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# Elizabeth Inchbald

## Complete Works



Series Eleven

*The Complete Works of*  
**ELIZABETH INCHBALD**

(1753-1821)



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Version 1

*The Complete Works of*  
**ELIZABETH INCHBALD**



*By Delphi Classics, 2021*

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### *Complete Works of Elizabeth Inchbald*



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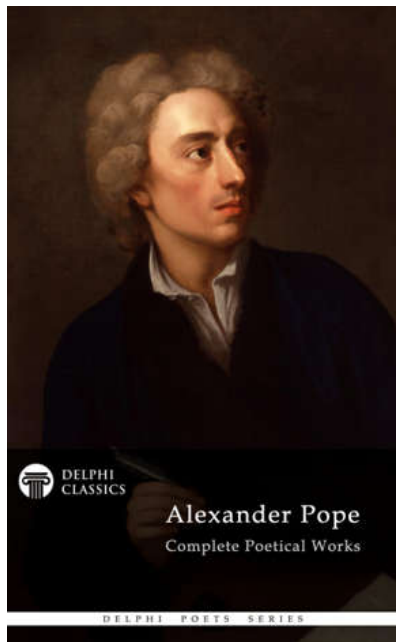
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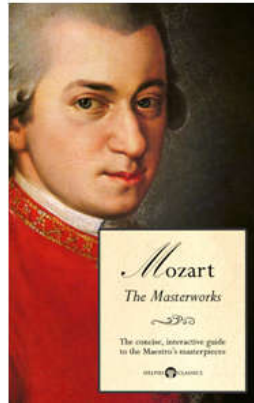
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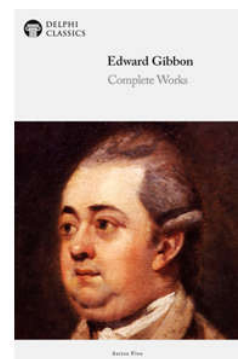


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## The Novels



*Church of St Nicholas, Stanningfield, a village near Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk — Inchbald's birthplace*



*Countryside surrounding the small village of Stanningfield*



## Appearance is against Them (1786)



The two anonymously published epistolary novels *Appearance is against Them* (1786) and *Emily Herbert: or, Perfidy Punished* (1786) were later ascribed to the hand of Elizabeth Inchbald, though there is much dispute now whether she actually wrote them. Her biographer Annibel Jenkins points out that she was working on a novel as early as 1777 and submitted a completed text (though this was more likely an early draft of *A Simple Story*) to a publisher in 1780. Therefore, she could have written the two novels in question. James Boaden, who had possession of Inchbald's diaries when he wrote the *Memoirs of Mrs. Inchbald* (1833) makes no mention of the two novels, and neither does Jenkins. As the attribution to Inchbald came much later and the fact that *Appearance is against Them* shares its title with one of Inchbald's plays, first staged and published in 1785, a more likely explanation would be that at some point a cataloguer mistook the title for Inchbald's play. As the anonymously published *Emily Herbert* was advertised as being by the writer of *Appearance is against Them*, it is understandable how the mistake of attributing both works to Inchbald could arise. Still it is possible she did write the novels and they might exist as examples of her very earliest literary efforts.

*Appearance is against Them* is structured as a series of letters between Isabella Rochley and her dear friend Harriot. Rochley's family has recently fallen upon hard times, after the unwise speculations of her now deceased father. The main incident in this narrative is borrowed from Voltaire's *L'Ecossais*, a well-known comedy. Although it offers an interesting story, the language was deemed to be poor and weak by a reviewer in *The Monthly Review*. The critic explains:

"At the opening of the performance, indeed, where the Author describes the feelings of a person once in affluence, but reduced to nearly a dependent state, we discovered a prettiness of thought and expression, and which really promised well. We were accordingly prepared to 'hail the coming good' — but, alas ! as our Author observes, '*appearances are often deceitful*', and when we expected to embrace a Juno, we met with nothing but a cloud."



*Inchbald by Samuel Freeman, c. 1780*

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## LETTER THE FIRST.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



WARWICK.

WHY all this distress my kind Harriot, why so much anxiety on your Isabella's account? I hoped my last would have convinced you I am by no means so unhappy, as your fears would persuade you; no doubt we have suffered, severely suffered: the unexpected change in our situation is certainly a very mortifying circumstance; but, remember my dear, we are not the first, would to heaven we might be the last, who have been ruined by that destructive vice; 'twas my poor father's only foible; do not then let us be too severe on his memory; nor are we Harriot left quite destitute as you suppose, far from it: my Orlando's commission is alone sufficient to maintain him as a gentleman, had he no more, but he has more — after paying all my father's debts, and sorry, sorry, am I to say, they were mostly what is falsely called debts of honor; we find a reversion of near two thousand pounds. What is this, you will perhaps ask, when compared to the noble estate he has lost at the gaming table? — nothing — yet Harriot, how many, no less worthy than ourselves are there at this moment, who would look upon even our present situation as enviable; 'tis by reflections of this nature I endeavour to reconcile myself to my fate, and, thank heaven, I am reconciled to it. — O spare then, my dear Harriot yours on the memory of my unfortunate father. I know they are the effects of your tender affection to me; but they hurt my feelings, I can pity, I can lament his situation; this I can allow you to do; but, indeed you must spare your censures on a conduct, which, though faulty, a daughter ought not to condemn: alas, he suffered most severely — his agony — his remorse in his last moments would have pierced the most flinty heart. — Orlando's behaviour — but no words can do it justice — 'twas great — 'twas noble — not a murmur — not even a sigh escaped him for his own fate, all his feelings were for the sufferings of a father whose failings he pitied, and wished to forget — he, Harriot, has indeed, a degree of manly fortitude, to which your poor Isabella has no pretensions: my resignation proceeds rather from an indifference for the superfluities of life, from a happy flow of spirits, which has ever led me to look on the bright side of the picture, and let me add, which should indeed have been first mentioned, a firm persuasion, that, the Almighty never wholly forsakes the virtuous, nor lays heavier burdens on any of his creatures, than they are able to bear. What have I then to fear? — poverty — be it so, far be it from me to believe all who are destitute of riches are miserable — nor can I be deemed absolutely poor, having such a brother as my Orlando — he may — nay, he must rise in his profession, if merit can entitle him to it; and though that does not always follow, yet a very superior degree of it, is seldom wholly overlooked, and such is his — have I not a kind affectionate friend too in my Harriot, who, I am positively certain will love me more truly now, if possible, than in my days of prosperity? — adversity is justly said to be the test of friendship; I am under no apprehensions for the loss of yours — those who may now look cool upon me, I have pride enough to despise, and thus we are quits — it will shew me their real value, and that, let me tell you, is gaining no inconsiderable knowledge. — Are you convinced my dear Harriot, that I am not so much to be pitied as you have hitherto kindly feared? believe me,



happiness is an imaginary blessing, at least, 'tis in the mind we must seek for it, not in those outward trappings, which wealth bestows, and can only bestow. I am very much persuaded, I shall find myself as thoroughly satisfied and content, nay, as vain of my charms too, in a neat linen or muslin gown, as ever I was when adorned with more costly attire; indeed, I have somewhere read, that beauty when unadorned, is adorned the most— 'tis a doctrine I am now determined to adopt, and, who knows, what may yet happen; if that maxim may be depended on, my days of conquest are yet to begin, that is to say, I am to be more capable of it than ever. — I feared, you see, you should fancy I had lived to nearly my nineteenth year, without having done any execution, and, humbled as I am, felt my pride alarmed at such an idea — thank heaven, however, I am setting out in my new plan of life, with my heart perfectly at ease — no small consolation that, let me tell you — not so, my darling Orlando; and that pains it indeed, more than any other wound it could have received — he has now, I fear, a hopeless passion to struggle with, beside all his other misfortunes — you are no stranger to his attachment to the lovely Caroline, nor her wretch of a brother's rooted aversion to mine — an aversion, founded on his superiority; they were fellow collegians — he there conceived that envy for his superior talents; and the universal esteem he met with from every creature, (himself excepted,) and by some other trifling circumstances which has since occurred, of which you have seen many proofs; it has, from that period, been his constant endeavour to do him every injury in his power, though, till now, he has met with few or no opportunities — and, there is nothing more certain, I firmly believe, than that.

Forgiveness to the injured does belong,  
They never pardon, who have done the wrong.

Now, I say, he has it amply in his power, to mortify the amiable object of his aversion, since Caroline is, till of age, wholly in his power, then indeed she may chuse for herself; and I have every reason to believe her choice is already made, but till then, she cannot marry without the wretch's consent; this however, is not the worst; time would of course remove this obstacle, but the scene is changed — my Orlando's sentiments are of a nature so delicate, that I am fully persuaded he will, or rather has, from the moment, he knew he had no longer a fortune to offer, worthy her acceptance, given up every hope of possessing the mistress of his tenderest affections. Sir John will therefore be again disappointed, in his hopes of mortifying him, for never will he put it in any woman's power, to suspect interest could have any influence over him. The lovely Caroline, I well know, would rejoice in thus having it in her power, to restore the man of her heart, to that affluence from which he has so unhappily fallen, indeed, I can hardly form an idea of a greater gratification than that must be to a noble mind, except being able, like Orlando, thus to sacrifice all his prospects of felicity to his ideas of honor— 'tis the pangs, which I am sensible, at this moment, wrings his generous heart, that pains mine most, in this our fallen state — all other ills I can look forward to with tolerable fortitude; but where my brother's peace of mind is concerned, I feel most severely; 'tis only while reflections on this subject occur, that my heroism forsakes me; 'tis then, I mourn our loss, and the little probability there is of his ever being so happy as he justly deserves to be, or as my affectionate heart could wish — for, alas, we may truly be stiled orphans. Since, I know not one relation we have in the world, on whom we have any possible claim: my poor father, had no brothers — my amiable and ever to be lamented mother had but one, and he died when Orlando and I were infants, at least we have every reason to believe so, as we have never heard of him since. — On Providence, Harriot we

must place our trust — but had we hundreds of relations, are there any on whom we could, or ought with so much confidence to rely? surely there are not, for they, though possessed of millions, might behold our wants with an eye of indifference; all our hopes of sharing their wealth might possibly be disappointed, for 'tis not those who possess most, who are always readiest to bestow — but, in putting our trust in Providence, we not only do our duty, but cannot fail in being rewarded, either in this world or a better — yet, alas, my dear Harriot, this, I fear, is in general, a last resource — certain it is, your poor Isabella has no other; I fear, if I had, you might not have found me capable of making so many pious reflections. — I dare not too minutely enter into the scrutiny, conscious, that 'tis much easier to preach than practice — of this, however, I am absolutely certain, that the sentiments I have expressed, are such, as I ought most firmly to believe, and though my faith may be weak, I trust it will never wholly fail — do not be shocked my dear Harriot, when I inform you where to address your next letter, forget, as I endeavour to do, the elegant mansion, in which I formerly enjoyed the pleasure of your correspondence, reflect only, that your pleasing epistles will now be doubly dear to me, robbed as I am, of so many other sources of satisfaction, — do not suffer a tear to drop on it in remembrance of the past, 'tis fruitless, a thousand things may yet happen to cheer my present prospects. I do not despair; and why, my good girl, should you: Let me find in your next your usual vivacity, that will help to restore mine, indeed, for my Orlando's sake, I will do my utmost, not only to appear, but really to be cheerful; not for worlds, would I give him one moments uneasiness, nay, in this, and only this case, would I deceive him; and, if possible, persuade him, I am more resigned, than 'tis in nature to be — you have not, I am sure, forgot our worthy teacher at Mrs. Mason's; she was ever extremely partial, both to you and your Isabella; our governess, was of a more haughty, more forbidding cast; of course, Mrs. Bellmour was our favorite — to what can all this possibly tend, cries, my Harriot; what has Mrs. Bellmour to do with the address you was talking of? — a great deal my dear — she has lately left our school, and has now a house in London, where she has half a dozen young women constantly employed in embroidery, and other elegant works; she has a very numerous acquaintance amongst people of fashion, and I hear, has great business in that line; her house is an exceeding good one, in an airy situation — no shop — pray let that console you — with her I have determined to reside for a time — my pride forbad my continuing in the country; I dreaded the pity of my former acquaintance, and trust I shall never require it; as it is one of the least pleasing of all consolations, and for that reason, I fear, given so freely. — In town, I can live as retired as I please, and what is still better, enjoy my Orlando's society daily — he is now my only protector; could I then do better than take up my residence near him. — Mrs. Bellmour is a woman of family, of a fine understanding, well bred, and accomplished; our situations are in some degree similar — true there is this difference; she, though as I said, of a good family, never had hopes of a fortune: Her father was a younger brother — married against the consent of his friends; was never pardoned, and died when she was an infant; she was of course brought up without higher views than she has attained to; perhaps, her father's misfortunes might deter her from entering into the state of matrimony; be that as it will, she never did, though she has certainly been a fine woman in her day — with her, I doubt not I shall find myself very commodiously situated; my faithful Fanny, begged to continue with me, indeed, I had no thoughts of parting from her; but, when she saw all the other servants dismissed, she feared it was to be her fate also; she is a good creature, and, I believe sincerely attached to me, indeed, having lived in our family, from a girl I can hardly doubt it — nor is this desire a small proof of it. — My

dear Orlando wished me much, also to retain my own man — but this I at once declared I would not consent to — could I possibly think of putting him to an expence for a gratification I could so easily dispence with — no, Harriot — far, far, rather would I make shift with the bare necessities of life, than encroach on his generosity— 'tis for his dear sake too, I chuse to live retired; in London, I am an absolute stranger; I mean to continue so. — Reading, music, drawing, and needle work, with sometimes his loved company, will abundantly amuse me; thank heaven, my mind is not such a blank as that I should, like too many others of my sex, be compelled to kill time, instead of using it to rational purposes: Lord help those insignificant souls, who find every moment of it heavy, when not engaged in dissipation — much indeed are they to be pitied, and many, many such there are, in this small town.— 'tis now I think full time to bid you adieu; when I am settled in my new habitation, you shall hear from me again — in the mean time, be under no apprehensions for me. I have made up my mind. All will do mighty well. Continue to love me, and believe me,

Ever your affectionate,  
ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE SECOND.

SAME TO THE SAME.



LONDON.

HERE I am, my dearest Harriot, and I assure you, very comfortably settled — comfortably, you cry, shocked at the homely phrase — but why shocked? — you have been so long accustomed to think of your Isabella, as enjoying every elegance, every luxury of life, that the idea of being reduced to the mere comfortable, it appears, I suppose, a mighty uncomfortable expression — now, I, on the contrary, by casting my eyes around me, and viewing the thousands who every moment pass my windows, visibly destitute of even that blessing, think 'tis no small mercy, considering, that another unlucky cast of the dice, might have put me on a level with the most wretched — 'tis by reflecting in this manner, my dear Harriot, one finds consolation; in fact, I have lost nothing essentially necessary to happiness, were it not a truth, how very very few, in this world have any pretensions to it — few I mean, in comparison of those, who are even in a far worse situation than I am at this moment; have I not a kind affectionate brother, a friend, no less tenderly attached to me? — in short, I am determined to bid defiance to adversity; I will bear it, not only with resignation, but, if possible, cheerfully, which I am positively certain, will strip it of half its horrors; no more condolence then, no more fruitless repining, let us remember, this misfortune was brought upon us by a father, a kind, an indulgent, though an imprudent one; be his faults and failings forgot, and, may I ever reflect with gratitude, on the thousand benefits we have received from him — a good education, well informed understanding, sentiments we need not blush to acknowledge; these, Harriot, we owe to his paternal care, but for those instructions, I might not have been able, as thank Heaven, I now can, to look back without a sigh, to those ample possessions, once ours — now in the possession of others, perhaps, less deserving — why wonder at the fall of a private family — 'tis a fate from which even the greatest empires are not exempt — but, let me farther convince my kind Harriot, I am not an object of pity, by giving her a more minute account of my situation; I found Mrs. Bellmour's house infinitely more elegant, yes, elegant, than I had any idea of; I have three apartments, which we will call my drawing room, dressing room, and bed chamber, more than that number I did not aspire to, in my father's house, 'tis true, my second is not quite so spacious as my former one there, but for that very reason, is now preferable, as it is more suitable to my circumstances — the furniture is all chintz — my dear Orlando, has supplied me with a few well chosen books; I have my harpsichord, my materials for drawing; and, as for all sorts of elegant works, have only to step down to Mrs. Bellmour, and there I may at all times, see and copy the greatest variety — she is delighted with the honor I have done her, in making choice of her house, and pays me as much respect, as if she were a stranger to my misfortunes; she has no other lodgers, though she has another set of apartments, as good as mine, which she can spare, but has made a point of taking no person, who is not particularly recommended, nor is she very anxious about it, as she is in a fair way to make a fortune in a few years, by her business — now, tell me, honestly, have I not great reason to bless Heaven, that I still enjoy so many comforts — surely, I have — you'll perhaps, tell me, I am excluded from all



society, or at least, from such as I have hitherto been accustomed to— 'tis very true, and society is undoubtedly, the first satisfaction in life — but, though I had a numerous acquaintance, it by no means follows, that in their company, I found what I call society— 'tis, in my opinion, a thing no longer understood, 'tis still like friendship, much talked of, but where do we find it — not at public places, not at card parties, society, according to my ideas, consists in rational conversation, with sensible well informed people — where are they to be met with? that there are many such, I make no doubt, but, what avails it — a man, or woman, of superior understanding, makes no better figure — nay, I am apt to think, a worse figure at a public place, or, card assembly, than one who can only talk of the weather — the fashions, the opera, or the last new play — and, where does one meet any soul, but at places of this nature? not in London; so my loss, you see, is not great in that article — do you, Harriot, in your conscience, think they understand the matter much better in the country — I do not — during the few months people of fashion spend there, do they not to the utmost of their power, live exactly as they do in town — where then is society to be found — I say, 'tis wholly abolished, and in its stead, we have only an eternal round of insipid dissipation, in which, as I said above, the fool, makes just as good a figure as the man of sense — I never passed a winter in town, except one — and upon my honor, I never was so tired of any six months, since I was born, yet, I was then in the first company, nay, admired too, as a beauty, that circumstance one would think, might have kept one awake, but I declare to you, I have found on many occasions, more use for my fan to conceal a yawn, than for any other purpose; how often have I been, one of a large circle of belles and beaux, for hours together, without hearing a single sentence uttered worth attending to; yet all affect amazing vivacity, and a laugh is frequently heard, when not a soul amongst them, if asked, what gave rise to it, could possibly tell— 'tis, as somebody very justly observed, when talking on this very subject — all laugh, and no joke — this is society — and this I am likely to be debarred of, if I have not it in my power, to mix as formerly, with the beau monde — am I to be pitied — not one bit — besides, my new situation has the charm of novelty to recommend it, and that, let me tell you, is no small matter — did ever mortal, you cry, hear any one so eloquent in praise of adversity — perhaps not — but 'tis my way, Harriot, to make the best I can of a bad bargain — and, after all, should I be one jot the happier, had I given myself up a prey to despair — had I, instead of thus endeavouring to forget the past, tormented both you and myself, with unavailing lamentation — I doubt the fact, my dear — my Orlando too, who makes it my study to keep up my spirits — shall I not do all in my power to assist him in his kind purpose; I should little merit his affectionate attention, if I did not — here comes the dear creature, I hear his voice below — farewell — let me hear from you soon, and believe me,

Ever your,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE THIRD.

SAME TO THE SAME.



LONDON.

WHAT an angel is Caroline, my dear Harriot — Oh! she has proved herself the most generous, the most exalted of women — you may remember, that I broke off abruptly hearing my Orlando's voice, enquiring for me — read that, my Isabella, cried he, giving me a letter, and confess that the charming Caroline is, as I ever believed her, a noble minded creature — I have his permission to send you the following copy of it, that you may yourself, judge whether she does not justly merit the encomiums, I have given her

TO COLONEL ROCHLEY.

WERE I not thoroughly acquainted with the sentiments of the amiable Colonel Rochley, I might, perhaps, have scrupled to give him this proof of my partiality, nor am I ignorant, that there are many of my own sex, and perhaps, of yours, who would condemn me for it, but I have examined my heart, it acquits me, and I am in this instance, determined to rest satisfied with its decision — to the change in your situation, I give not a thought on my own account, yourself, not your fortune was ever the object of my attachment — I know your worth, and I think, Orlando, I know also, that you have a tolerable opinion of mine, but, I also know the delicacy of your sentiments — these, if I do not mistake your character, will lead you to fancy it incumbent on you, to give up all thoughts of the poor Caroline, because, truly, 'tis no longer in your power, to produce a rent, roll equal to hers — this may, for ought, I know, be deemed mighty noble, mighty generous, and all that — but, it does not, my good friend, accord with my ideas, nor, do I mean to let you so easily off, you have — at least you told me so a thousand times — I say, you have freely and voluntarily given me your heart; I have long looked upon it as my property — with your heart, I made not a doubt, that I should, in due time, be able to prevail on you, to give me also your hand; nay, so certain was I of it, that I had privately made a vow, never to bestow mine on any other of your sex; a pretty scrape then, I am likely to be brought into, should you make a point of playing the hero, and for the before mentioned ridiculous reasons, give me up — I know my very amiable and affectionate wretch of a brother, would see us both perish, rather than consent to our union — but, if you will condescend to wait — let me see, how long — O, just four months, and three weeks; I shall then, be my own mistress, and, as I am, very unwilling to break my vow, and still, more unwilling to seek out for a new lover; I am, when that happy period arrives, determined to sue you for damages, should you presume to break yours — and, I promise you, I shall claim a pretty considerable sum, nor will it, I think, be denied me; the loss of my heart, let me tell you, is no joke — I accuse you of the theft; deny it if you can — prepare then, either your defence — or, what will give me infinitely more satisfaction, agree to compromise the affair, by keeping it, and permitting me to retain yours in return, on this condition, I here, make a second vow, that on the day I shall become of age, I will offer you my lilly hand in holy

matrimony; think of what has been said, and don't play the simpleton — you must have a very short memory, if it is necessary for me to inform you, that,

I am, Most truly, and affectionately,

your CAROLINE WESTBURY

P. S.

Do not fancy I have formed the above resolution, without mature reflection — no — I am too wise, too prudent for that, believe me — I have weighed the matter, as thus — in one scale, I put myself and my twenty thousand pounds — in the other, your worship, your colonel's commission, with all your accomplishments of mind, and person — when, behold, my Ladyship's scale instantly kicked the beam, nay, so very unequal were they, that I am positively certain, could I have thrown fifty thousand more into it, there it would have stuck — the duce is in it then, if I shall not have the best bargain — adieu. —

You have now, I presume, read the delightful girls letter — what do you think of her, my dear Harriot — is she not a spirited, charming creature? — there are those, she says, who might possibly condemn her — you, I trust, are not of the stupid number; for my part, I adore her for her ingenuous candour — she knows, Orlando's whole happiness centers in her — she knows his worth — who then, but the most ridiculously prudish, shall presume to say, she has not acted like an angel — yes, an angel, I repeat, for, alas, I fear 'tis not like the generality of our sex — well, my dear Orlando, cried I, when I had read her epistle — what says your heart, to this proof of your Caroline's folly? — folly, Isabella — certainly replied I — must she not be a very weak creature, thus, to persist in loving you, merely for those good qualities, which no reverse of fortune can rob you of — what are those, compared to an estate of two thousand a year? — nothing indeed, I believe, said he, in the estimation of too many of your sex, Isabella, but my engaging Caroline has a mind — to play the fool, cried I, interrupting him, that's all — but seriously, continued I, do not now, my dear brother, carry your sentiments of honor or generosity, too far — there are obstacles enough to your felicity already; let it be your business to remove, not by a false delicacy, to add to them; remember, the lively affectionate Carolines happiness is at stake, as well as yours — has she not freely confessed it? — she has, cried he in raptures, and I am the happiest of mortals; yes, Isabella, I will look forward with hope — hope, replied I, nay, with certainty — only, beware of that wretch, her brother, I know no villainy of which he is not capable, suffer him to believe you have now given up all thoughts of his sister; be cautious how you conduct yourself; beware, that none of your letters fall into his hands; I have no fears, on your account, my dear Orlando, 'tis for your Carolines safety I tremble, wholly in his power, as she is at present, who can say, what his hatred to to you, and his sordid avarice may prompt him to? — go, my beloved brother, go, and answer the charming girl's letter, as it deserves, but, as I said before, take care that 'tis safely conveyed to her — he left me, the happiest of beings — yet, a thousand delicate scruples damped his joy, but I think, conscious as he is, that her felicity, as I told him, depends upon him, he will conquer them — thus my dear friend, all my sorrows are at an end — my Orlando will yet be happy — can I then fail to be compleatly so? — impossible — no more repining, no more reflections then on the past, who can say, what a day can bring forth? this has been a happy one, to morrow may be no less so —

I trust it will, And am, ever your's,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE FOURTH.

MISS LENOX, TO MISS ROCHLEY.



NORTHAMPTON.

YOU are persuaded, you say, in one of your letters, I shall love you with more sincerity now, in your adversity, than ever I did in your days of prosperity — why, really my dear Isabella, the thing is mighty easily accounted for, though, 'tis not exactly according to the modern ideas of friendship; have I not, by this change in your situation, had an opportunity to discover a thousand good qualities in you, which, but for that, neither you nor I might ever have suspected you possessed? — how could it ever have entered my head, that Isabella Rochly, born and bred in affluence, accustomed from her infancy, to all the luxuries, all the gratifications wealth could bestow, should, when unexpectedly robbed of them all, continue the same lively, chearful creature she ever was — who, I say could have believed it? — well, may you say, you bid defiance to poverty — with a mind, as yours evidently is formed, what, as you say, have you to fear? — all this is great — is noble, my dear Isabella, yet, though convinced your sentiments are right, rational, and all that — I cannot help feeling — aye, and fearing too — but you will tell me, I am a Job's comforter — 'tis very true — the fact is, had you, as every other mortal in your case, would have done, filled your letters with sighs and tears with ahs! — and ohs! as long as my arm — I should have taken the other side of the question, and have endeavoured to console you, by every means in my power — but your astonishing resignation — your truly christian philosophy, leaves me nothing to say — I can only wonder and admire — and love you most affectionately.

Having therefore, nothing more to do, let us chat as usual, on a late event, merely, as on an unpleasant dream — and first, for the charming Caroline — no, no, believe me, I am not one of the stupid number, who condemn her, if any such there be, which I very much doubt — at least, if they are acquainted with Orlando Rochley, I pronounce the thing impossible — one there is — him, I had forgot, but, he is a wretch, not worth naming, her brother, I mean — but, though, not worth naming — he is an object to be feared — do you know, Isabella, I am assured, he is at this moment in treaty with one of his gambling companions, who has taken it into his head, to fancy himself capable of being desperately in love with the dear girl; Sir John, has lost a very considerable sum of money to him — I believe, at the last Newmarket races; this sum he has promised to give up, on condition he receives the hand of Caroline, in its stead; and also, to accept fifteen thousand, instead of the twenty, to which she is entitled, on the day she is of age — this, I am informed, and from pretty good authority, is the bargain these two worthy Baronets have struck; judge you, whether they will leave any stone unturned to accomplish their vile plot; Sir John, 'tis well known, is over head and ears in debt — Sir James Henderson, rich as a jew, and though incapable of a real attachment, spares no expence to gratify his passions — or, the whim of the moment — I tell you this, my dear Isabella, not that I have any apprehensions, farther than the trouble they may occasion — thank heaven, we live in a land of liberty; a woman cannot be forced into matrimony against her will — and of all women, Caroline Westbury, is least likely; she has more sense, more spirit, than



half the fellows in England, consequently, they will make but a bungling hand of the business, but, as I said above, they may torment, and give her a great deal of trouble — you may do as you please, in regard to informing your dear brother, of what I now tell you; I think it may not be amiss, knowing ones enemies, one may the better guard against their machinations; indeed, being master of her generous heart, I think he has nothing to fear, he has only to have patience, and, as you say, all will do mighty well — but why, my dear Isabella, this very retired plan of yours? — I see no reason for it, why not enjoy a little society, I was going to say — forgetting you had proved to me, 'tis a thing no longer existing — perhaps, not according to your antiquated notions; but you in your turn forget, that all one has to do in this world of ours, is to take things as we find them; while thus indulging your simple plan, (the only simple one by the way, you ever formed) — the world will take it for granted, you are weeping and wailing your misfortunes unable to bear this reverse with proper resignation, take my word for it, they will never be kind enough to impute your conduct to the real motive, they will be glad to find a defect in a character hitherto deemed perfect, disappoint them, my dear Isabella, convince them, your happiness depended not on so fickle a being, as Madam Fortune, nor, could her ill favoured daughter, Miss, rob you of your felicity — give them not such a triumph, my dear girl, but, let them see, you are still the lively, chearful companion you ever were; I know you have but few acquaintance in town, but, if amongst those, there are any, whose company can afford you an hours amusement, why not enjoy it — I am not without hopes of spending a few months in London this winter; if I do, emerge you must, for that I shall spoil your philosophical plan, is most certain, so you may as well drop it at once; my love to Orlando — let me hear from you soon, and tell me whether you have obeyed my commands; remember me also to our old friend Mrs. Bellmour, and doubt not, the affection of your unalterable,

HARRIOT LENOX.

## LETTER THE FIFTH.

SAME TO THE SAME.



NORTHAMPTON.

I WRITE this in haste, be not too much alarmed, my dear Isabella — I wish I could spare you the anxiety these lines I well know must occasion, but I cannot answer it to my heart, were I to conceal, what so nearly concerns your peace — Sir John, I am informed by one, who is acquainted with all his motions, has by some base means or other, seen your brothers letter to Miss Westbury. I suspect he also knew of hers to him — be that as it will, he is outrageous, and swears he will shoot the colonel through the head, rather than she shall give herself and fortune to a beggar; that was his elegant phrase — but, above all, to the man he detests— 'tis said, but this I cannot affirm, he set off for London yesterday — accompanied by that wretch Henderson — did they possess one spark of honor between them, I should be less apprehensive, but they do not — they dare not — I am certain — they have not sufficient spirit to demand satisfaction, as it is called, like gentlemen — they are too conscious of his superiority, openly to avow their designs, his courage is too well known for that — they are mere bullies — and cowards of course — all I mean by telling you this, is, that you may caution your brother — charge him to be on his guard — I really, hardly know what it is I fear — but, such is my affection for you both, that even the shadow of danger makes me tremble; should Sir John really, be gone to town, they may chance to meet, and who can say, what may be the consequence — warn Orlando then to avoid him — I have time for no more, lest, my well meant intelligence should come too late — heaven, bless you both, prays, your affectionate,

HARRIOT LENOX.

## LETTER THE SIXTH.

MISS WESTBURY, TO LADY BELL SYDNEY.



WESTBURY-HALL.

YOUR ladyship is impatient, you say, to hear how I have settled matters with my gallant colonel — why, my dear Lady Bell, had the affair been left to my management, it would have been happily settled, long ago, for I think I could, in spite of his heroics, have prevailed on the dear creature, to have taken me for better, for worse — yet, such are his obsolete notions of honor — generosity, and other equally absurd ideas, that I should, I believe in my conscience, have had enough to do — but I told you, nay, I sent you a copy of the epistle I wrote him, on hearing the situation his imprudent father left him in — the loss of his fortune, never gave me one hours concern, on my own account, persuaded mine, is abundantly sufficient to satisfy any two reasonable people, and reasonable, I have ever found him, except in this instance — here truly, his pride steps in, can he think of giving a beggar to the woman he adores? — that is, the burden of his melancholy song — however, as I was saying, I believe my eloquence might have prevailed, had I been at liberty to argue the case with him, as I wished, but behold, my good for nothing brother, has found means to stop all farther proceedings at present — and, by such means, as none but a being, like himself, actuated by the basest of all motives, could have stooped too — he naturally suspected the change, in Colonel Rochley's situation, could make none in my sentiments, my attachment, he knew, was built on a more permanent foundation — he therefore, made several attempts to discover my thoughts on the subject, but to no purpose, well did I know his, and therefore, chose to disappoint him — however, he was too artful for me — he bribed my maid — she knew I had received a letter from him, though I never make people in that line my confidants as too many Misses do — but, having a better opinion of her, than I find she deserved, made no secret of it — she knew our attachment, she knew his hand writing — and, in short, when questioned on the subject, at the same time, eyeing a purse of gold — she answered, as he wished, and promised, I presume, to get him a sight of the letter — how she contrived this, I know not, unless by a false key to my cabinet, as I think, I could not be so careless as to leave it open — be that as it will — a few days ago, while at breakfast with my Tyrant, he with rage, malice, and a thousand other amiable passions, strongly depicted on his expressive countenance, produced the said epistle, at the same time, abusing us both in a language, which wou'd have done credit to an inhabitant of Billingsgate — I bore the storm with most provoking philosophic calmness — this, he, poor soul, could not bear — we females, my dear Lady Bell, have a thousand times more command of our tempers, than these lords of the creation, as they style themselves — so you have really been mean spirited enough, cried he, half choaked with passion, to offer yourself to this fellow? — even, so replied I, and pray brother, what can you possibly have to say to it — it cannot surely, interfere with your happiness, you, fond, as you ever were of me, cannot marry me yourself, what, in the name of common sense, then is it to you who does? provided he is a gentleman, a man of worth, of character — he is neither, cried he, he is a d — nd — stop, my good friend, said I, interrupting him — no naughty words I beseech you — you know

— yes, well do you know, Colonel Rochley is all I have described, but I also know, not only, that you have long entertained sentiments for him, which do no great credit to your understanding, but I know also the cause — his evident superiority, not his inferiority, Sir John, is the crime you cannot pardon; he has made you look rather simple, on more occasions than one, 'tis no secret, my good brother, you know it is not — I might not now, or ever, have reproached you with it, had you not thus compelled me to it, in order to justify my partiality, by proving to you, he has no other fault, even in your eyes — surely, he is not answerable for the misconduct of his father, more than I am, for that of my brother, his family — his — d — n — his family, cried he — well, if you insist upon it, replied I, with a provoking smile I fear, I can't help it, but pray, spare the colonel — my dear Lady Bell, I actually thought he would have beat me — and, perhaps I did deserve a box on the ear — to cut this matter short, continued I, and to save all farther altercation on the subject, I now declare to you freely, and candidly; I am fully determined to give my hand to this beggar, the very day I can also present him with it, my fortune — till then, I have no such intention, nor shall you then be such a cursed fool, cried he, if I can help it, and I think I shall find ways for that — so saying, away he bounced — I soon followed, in order to lecture my abigail, fully persuaded, she had betrayed me, if I may call it so, though, as I never trusted her, I believe, 'tis not exactly the case — on questioning her, she denied the whole, but in such a manner, that I was fully convinced in her guilt, and accordingly dismissed her without farther ceremony — thus have I given those particulars you wish to be acquainted with, my present situation is none of the pleasantest, but, thank heaven, I am not very apt to give way to despair; the time is at no great distance, when I shall be at full liberty, to act as I think proper; teased in the mean time, I expect to be, but have made up my mind to bear it; I might, no doubt, quit our family mansion, and take up my residence with some of my friends, but it would answer no good purpose, for the fact is, they, one and all, pronounce me imprudent at least, thus to throw myself and fortune away, as they call it, on a man, who cannot, now, make such settlements as I am intitled to — I, on the contrary, tell them, he has made all I ever had an ambition for — he has settled his heart upon me — I hear his charming sister chose to live in London, rather than continue in the country, where the misfortunes of her family, will of course, be a subject of conversation for ages — I think, she judged perfectly right — there too, she is more immediately under the protection of her generous noble minded brother; Oh! how much contrast to mine! I am told, she resembles him, both in mind and person — happy, my dear Lady Bell, should I have been, had it been in my power, to offer the lovely girl an asylum with me — such a companion would have been the most desirable thing in life, but my brother's rooted aversion to her whole family, puts that out of the question at present — when the happy day arrives, that he is no longer my master, I shall make it my first request, to my dear Rochley — till then, I must deny myself that pleasure — in spite of the pretty trick that has been played me, I shall contrive some means to continue a correspondence with him, but there is no hurry, we know each others sentiments, that is the most material point — and so the matter rests, adieu, my dearest friend — you see I am in a fair way to be one of the poor persecuted damsels — this comes of falling in love — take care how you, my dear, get into this unfortunate scrape — and believe me, most truly,

Your affectionate,

CAROLINE WESTBURY.



## LETTER THE SEVENTH.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

A Thousand thanks, my dearest Harriot, for your friendly intelligence, I instantly made my brother acquainted with it, who had the civility to laugh at our feminine apprehensions — how can you, my dear Orlando, said I, make a joke of what, to us appears a very serious cause of alarm? why, my sweet Isabella, replied he, because fighting is my profession, would you then, have me like you, tremble at the thoughts of a sword, or pistol? — no, certainly cried I, Heaven forbid, had you a man of honor to deal with, but who can say, what a wretch like Sir John may be capable of — I vow I should not wonder, if he had you assassinated — no, no, Isabella, when you form plans of that nature, you must lay the scene in Spain, or Portugal, there we hear of adventures of that nature, though I'll be sworn, where one story of the kind is true, fifty are false; depend upon it, you have nothing of that kind to apprehend — certain it is, I should be sorry, on my Carolines account, to have a fracas with him, nay, for her sake, and for yours too, my dear Isabella, I will not seek an occasion of meeting him; as far as I can with honor, I will even avoid it — but, if by chance we do meet — and he should presume to insult me, by look or word, why my dear, I shall endeavour to teach him better manners — but take my word for it, he has too much regard for his person to put it needlessly in danger — I know him of old — he has adopted Hudibras's maxim

Great are the perils that inviron,  
The man who meddles with cold iron.  
but should it come to that, be assured he will be wise enough to consider, that  
He who fights, and runs away,  
May live to fight another day;  
But he who is in battle slain,  
Will never rise to fight again.

was it possible Harriot, to forbear laughing in spite of my fears, at the idea this gave me of his antagonist — I confess his agreeable vivacity put them almost to flight, I begin to think the creature will not have courage to face him, for according to Shakespeare, “conscience makes cowards of us all”; and I am sure, his must accuse him of envy, malice, and a thousand other diabolical passions — I again begged my brother for my sake, to be on his guard, he smiled, saying, he was on the point of obeying me, as he was just going to be on guard, at the Tower — you chuse to be witty, my dear Orlando, said I, but, though this duty will prevent me seeing you for some time, I rejoice to hear you are obliged to be there, as I think the wretch will not have courage to follow you to a place so capable of making a vigorous defence — he now, kindly kissed my cheek, bid me fear nothing, be chearful, amuse myself the best way I could, till he saw me again, and left me much more at ease, than when he

entered; certain of his Carolines attachment, master of her invaluable heart, he is as happy as this world can make him.

You do not, my dear Harriot, altogether approve my retired plan of life — I have made no vows to seclude myself from the world, should I ever meet with a temptation to enter into its amusements — far from it, I am of too sociable a disposition for that, but I think, decency, propriety, not to mention my own feelings, forbid it at present — you forget Harriot, 'tis not many months since my dear father's death, and however we may have suffered by his imprudent conduct — I lament it most unfeignedly — another reason I have too, which you have also forgot — shall I — can I, do you think take advantage of my Orlando's generosity, and run into any unnecessary expences? forbid it, heaven — no, no, Harriot — I will content myself for a while with such amusements as I can enjoy, without robbing him of the little he is now master of — a time may come, when he can better spare it, and I am not so old, as to fear a decay in my charms, before I have an opportunity to display them to the world — in the mean time, assure yourself, I am not merely comfortable, but, as happy as a queen — I am upon my honor, and as a proof of it, I am just going to sing, and play Seaton Cliff — a new song, my Orlando brought me this morning, he tells me I shall like it — adieu,

Ever yours,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE EIGHTH.

MISS WESTBURY, TO LADY BELL SIDNEY.



WESTBURY-HALL.

I HAVE since you last heard from me, my dear Lady Bell, met with a trifle which gave (and very foolishly) half an hour's uneasiness — not more, for a moment's cool reflection convinced me, 'twas an artifice of my brothers, and his friend, Sir James Henderson — but take the particulars.

A few days ago we had dined, *tete a tete* — he was in better temper than usual, not a word of the colonel was said — 'tis a subject I never start, though of all others, the most pleasing to me; he chose to be very eloquent in praise of Sir James, was astonished I did not see him in the same favourable light, so fine a fortune — such great connections, &c. and then so distractedly in love with me, so constant, in spite of the cold reception his addresses met with — I owned it was very astonishing, as I was reckoned a girl of taste, but there was no help for it, some people were blind to their own interest, and I supposed I was one of the unlucky number — he did not, I believe, greatly relish my manner of expressing myself, but said no more.

On his quitting the room, I observed a letter lying by the chair he had sat on — it was open — I cannot say I felt any sort of curiosity to view the contents, nor should I, had I not, by mere chance, seen the name of Rochley; I am now persuaded he had dropped it in that open manner, that I might see it, sensible, nothing less would tempt me to peruse it, and in this instance, he really did discover some share of sagacity.

Here follows a copy of the delectable scrawl; I own, as I said before, I was weak enough to be fluttered, for about half an hour —

Dear Jack,

You may make yourself perfectly easy, would I could hope the news I now send you, were likely to make me so — who knows but it may, your charming sister may possibly, when convinced, as she soon will be, that her favoured colonel is unworthy the honor she does him, treat me with less severity — he is at this very time, paying his addresses to a merchant's daughter in the city; she has fifty thousand pounds in her own power, and they say, her heart fell a sacrifice to his red coat, and cockade some time ago at Almack's — she freely told him so — and made him an offer of that convenient sum, on condition he wou'd take her into the bargain; to this, he very wisely agreed, and they are to be married without farther ceremony, next week. — What I tell you, you may depend upon as a fact, for I had it from the girls brother, (father she has none) and he curses her for a fool — so you may make yourself easy, no fear of his being grafted into your family now. — One thing I make a point of; not a word of this to your sister, I wish not to be the first who shall inform her of it, she may perhaps fancy I am mean enough to triumph on the occasion — I do not — I own I cannot help being highly pleased, because I flatter myself, were he once fairly out of her reach, she may chance to cast a favourable eye upon your humble servant. — One thing is certain, if she does not — curse me, if I care a straw if all the rest of her sex were blind. — Once more, mind what I say — no tatling — I know you will be bursting to tell her — but, if you do — or at least, if you give me as the author of the intelligence, I'll blow your brains out the next time we meet; my officiousness, as she

will call it, can only give her a worse impression of me, than she has already, and that is needless — so be dumb, I charge you, she will hear it soon enough from others,

Yours,

JAMES HENDERSON,

How do you like it Lady Bell? — artful, and really better manufactured than I believed either of them capable of — I hope you will own it was enough to stagger one at the first reading — I confess it did me — for after all, men are but men. However, I am fully determined not to believe one word of the matter — and, as I love to do things openly and honestly, I have treated my colonel with a copy of it, inclosed in a few lines from myself; civilly desiring he will himself tell me, whether there is any truth in it, as I would sooner take his word, than that of any other person — at the same time, adding my opinion, which as I have already told you is, that 'tis an abominable falsehood — I did not think it quite convenient to tell him, who was the eloquent author of this epistle, that might have led to disagreeable consequences — but, what you will grant, is still a better joke, I have taken no notice of having found it, though, that it was dropped on purpose for me to pick up, is as clear as noon day — I could expire with laughing at the thoughts of my having thus disappointed the dear creatures, by pretending to know nothing of the matter.

When we met at tea — I found my brother was brimfull of expectation — I affected to be more gay, more lively than usual — yet, took care not to over act my part; I was humming a favourite air, when he came in, and continued it; he was visibly in the fidgets — tried first one chair, then another — but all in vain — I made the tea with all imaginable composure — and at last, finding I would not break the ice, and of course, fearing the matter would come to an untimely end, if he did not lend a helping hand to restore it.

Caroline said he, looking very like a fool; pray did you find a letter? I have dropped one some where, and cannot, for my soul, find it.

You see, my dear Lady Bell, I had nothing for it, but to tell an absolute lye mincing the matter would have spoiled the joke — no, replied I, I really saw none — no, cried he, shocked to death at the very idea that his plot should have miscarried — surely you must, for I am pretty certain, I had it in my pocket at dinner — are you equally certain, said I, you have not lost it out of doors? O! quite so, replied he, it must have fallen in the dining room, while taking out my handkerchief, 'tis very likely, said I, I will ring, and order a servant to look for it, it may be there still, perhaps, or some of them may have picked it up — I hope it is of no great importance, in case it is not to be sound? — this was an awkward sort of a question, was it not, my dear Lady Bell? he felt it to be so, and looked more foolish, if possible, than before, and waved giving an answer — I rung the bell — John step into the dining room, and see if you can find a letter there, your master has dropped one, and fancies it was in that room — away went John.

I need hardly tell you the poor epistle was not to be found — make farther enquiries said I, amongst the servants, some of them may have got it — lost, it cannot be, in the house, and, unless there were bank bills in it, I can hardly suppose any of them can have motives for, not restoring it — I hope it contained none, brother.

Such was the command I had of my countenance, my dear friend, that, I saw plainly, I had fairly taken him in — no, you never saw mortal in so ridiculous a situation — 'tis impossible to conceive it — what was now to be done? here was a fine well concerted plot blown to air, he had sense enough to see, that telling me the contents would never do — 'twas too late — I should immediately suspect he had dropped it on purpose, or, why not have told me the mighty news at dinner, if he

could do it now — this argument might have no weight, had the business been of an honest nature I am sensible — but, here the case was different, he felt I should not believe one word of the story, if told simply, without all the corroborating circumstances contained in the unfortunate epistle — it was to do it justice, wrote most plausibly — Sir James begging he would not inform me of it, for instance — how now, tell it without disobeying that injunction, and of course, robbing his poor friend of the merit, he hoped to acquire, by that very injunction: This was a dilemma not to be got over.

What then could the silly soul do better than let the matter drop? and this, he very prudently did — whether this disaster will cure them of plotting, heaven only knows — you see not a doubt remains with me, that it was a plot — though I have not yet had it cleared up, by my dear Rochley.

This I hope to have in a few days, as I have taken effectual care, neither my letter, nor his answer shall again fall into my brothers hands — and he, I fancy, fearing his answer to his confederate, might, by some unlucky chance, fall into mine, has thought proper to set off full speed, for London, to tell the story in person

I would give something to hear their dialogue on the subject; poor Sir John can make but a very so, so, figure on the occasion, his friend will set him down as a mere marplot, though, I think I have the best title to that appellation — for, 'twas certainly I that marr'd it.

I flatter myself the story will divert your ladyship, and so I leave you, that you may laugh without interruption.

Yours, ever,

CAROLINE WESTBURY.

## LETTER THE NINTH.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

ALAS, my dear Harriot, your fears, your kind apprehensions were but too well founded! — I may now say, I am as wretched a being as ever existed — compleatly wretched— 'tis possible, the dreadful news may, e'er this have reached you, but the particulars cannot, and well I know the melancholy story will be told by my loved brothers enemies, with every possible aggravation, for 'tis known only to them — the particulars I mean, alas! the event can be no secret! — I am almost blind with weeping, and can scarce see what I write, yet, what other consolation is now left me? — little did your poor Isabella think, when she last wrote to you in such good spirits, that she was in a few days to be reduced to such deplorable distress, you have seen me bear the loss of fortune without a sigh, still blessed with the tender affection of a beloved brother, I found nothing wanting to my happiness — he was all the world to me — but I have, perhaps, seen him for the last time — Oh my Harriot! do I live to write it? I cannot proceed — my heart is torn with anguish, it bleeds for the misfortunes of my amiable Orlando — yes, my dear Harriot, 'tis still for him I mourn — all his prospects of felicity are now for ever blasted — fate has done its worst, he has mortally wounded the brother of his Caroline — judge then the condition I am in at this distracting moment.

Sitting some days ago at my harpsichord, in order to practise another new song the dear creature had sent me, that I might sing it to him, when next he called — the following letter was brought me.

It pains me more than I can express, to give my tender, my affectionate Isabella, one moments uneasiness — think then, my beloved sister, what I now suffer, while thus obliged to tell her, I fear it may be long e'er I see her again — Oh! that I could find words to soften the sad story, for gladly would I, at the instant I am under the cruel necessity of wounding your feeling heart, also, pour into it, the balm of consolation, but my wishes are vain — know then my Isabella, your brother has wounded — and, alas! 'tis seared mortally — the brother of the woman he adores — need I add more to convince you I am wretched? — before you receive this, I shall be on my way to the continent; I fly, my beloved Isabella, more for your dear sake than my own — the idea of leaving you friendless, I could not stand, I fly, in order to preserve a life, which, for your sake, and for yours only, I think worth my care, had there been any witness to the transaction, on whose honor I could have depended, I should have had little or nothing to apprehend, but there unfortunately was not — Sir John and his friend Henderson, were alone privy to it — a few persons however, gathered round us when the deed was done, and the former then, in dying accents, had the baseness to declare to them, I was the aggressor and his murderer — this horrid, this false accusation Sir James endeavoured to confirm — what then had I to hope? they might have considered that, as there were two to one, the story appeared improbable, but, in the confusion, a scene of this nature naturally occasions this reflection, did not occur, or, father was not attended to, for I offered it in my justification — happily for me, the night was exceedingly dark, and, while they were



employed in conveying him to the nearest surgeon, I made my escape, and, instantly getting into the first carriage I met with, drove home, put up a few things, and accompanied by my faithful Frederick, jumped into a post chaise, and set off for Dover; this I write at the first stage, my beloved Isabella — you shall hear from me again, when safely landed on the other side of the water — keep up your spirits, my dear sister, exert that fortitude, you have on a former melancholy crisis, given such evident proofs you are possessed of — remember, it will be the greatest consolation I can now enjoy, to hear you do not sink under this affliction — God bless and preserve you, my Isabella, and grant we may yet meet again in happier days, prays your ever tenderly attached, and truly,

Affectionate Brother,

ORLANDO ROCHLEY.

Happily for me, the worthy Mrs. Bellmour came with it herself — I had no sooner cast my eyes over the distracting contents, then I fell lifeless on the sofa where I sat — but my grief you will naturally conceive, so need not attempt to describe what I felt at that terrible moment, or, what I still feel — I am unable to write any more at present — alas! why should I, what can I say that will not distress you, as well as myself? — I am dying with impatience, to hear again from my poor Orlando — Mrs. Bellmour informs me this moment, the vile Sir John is still alive, though, there are no hopes of his recovery — wretched as he has made me, I, yet, for my beloved brothers sake, earnestly pray that he may survive it; Oh! Harriot pity me, and join your prayers to those of your

Ever affectionate, but truly unhappy ISABELLA ROCHLEY

## LETTER THE TENTH.

MISS WESTBURY TO LADY BELL SIDNEY.



LONDON.

I Would sooner have acknowledged the favor of your kind, your affectionate letter, my dear Lady Bell, had it been in my power — but what with the dreadful shock I have met with, and the hurry of my journey, it was impossible — I know you will forgive the seeming want of attention, at a time like this — I arrived in town sooner by some hours, than I believed it could have been done, indeed I never quitted the carriage, but drove night and day, such was my impatience to see my poor brother. Alas, I no longer remember his unkindness, his present situation alone engrosses all my care — he still lives, my dear friend, and the surgeons tell me, he may linger for some time; but they give me no farther hopes — he appeared sensible of my attention, in thus hurrying to town? but shocked me beyond expression, by the ungenerous manner in which he mentioned Colonel Rochley — ungenerous I must call it, since no power on earth will ever be able to persuade me he could act in a dishonorable manner — this, my dear Lady Bell, is a point from which I never will recede, in whatever light the rest of the world may look upon the unfortunate affair.

He is my brother 'tis true — but this circumstance alone, shall not tempt me to do injustice to the most amiable, the most worthy of men; though, alas! that man can now be nothing to me, my hopes of happiness are for ever destroyed, whether he is innocent or guilty, but still I will be just — Oh no! — it was not in his nature to take undue advantage of even his greatest enemy — never shall they persuade me of it — who, but the prejudiced can give credit to so cruel an aspersion; nay, were not appearances strongly against (must I say) my unfortunate brother? surely they were — he was accompanied by his friend — Colonel Rochley was alone when they met — this, even they themselves cannot deny — but they add, he was the aggressor, he sought the quarrel, by first insulting Sir John — never will I believe it — no, his regard for me, I am well assured, would have prevented that, I know it perfectly; nay, I am no less certain, he would, on my account, have put up with more from him, than from any man breathing, I know it well — great must have been the provocation, that could tempt him to an action, which he could not but be sensible must put an end to all his hopes of obtaining the hand of your Caroline — so that whatever happens — whether my brother lives, or dies, he is as far as the nature of the shocking case will admit justified in my opinion — Oh! how my heart bleeds for his amiable sister, my dear Lady Bell, what must her distress be at this cruel moment? did I but know where to find her, I would fly to offer every consolation in my power — indeed I would let the illjudging world say what they pleased, my own feelings would acquit me, my heart tells me it would be an act of humanity, and I would trust to its dictates — but I have not the smallest clue to guide me to the lovely mourner. She may by this time possibly have left London — my brother asks for me, I hear, I must bid your Lordship adieu,

Ever yours,

CAROLINE WESTBURY.

## LETTER THE ELEVENTH.

COLONEL ROCHLEY TO ISABELLA.



CALAIS.

DURST I but flatter myself?, this would find my dearest sister tolerably recovered from the shock, I am but too sensible my last letter would give her, half my distress would be at an end — after a few hours sailing, I arrived safely here, and safely I may remain here, till my unfortunate affair can be happily adjusted; let this console you, my beloved Isabella, during my absence, long it will not be, I hope, happen what will; I have friends, and powerful ones too, who will do all they possibly can to serve me; I am, therefore, under no apprehensions for the consequences, your Orlando's honor, has never yet, thank Heaven, been called in question, nor will it now.

I have sent over the real state of the case to my worthy General, I have received many proofs of his friendship and regard, and am certain he will not now withdraw them — the ungenerous account Sir John wished to propagate, be assured, my Isabella will not gain credit, my character is too well known, so is his — I say not this by way of reflection on him, I scorn the thought — I mention it merely as a matter from which you my sister may draw some consolation — he still lives, I find by a letter I received yesterday from a friend — who can say, but he may yet recover? — independent of my own safety it would give me unspeakable satisfaction — believe me I am not one of those who can, however honorably, be the death of a fellow creature, without remorse; I, my dear Isabella, though conscious the fatal deed was done in self-defence, feel it a very serious matter, and trust that circumstance will acquit me in the sight of Heaven, in the opinion of the world, I cannot doubt but it will — let me hear from you immediately, I will give you my address before I seal my letter, let me have the happiness of hearing you have exerted yourself on this occasion, that you bear the trial as becomes one of your excellent understanding; tell me also, whether Mrs. Bellmour is as attentive, as anxious to render your situation agreeable and convenient, as she was when I left you — and tell me truly — I will not knowingly, suffer my Isabella to be treated with disrespect — I think she is incapable of it — I have been thinking, I know not how justly, that it might perhaps save you some trouble, were you to change your name till my return; what I mean is, the friends of Sir John may possibly be indelicate enough, should they by chance find out your place of residence to make some impertinent inquiries about me — this may not — indeed 'tis not very probable it should happen; but I would, to the utmost of my power, guard my beloved sister from even the shadow of an insult, and I should look upon any enquiry they might think proper to trouble you with, in regard to the affair in that light; at any rate, it can have no bad effects, the idea occurred to me, I therefore mention it, though I believe on reflection 'tis quite unnecessary, so do as you please my dear.

You may possibly wonder how I have been able to write so long a letter, without once naming Miss Westbury — no longer you see, dare I indulge myself in calling her my Caroline — that is a felicity I must now resign — yet, she is dear, infinitely dear to me, and must ever be so while I have life — but, though all my fond, my flattering hopes are thus cruelly blasted, I would not willingly forfeit her esteem, I have

therefore presumed (unhappily circumstanced as I am) to write to her, that I might as far as is consistent, with truth and honor, justify myself; I have the vanity to believe she will not readily give credit to any report she may hear, if any such there are that will throw a stain on my character, I think she will do me more justice — even the word of a dying brother, should he dare to persist in his first ungenerous, ungentleman like assertion, will not, I am confident, induce her, to believe I could act dishonourably.

I have frequently regretted my dear Isabella, that with minds so congenial as yours and my beloved Caroline's, you should be strangers to each other — yet, alas! what would it now have availed? — you would only have been more sensible of her worth, and of course, have felt your Orlandos disappointment the more severely — adieu, my sister, my friend, let me soon receive such a letter from you, as you think, will give pleasure to the heart of your tenderly attached,

And affectionate Brother,

ORLANDO ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE TWELFTH

ISABELLA, TO COLONEL ROCHLEY.



LONDON.

YES — I will endeavour to write such a letter as I think will give pleasure to the heart of the most amiable of brothers, is there any effort in my power, I would not exert to the utmost, for this dear purpose? oh no! — I have recovered the sad shock your former letter gave me, indeed I have — I am quite well again — even you my Orlando, who give me credit for so large a share of fortitude, would be amazed to see how well I bear it — are you not pleased with your poor Isabella for this? but I am sure you are — through Mrs. Bellmours means, I hear daily of Sir John, and have at length the inexpressible happiness of informing you he is not only still alive, but the doctors begin to have hopes — faint hopes they are, I believe, but this is something, I shall, with the probability of that wished event, his recovery I mean, be able to bear your absence without repining — for not, for worlds, would I have you return till you can do it with perfect safety, and this cannot be till he is pronounced out of danger, which is yet very far from being the case — at present he has not only his wounds to contend with, but a violent fever, occasioned by them, they say — alas what will they not say, to aggravate the melancholy event? indeed Mrs. Bellmour tells me, should he thus linger for a twelvemonth, and dye at the end of it, the surgeons may pronounce them the cause of his death — is this possible? — yet it may to be sure, bring on a bad state of health, which may — but let me not think of it — I will believe better things.

I rejoice to hear you have wrote to Miss Westbury — or, shall I say your Caroline? yes, I will indulge the dear hope that she may yet be yours — should her brother live, who can prevent it — and is there not now a probability? what would I not have given for this a few days ago — I mistake the charming girls character exceedingly, my dear Orlando, if she can so far mistake yours, as to harbour a thought injurious to your honor — she knows you too well — and I must say she knows her brother too well also, to take his word for — an impossibility.

And now let me do justice to my good friend Mrs. Bellmour, by answering your sweetly kind enquiries — believe me, she is more attentive, more obliging, if possible, every day; I really can never be sufficiently grateful for her tender care of me, when I first heard of the sad affair which has robbed me of your dear society — I will, now I have pretty well got over the shock, confess I thought it would have killed me, so did my truly kind friend, I believe, and, but for such a friend I cannot say what might happened — but I am now as I before assured you, quite well, and you see, in better spirits than my Orlando expected — a-propos — I had almost forgot to answer one part of your dear letter, I mean in regard to changing my name for a while — I cannot see any necessity for it, that is certain — yet, two circumstances have determined me to do it — the first, because the idea took its rise from my ever kind and considerate brothers care of his grateful Isabella, none but a mind delicate, and anxious as yours, could have formed one of that nature — had I no other motive, that alone, would have induced me to adopt the plan; the second is as follows:

The day before yesterday, a person quite a stranger to Mrs. Bellmour, stopped her as she was going out at the door, and she says, in an awkward kind of a manner, asked

the young lady's name, who lodged with her — pray let me first ask you, replied she; what is your reason for desiring to know? — the man not being prepared for this very prudent question I presume, hesitated, and was at a loss how to answer it — but again begged she would tell him — you must excuse me, Sir, said she, I do not think myself authorized to do it without her permission — you are a stranger to me, and of course, to the lady, since you do not even know her name — I have several young people in my house, and consequently cannot be certain which of them you mean, if your business is of a nature necessary for any one of them to be acquainted with, you must contrive to inform her of it in a proper manner — but I am persuaded you are mistaken — indeed I am not, replied he — she left him, but instead of going out as she intended, very prudently returned into the house, in order to warn her family to be on their guard, in case he should make any farther enquiries, or knock at the door — she came up to me to tell me, thinking it might afford me a moments amusement — now, though I have very little reason to fancy he really did mean me — yet, 'tis possible he might; these are my two reasons — which, tho' both trifling, when taken separately, yet, when joined, they amount to something, and so my dearest brother, address your letters for the future, to — to — any Miss you please — not so neither — 'tis necessary to fix on one, though no matter what — Miss Beverly, then let it be.

I shall tell Mrs. Bellmour, and give the latter circumstance only, as my reason for the change — she, I well know, will approve whatever has prudence for its motive, and, as I am situated, one cannot be too cautious, a stranger as I am, and now deprived of my dear protector — adieu, my beloved brother, may Heaven preserve, and soon restore you to your,

Ever affectionate, Friend and Sister,  
ISABELLA ROCHLEY.



## LETTER THE THIRTEENTH.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

REJOICE with me, my dear Harriot, I have had a second letter from my Orlando, he is well, is safe, and writes in as good spirits, as a feeling mind in his unfortunate situation, can be supposed to do — what a brother am I blessed with, how kind, how affectionately attentive to every thing that concerns his poor Isabella, I might name ten thousand instances, but one shall suffice at present, nor need I indeed have mentioned this, since you my Harriot, know him well — but it is in some degree necessary to clear up what is to follow, or what in fact may as well go before.

Know then, that for a while, th at is to say, till his anxiously wished return, you are to address your letters to me, by the name of Beverly. — You are, I presume, amazed; but I am going to explain the matter, he tells me, that while reflecting on my present unprotected state, it occurred to him, that it was possible Sir John's family, should they discover where I was to be found, might be indelicate enough to trouble me with enquiries about him; and, as he kindly wishes to guard me against every possibility of being insulted, he proposed my taking another name during his absence. — Now, though I think there is no probability of this happening, yet as it was an idea that occurred to my Orlando, whose sentiments are more delicate, more refined in regard to what concerns our sex, than any mortal I know — I could not refuse to gratify him, not that he makes a point of it — by no means, on the contrary, he afterwards says, he is persuaded it is unnecessary, adding, do as you please. — I will certainly do it, as it can have no disagreeable consequences, and may save me the trouble, he so kindly apprehends — Miss Beverly, then my dear Harriot, must for some time be your friend and correspondent.

I have the satisfaction to tell you, I hear Sir John, it is thought, may yet get over it — but he is still exceedingly ill, if he does recover, it must be a work of time, he had lived a very irregular life, his constitution by no means a good one, and rendered still worse by every kind of intemperance, yet should he unfortunately die within the twelve month, I am told it may be imputed to that miserable *ren contre* — how dreadful is this, my dear Harriot — how very hard upon my darling brother — but, as I perpetually say, let us hope the best.

And, now for want of a more important subject to fill the rest of my paper, let me tell you, I have lately had a peep at some of the beau monde, whose society you so much wish me to enjoy — a peep I say, for it was no more — Mrs. Bellmour is busily employed at present, in embroidering a trimming for the birth-day — it is for a Lady Benningfield, a young and handsome widow — I never beheld any thing more truly elegant, I often sit by her while she is at work at it, by way of spending an hour agreeably, when tired of my book or music — A day or two ago, I was thus engaged, when the fair widow's carriage drove to the door — I would have retired, but unluckily they were in the passage before I could reach it, the street door being open, a servant having that instant came in, of course I must have met them there — I returned to my seat very easy about the matter — in she swam most affectedly — followed by another Lady and a Beau — a Belle without a Beau, you know my

Harriot, would be as awkward as — as — I leave you my dear to find a simile — the beauty — elegance, and expressive countenance of her fair friend struck me exceedingly; never did I behold so much sweetness, yet a great deal of vivacity in any mortal before, no affectation, no airs — the other made up of both to her very finger ends — now for the Beau, cries my Harriot? — why, I must do him the justice to say, he appears, if I may judge from so slight a knowledge of him as if he deserved a more manly appellation — except my dear Orlando, I never beheld so fine a figure, nor a man so perfectly graceful — mighty fine cries Harriot, upon my word Isabella, you have a pretty knack at description. —

Must I add, Harriot, your poor friend seemed to attract some degree of their notice? in spite of the enchanting, the divine trimming, as her ladyship every moment called it. The young lady gazed upon me in so particular a manner, yet with so much respect and sweetness in her manner, that I really fancied she was endeavouring to recollect me believing she had seen me before — how true this is I know not, but in that light her glances struck me — as for his lordship — for he was a lord, I soon found — he of course could not overlook a female, who has been reckoned something more than tolerable, I caught him peeping — so, alas! did Lady Beningfield, and many a gentle tap on the shoulder she gave him, for not paying quite enough attention to the dear trimming; twenty times did she call him an insensible wretch! and other such phrases peculiar to the bon ton — she too once or twice deigned to cast an eye upon me, but soon changed them to a more pleasing object, by turning to a large mirror, which was placed most commodiously before her — all matters settled — a thousand orders given, they at length took their leave, her ladyship crying,

come creature, why don't you lead me to my carriage,

for the Beau was unfortunately stretching his neck over Mrs. Bellmour's shoulder, to get a last look at your Isabella — no small share of vanity you'll cry — I only relate facts, my dear, and as I am not overwhelmed with the variety of my amusements, chose to make the most of this subject, and so farewell.

I am going to write to my beloved Orlando, and must now bid you adieu, not however, till I have told you, I am ever most truly yours,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE FOURTEENTH.

MISS WESTBURY TO LADY BELL SIDNEY.



LONDON.

THANK heaven! my dear Lady Bell, my brother is rather better, the fever is abated, but he is still in a miserable way, the doctors, however, say he may possibly live; I am willing to believe the best, though, alas! I fear this is not their real sentiments — I must tell your Ladyship an incident which happened a few days ago— 'tis ridiculous I grant, but has nevertheless, made such an impression on me, that I am tempted to doubt my senses — Lady Beningsfield called on me the other morning, and insisted on my going with her to an embroiderers to see a trimming she has ordered for the birth-day. She is no favourite of mine, you know, however, as I had been so long confined to a sick room, I thought a drive for an hour might raise my spirits — Lord Templeton as usual was with her, and is absolutely, if possible, more irresistible than ever — you see I can be just though I have given my heart to another; perhaps had her Ladyship not known of my attachment she might not have asked my company, since she fears every woman who presumes to cast an eye upon him has a design upon his heart, which she is determined to conquer or die in the attempt. — entre nous I am fully convinced he does not care three straws for her; but let her Ladyship make this flattering discovery, 'tis no affair of mine. —

All this is nothing to my story however, and my story is a very absurd one when you get at it — to the embroiderers we went, my dear Lady Bell — and there had my Rochley's name been Beverly, I should not hesitate to swear I saw his beautiful sister, the resemblance struck me so forcibly I could not keep my eyes off the elegant creature, in my life I never beheld two beings so strikingly alike — the same expressive dark eyes, the same lovely mouth, the very dimples that so enchantingly play about it, the teeth — in short, I am very ridiculous — her name as I said above I found on somebody speaking to her is Beverly, and so ends my story — not so hers, or I am much deceived, for be she who, or what she will, I will lay my life his Lordship is fairly caught— 'tis no wonder, that's certain, — he had no sooner cast his eyes upon her, than farewell common sense; not a rational answer could either her Ladyship or I get from him, though many an irrational question did she torment him with, — he looked and sighed, and sighed and looked again — so did her Ladyship I believe, but with very different sensations — she smiled, she ogled, she chid, but could make nothing of him, he was indeed, as she perpetually calls him a stupid wretch, which being interpreted, means neither more nor less in the mouth of a very fine lady, than — you are a divine fellow.

On this unfortunate occasion, however, I fear she meant it literally; and to mend the matter, we were no sooner seated in the carriage, than he cried, what a lovely creature was that we have just seen! — Where, for heavens sake? asked Lady B. (affecting to look out of the window, by way of making us believe she fancied he spoke of somebody in the street) — Where? answered his lordship, — how, my dear Lady Beningsfield, can you ask that question? Surely, you must have observed her at Mrs. Bellmours, — not I, truly, returned she, I observed nothing, lovely there, I give you my word, except my trimming; that is a fib, thought I, and so thought somebody

else. I'll be sworn. Did you too overlook the charming girl, Miss Westbury, said he, turning to me? Surely, you could not as you had no trimming to engage your attention. Indeed, I did not, my lord, nor can I believe her ladyship could do it either, replied I, she is joking, depend upon it; not I truly, cried she, brideling, I see no joke in it, except that some people are very apt to discover beauties where others can find none — the truth is, I suppose you are both joking, for I can hardly imagine such a prodigy as you describe could be there, and I not see her. There was now I recollect it a tall, starched looking thing stuck up there, who gave herself all the airs of a beauty — aye, and all the graces too, Lady Benningfield, cried his lordship. — At this instant, the wheel of the carriage by some unlucky — indeed, I should rather say, lucky means or other, got entangled in that of a coach passing by us. She took this favourable opportunity to be amazingly alarmed, screamed, flung herself into his lordship's arms, and there fainted, as it were — he could do no less, you know, my dear Lady Bell than be alarmed also; the matters were soon adjusted between the honest folks without, but not so within: in vain I held my eau de luce to her nose; in vain my lord said and did all that lord could do. — I cannot say I was under any violent apprehensions, nor he neither I believe; however, as one must get the better of a fright sooner or later, she at length thought proper to open her languid eyes faintly exclaiming, "Where am I?"

I had very near replied as Scrub does in the *Beaux Stratagem*, to the same question on a similar occasion. — Here, my lady, since this was certainly the stratagem of a Belle, — my lord in pity to her weakness forbear to renew the subject we were on before, conscious, I believe, that had more to answer for than the poor wheel. — They soon after sat me down, and what then passed between them I know not; but I fear his lordship's thoughts would be too much engrossed by the charming Miss Beverley, to permit him to play the lover with a good grace — indeed I never believed he wished to be looked upon in that light by Lady B, yet, the world says it is to be a match — that she wishes it is abundantly clear, but I cannot bring myself to fancy he has any such intention. The lady is handsome, no doubt, and rich too — so is he — fortune can be no object to him — but these widows, my dear Lady Bell, are a dangerous set of beings, — there is nothing impossible, she may draw him in perhaps— 'tis certain there has long been a violent flirtation between them, she is artful, and doats upon him to distraction — how it will end heaven knows if Miss Beverly has, as I verily think she has, made a serious impression on him; he cannot do a wiser thing than to make the most of the fracas above mentioned, 'tis a fine foundation for a quarrel, he has only to persist in doing justice to that lovely girl, and the business is done.

I would give the world to know who she is, and how she came there, for she appeared to be at home, yet, 'tis utterly impossible she can belong to Mrs. Bellmour, — impossible, — her air, her manner, in short, her whole appearance forbids an idea of that nature. — Adieu, 'tis ridiculous to think any more about it.

Yours, ever,

C. WESTBURY.

## LETTER THE FIFTEENTH.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

WOULD you believe it Harriot? — yet, after all, why not? Did I not formerly tell you my days of conquest were yet to come? — Lord Templeton has actually been to call upon Mrs. Bellmour, by way of ordering a waistcoat, &c. &c. — but in fact, as she tells the story, to make a thousand enquiries about your friend Isabella, — and pray, said I, a good deal startled, you may well believe, (fearing he had looked upon me in a light it hurts my pride — my delicacy, to think of) — what answer did you, my dear Mrs. Bellmour make to his impertinent questions? — Had his lordship replied she made any that merited that term, be assured my dear Miss Rochley you should never have been shocked by the knowledge of them from me. — I beg your pardon, my good friend, said I; I ought, indeed, to have done you more justice than to believe you would have mentioned a subject you thought could give me offence; but those sort of gay men are but too apt to take liberties with our sex, especially if friendless and unprotected as I am, 'tis too true, replied she, but his lordship, I believe, though young, and a man of fashion, as 'tis called, has fewer of the fashionable vices than most of his sex, — I know his character well, 'tis a most amiable one, I never indeed saw him till the morning he first came here with Lady Beningsfield; but much I have heard in his praise I do assure you.

I own I was a good deal surprized at the manner in which he spoke of you, as I have heard he is paying his addresses to Lady B; this circumstance made me more reserved in my answers than perhaps I should otherwise have been — Ah! you could not be too much so, my dear Madam, cried I, piqued at what she mentioned — for however polite, however specious his behaviour, all the enquiries he could make, that being the case, must be looked upon as very impertinent — I am hurt — exceedingly hurt by them I confess, and must intreat you to answer no more of them — hear me patiently, said my worthy friend, pray do not condemn, either his lordship or me, till you have heard all that passed — again I begged her pardon, and promised to be attentive — he spoke in raptures, continued she, yet with the highest respect, begged I would tell him who you were, of what family, and a thousand things of that nature — to this, I replied, your name was Beverly — that you was a young lady of fashion and family — particular business had brought you to town, and as I had had the charge of your education, you had done me the honor to prefer my house to any other, being a stranger in London —

And now my lord, continued I, permit me in my turn to ask your reasons, for wishing to know those circumstances? Miss Beverly is at present under my care, she is extremely dear to me, and I am of course deeply interested in all that concerns her — I honor you for it, replied he, you have certainly a right to question me in your turn — I can only say, my motives are such, as even the charming Miss Beverly could not justly condemn; I was struck with the uncommon elegance of her person, her graceful manner — I will be very candid my lord, said I, finding he now made a pause — in talking of my accomplished friend, your lordship uses the language of a lover — pardon me, if I take the liberty of observing this is a language; I do not think you can

use with propriety on this occasion — I am not to learn, my lord, that the world talks loudly, that you are paying your addresses to — Lady Benningfield — no man so circumstanced should — I will be candid, also, cried he, interrupting me — the world is very much deceived, if that is its opinion; be assured, had that been the case, I would have spared you the trouble I have now given you — of this I give you my honor — so saying, my dear Miss Rochley, he took his leave — and I hope you will now acquit me of having been guilty of any impropriety.

Indeed I do, replied I; I ought to have known you were incapable of it, my dear Mrs. Bellmour; yet you cannot, I think, wonder that a circumstance of this kind should surprise me, nor after all, can I conceive what his lordship means, I wish it may not be something relating to my dearest brother — but that is absurd — I forget he believes my name Beverly — she smiled at my speech; saying,

indeed Miss Rochley, were you not more void of vanity than thousands are, who have smaller pretensions to it, you could not, I think, be at a loss to guess

— he was as he says, and I will take upon me to affirm, he says truth, struck with your beauty — nothing could be more natural — he has not the character of a libertine — he has a very large fortune — is his own master — the enquiries he has made, are a convincing proof to me, that the wound you have made in his heart is not a slight one — whether it will heal without his, applying to you for a cure, I cannot say, though I rather doubt it — O! no fear of its proving mortal, replied I, men are not so vulnerable in these days, as they were formerly; the arrow must be tipped with gold, that now hopes to kill. — Could you my good friend have added with truth, when kindly giving him the catalogue of my virtues, that I was also possessed of considerable fortune; I have the vanity to think, he might have been seriously wounded; but as it is, be under no apprehensions, depend upon it, his lordship will recover — besides, what's to be done with his present flame, Lady Benningfield? — nay, cried she, he gave me his honor, the world was wholly mistaken in regard to that matter — that she is violently in love with him I know, from pretty good authority, indeed 'tis one of those secrets known by the whole town; but I firmly believe he has no more thoughts of marrying her Ladyship, than he has of doing me that honor — well said I, be that as it will, I am no less certain he will not marry me, and so let the matter rest — all I intreat, is my dear Mrs. Bellmour, in case he should take it in his head to mention me again, that you will be cautious; you know I am particularly circumstanced at present. I wish to avoid making any new acquaintance, till my brother's return — and especially under a feigned name.

Thus Harriot have I laid this important business fully before you — happy was it, I gave you my opinion of him in my last letter — were it still to do, you might fancy the picture a little flattered, in return for the portion he has bestowed upon me — adieu, my dear, let me hear from you soon, do not give me cause to think you more negligent than formerly,

Your's, ever,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.



## LETTER THE SIXTEENTH.

MISS LENOX, TO MISS ROCHLEY.



NORTHAMPTON.

WOULD you believe it, cries my dear Isabella? this lord has actually been making a thousand impertinent enquiries about me — no to be sure — who could be simple enough to credit so great an improbability — the story wont go down with me child.

Isabella, I am more than half out of my wits with joy — my father knows your adorer well — I will not tell you what he says of him, lest you should be out of your wits too, in case he makes no more inquiries — why, my dear creature, he is of all men upon the face of the earth, the very being formed to make a woman, too happy in all conscience — I die to hear more of him, from you I mean — I can neither eat, drink, nor sleep, since I heard of his impertinence.

Mrs. Bellmour behaved like an angel in the affair — don't be silly Isabella — don't play the fool — there's a medium in all things, one may be over prudish — be assured his lordship is a man of real honor, were I not certain of it, I would blot out the last sentence — Lady Beningfield will poison you, beyond a doubt, but that's a trifle — she is the greatest flirt breathing — and has made herself tolerably ridiculous about him already; but take my word for it he will never make himself so by marrying her — I could treat you with a bit of scandal, my dear, concerning her ladyship; but it would be thrown away upon you, as I know you have no taste for it.

Pray how is that miserable wretch Sir John, is he determined to make a die of it, out of mere spite to your brother? I believe, in my conscience, he will at least make the utmost of the disaster; though, he may perhaps hesitate a little about carrying the joke quite so far as death — do let me hear how things go on; but above all, tell me, if my lord has had the temmerity to be again impertinent — adieu — I am going a journey of five miles for a dinner; don't you think I shall have a good appetite? that is one of the many delights of a country life, — the carriage is at the door, so fare ye well my Isabella,

Yours,

HARRIOT LENOX.

## LETTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

IS it possible — and does your worthy father really know Lord Templeton, and is he indeed such a prodigy? — I will not be over prudish, Harriot, and say — what is all that to me? — no, I will not; for the truth is, I am exceedingly glad to hear it in case of accidents — but before I bestow another line upon him, let me tell you, I have heard from my dear Orlando twice, since I wrote last to you — do not, my dear Harriot, now look stately, and say,

I might have heard ten times instead of twice:

— forgive my too long silence — I own my fault, and promise amendment — he is, thank Heaven! in perfect health and good spirits; his friend, the General, has promised to represent the affair in its true colours, and is of opinion, he has nothing to apprehend, should the worst happen, yet advises him to stay abroad a while, as the safest plan.

I am sorry to tell you, Sir John has had a return of his fever, and is again thought in danger — he was so well a few days ago, that I hear they talked of getting him conveyed, by easy journies to the country; but all thoughts of that sort are over for the present — Heaven forbid he should make a die of it, as you call it — most unfeignedly would his death be lamented, my dear Harriot! — not altogether on his own account indeed; but the consequences would be fatal to my dear brothers hopes — however, I would gladly flatter myself, as he has lived so long after the unfortunate rencontre, he may still get over it.

And now for another line or two about this same lord, my dear — what he means, Heaven only knows; but certain it is, he has repeatedly called on Mrs. Bellmour, imploring her to contrive some way or other for him to see me again — this she said, was a favour, she could on no account 'twas a liberty she had no right to take with Miss Beverley, she was intitled to more respect — would she then indulge him so far, as acquaint him candidly with every particular of the charming girl's situation? — no, certainly — was again her answer, she had no authority to do it; though, of this be assured, added the worthy woman, the more your lordship knows of Miss Beverly's character, the more reason you will have to esteem her, since I can from a thorough knowledge of her, with truth, declare that beauty, which seems to have made so deep an impression on your lordship, is her least perfection; I have known her from a child my lord — I had the charge of her education, as I believe, I had the honor of telling you before — she is descended from one of the most respectable families in the kingdom — at least, few can boast of a better — but will you, my dear Mrs. Bellmour, said he, only inform me why the lovely creature lives thus retired? I can meet with no mortal who is acquainted with her, though I have made every possible enquiry for that purpose, in hopes I might by that means procure the honor of being properly introduced to her, but all in vain — this astonishes me, — I will freely own to you Mrs. Bellmour, she has made a very serious impression on me, my heart subscribes to all you have said in her praise, I have not a doubt of her worth — are you not cruel then my dear Madam, thus to deny me an opportunity to be still farther

convinced you do her no more than justice? — indeed my lord, could I gratify your wishes with propriety, I would — I have too good an opinion of you, to believe your intentions are dishonourable, I will not shock my own feelings so much, as to suppose you would take this liberty with me if they were — I can only add, your lordship must have patience, I trust the time is not far distant, when Miss Beverly will have a lation with her, to whom your lordship may, without impropriety, apply for an introduction — till then, I am persuaded, she will on no account see any stranger — a relation? — yes, my lord, a near one — and one justly dear to her, should he have no objections to your lordship's being introduced to Miss Beverly; I think I may venture to say — she will have none, as he is well worthy that deference she ever pays to his judgment.

You alarm me, Mrs. Bellmour — is this so highly favoured relation a young man? perhaps — she smiling, replied;

he is a young man my lord; but you need not be so much alarmed, as your expressive, perhaps, implies you are:

— he now begged she would tell him his name, where he was — why absent — when I expected his return? — and in short a thousand silly questions of that nature: but to no purpose.

I had charged her to be cautious, you know, and she was most prudently so — provokingly so he seemed to think — and now my dear Harriot, let me know your thoughts on the matter also — as for mine, I have not yet been able to bring them into any sort of order; certain it is, I find his lordship has some times a share in them; but in so confused a manner, that I can give no account of it— 'tis possible, I may be able to arrange them more methodically by and by — one sight of him is not quite sufficient for that purpose — were it consistent with propriety, I should have no violent objections to take a second view, particularly after reading the character you give of him; but it certainly is not, so I must, as Mrs. Bellmour, very wisely advised his lordship to do; wait till my Orlando's return, they may then adjust all the necessary preleminaries, in case the wonderful impression my charms have made upon him, should not, before that time, be worn out, to make room for some other — Lady Beningsfield, you say, will undoubtedly treat me with a cup of poison, should I rob her of his heart — I vow, I never saw a woman, who appears more capable of it, but that's a trifle, as you say — and so, my dear Harriot, adieu,

Believe me, Ever yours,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

MISS WESTBURY, TO LADY BELL SYDNEY.



I HOPED TO have left town before now, my brother was so much better, that the doctors thought he might be removed without danger, and wished it, as change of air would have been of service to him — but his fever is returned with violence — Heaven knows what may be the consequence of this relapse.

What a miserable time have I had of it my dear Lady Bell — and what but a continuation of misery have I to expect, should he not recover? — alas! 'tis not the loss of him alone I shall have to deplore — my amiable Rochley too must be the object of my sorrow, for in that wretched case he never can be mine — but let me drop the melancholy subject, it sinks my spirits — why should I also sink yours.

You may possibly recollect my telling you, how violently Lord Templeton was struck with the charms of the elegant creature we saw some time ago at Mrs. Bellmours — I was convinced her charms had made a very deep impression — I however thought no more of it, till calling one day last week to enquire for my brother, I saw him — and by way of a little chat, asked, if he had been so fortunate as to get another sight of the lovely Miss Beverley? — I have not, yet I confess to you Miss Westbury, but I would give half my estate, could I obtain that happiness — are you serious my lord? (cried I, quite astonished to find him so very far gone) — upon my honor I am, replied he with fervor — I never beheld a creature so formed to captivate, she has absolutely robbed me of my peace — of your heart that is to say, I presume my lord — why in fact I believe the terms on this occasion are synonymous — yet 'tis not according to my ideas of love — I never till now could persuade myself, that passion could be excited by beauty alone, and except that she is beautiful as an angel, I know little more of her — but how comes that my lord, surely you might before now have contrived to learn, whether her mind is as lovely as her person? for my own part, I confess I have not a doubt of it, for never did I see a countenance so expressive of every thing that is amiable.

You are mistaken my dear Miss Westbury — it has been my principal employment from that time to this, but without success — the only intelligence I can gather concerning the charming girl, is from the person of the house where she resides — she indeed talks of her in terms of the highest respect, says she had the charge of her education, has known her from a child, that she is of a good family — but I am as great a stranger to her, as to her lovely friend, all this may be true — nay my heart assures me of it — yet still there is something mysterious — why this retired life? in so young a person it is wonderful, and creates a doubt, which I would give world's to have explained, and to be introduced to her — this Mrs. Bellmour could certainly do my lord.

Oh, no! this I asked, but was refused— 'twas a liberty she could not presume to take, Miss Beverly made a point of seeing no strangers —

It is very odd, said I; yet, certainly, all this my lord is greatly in the the charming girl's favour — no doubt of it; she has, it seems, a relation, who is at present absent, and till his return has reasons for this reserve — a relation, my lord — is it a father, uncle, brother? good Heavens! — yet it cannot be — her name is Beverly — who is

this relation, where is he? — none of these particulars could I learn, answered his lordship, except that he is a young man, and this information I got by mere chance — but why my dear Miss Westbury that exclamation, what if her name was not Beverly? — O! my lord, were it not, I could lay my life she is sister to my friend Colonel Rochley — never did I in any two creatures behold so striking a resemblance — I could not refrain from scrutinizing her any more than your lordship; added I, smiling, though not merely on account of her uncommon beauty, but the astonishing likeness I found between them — Ah! would to Heaven, replied he, your conjecture was true, all my anxiety about what now appears so perplexing, would instantly vanish my only business, then would be to endeavour to gain her affections, could I but do that, I should think myself the happiest of men — fortune is no object to me, to raise an amiable, a deserving woman, to that rank she is so formed by nature, to adorn, would be the sublimest of all gratifications — but it cannot be — my cruel, my lovely enslavers name is Beverly — and I am, really, my dear Miss Westbury, at this moment in a most painful suspense.

But pray my lord, said I, give me leave to ask what lady Benningfield says to this new passion? — she at least would persuade the world, she is sole mistress of your heart — upon my honor, replied he, if she is, 'tis more than I know; for I can with strict truth declare, I never had an idea of putting it into her ladyship's possession; nay, I am no less certain it was in my own, till I beheld the lovely Miss Beverly, from that hour I confess 'tis rather a doubt with me, whether 'tis still in mine or not — if your lordship was to ask my opinion of the matter, I should pronounce all doubt out of the question — I believe you are right, madam; yet I own, I am unwilling to believe my case, quite so desperate, till better acquainted with the object of its attachment, and how to manage that, I cannot for my soul contrive — I am sorry for it, I do assure you my lord, for both your sakes. As I own myself so exceedingly prejudiced in her favour, that I think she must be worthy, even of your lordship's esteem, and that is saying a great deal — he gracefully bowed in return for my compliment, and bid me good morning — and now my dear lady Bell, I must wish you good night, I have sat scribbling here till my fingers are cramped.

Adieu, yours,

CAROLINE WESTBURY.

## LETTER THE NINETEENTH.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

MRS. Bellmour came up to me this morning my dear Harriot to ask me a question, which she was polite enough to say I should absolutely decide as I thought proper — it seems, a person to whom she is under some obligations had just sent to her (knowing her house was spacious and genteel) to ask whether she could conveniently accommodate a gentleman with an apartment in it for a month or six weeks, perhaps it might not be so long, as he was only come to town on business which might possibly be settled in a shorter time; he wished to be near this family, who live it seems in the next street, is a man of fortune, and not young.

How could I, you know my dear Harriot, make any objections, supposing it had really been disagreeable to me, particularly as she was so good as to put it upon that footing? — none in the world, said I, my dear Mrs. Bellmour, I can have none; had it been a gay young man indeed — but in that case I well know that you yourself would have been the first to object, — most certainly, replied she, independently my dear Madam of your being in my house; — and pray, when is he to come? — this very evening; he only waits for my answer, which I could not think of sending till I had mentioned it first to you. — Be assured, replied I, I am exceedingly sensible of your very polite attention to me on this as well as every other occasion — on this she left me in order to send an immediate affirmative to her friend; so much for that business.

Now, Harriot, you must know as Lord Templeton and I are not likely to be farther acquainted, though to say truth, he has done his utmost endeavours towards it, I have some thoughts of setting my cap at this old neighbour of mine that is to be, he is it seems a man of fortune, and should I find it equal to my ambition, I will give him credit for all other perfections. Are you not surprised, my dear, to find me in so flippant a humour? I have good reason — the vile Sir John is once more pronounced out of danger. — I may now you know venture to abuse him a little, though while I believed the wretch dying, I hope you observed I spared those flattering epithets; he is going to Bristol by the advice of his physicians — most heartily do I wish him a speedy recovery, but speedy or not, my beloved Orlando may now return when he chuses.

I have just dispatched this important intelligence to the dear creature, and trust it will not now be long e'er I shall have the supreme happiness to tell you that he is safely landed in England, — you no longer wonder at my spirits I presume — I am half, nay more than half out of my wits with joy, and am determined he shall find me married to this rich old soul on his arrival: it will be such an agreeable surprise you know, Harriot — to be sure we shall rather be hurried in the article of courtship, but as my consent is ready 'tis the less matter, we may make love after we are fettered, since we have not time for it before, that will be something new, quite out of the common stile. — Poor Lord Templeton, 'tis really a pity, but there's no help for it, by the by he does not seem to have given up all hopes — perhaps, indeed, he has contracted a habit of calling here in his round of visits, for scarce a day passes without his asking Mrs. Bellmour how she does, and she says, how I do also? — The truth is,



he made her very considerable offers, on condition she would contrive to let him meet me in her company — bnt she is not the kind of woman for that purpose, unless convinced beyond a doubt his designs were honourable.

She has no idea of my submitting to be looked at with a view to see whether he may happen to approve of me — this, however, was my way of expressing the matter, — marriage, and another pleasant circumstance they say, Harriot, goes by destiny — so if it is to be decreed we are to be united in the holy band of matrimony, the thing will of course come to pass without our troubling our heads about it; would his Lordship but adopt this doctrine, it would save his horses a considerable deal of labour. Lady Beningsfield also calls here frequently, though her divine trimming has been finished some time; but she is an excellent customer to Mrs. Bellmour, yet, the latter suspects jealousy brings her ladyship as often as business, for she perpetually asks a thousand ridiculous questions about me, evidently wishing to find out whether his lordship has ever seen me again? To this you know Mrs. B. has it in her power to give a satisfactory answer in the negative, which of course she does, — happily she does not enquire whether he has made any attempts of that nature, taking it for granted I suppose if he had, I should have been too much flattered by so great a distinction to have let him sigh in vain for an interview. — Silly creature, she knows but little of your friend if this is her opinion, — Adieu, my dear Harriot, let me have your congratulations on the good news I send you, and believe me as usual most affectionately,

Yours,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY

## LETTER THE TWENTIETH.

MISS WESTBURY TO LADY BELL SIDNEY.



LONDON.

THANK heaven! I begin to breath again my dear Lady Bell, for upon my honor 'tis more than I can say I have done freely for some time, so great has been my anxiety and most painful suspense: my brother is at length pronounced out of danger, yet so weak and low that 'tis judged necessary he should drink the Bristol waters; we therefore propose setting off for that place next Tuesday; I shall accompany him as I think duty demands it of me, — though I am very sorry to say, I have already discovered his sentiments on a certain subject, continue as inveterate as ever, he has in spite of the unremitted; and let me say, the kind attention I have shewn him during his confinement, had the cruelty to express the most rooted aversion to the man, on whom he knows my happiness depends.

This horrid, this unjust prejudice, is really unpardonable, and puts it out of my power to feel for his sufferings as I otherwise should; — however, 'tis some consolation to reflect that he cannot prevent my felicity, though he has so long retarded it, and 'tis certainly very disagreeable to hear the most deserving, the most amiable of men thus abused, for so I may with too much reason term the language, he makes use of when talking of him. I am exceedingly hurt at this moment, as you will easily guess when informed of the cause.

I was sitting by him not an hour since when my woman brought me your letter — he fixed his eyes upon me while I read it, and observing the pleasure it seemed to give me, cried, though so weak he could scarcely raise his voice without pain, — Caroline, tell me truly, is that letter from that d — n'd fellow, Rochley? By Heavens! if I thought you dreamt of having any further connection with such a beggarly — . Stop, Sir John, said I, shocked beyond endurance at his expressions, I will not patiently hear a person, I blush not to confess I have the highest esteem for thus vilified. — Ask your, heart, Sir, whether he ever gave you just cause to? — Cause, replied he, see the condition to which I am reduced, Madam, and then ask your own-heart the question. — Ah, Sir John, Sir John! Does yours then acquit you? fie brother! — Do not give me reason to blush for the sentiments of one whom I wish to respect — you are, you must be conscious you have only yourself to blame for the situation you have been reduced to, was he to sacrifice his life in order to spare that of a person he well knew wished to rob him of it in the basest and most atrocious manner? — that of his greatest, nay, let me say, his only enemy. — I hoped, Sir John, your reflections, while languishing on a bed of sickness, while every moment the sear of death was before your eyes, would have taught you to see the nature of your sentiments in a proper light. I am sorry they have not produced so desirable an effect.

Is that letter from him I say? I want none of your ridiculous sermons, — pardon me if I do not think myself bound to answer any question asked in so rude, so unbrotherly a manner, — yet that I may set you an example of that behaviour you have too long been a stranger to. — I will condescend to tell you it is not — thank you sister for your kindness, only add to it by swearing you never will receive any from him, and

you shall find I not only can, but will profit by it. — Excuse me, Sir, however, I may wish your reformation, I cannot possibly pay so great a price for it.

I now left him to cool at his leisure, and took up my pen as the likeliest means to cool myself,, for I confess I was too much warmed by the curious dialogue, I am determined if possible not to come to open war with him; I wish not to change my place of abode to leave him I mean, If I can any way avoid it; my late father's house is certainly the most eligible place I can inhabit while single, — had he been still spared to me, I should not have been subjected to the tyranny of this tormenting ill-tempered brother, his reign is, thank heaven! pretty nearly expired, that reflection enaables me to bear it with tolerable fortitude, and the moment it is, he may depend upon it I shall put myself under the protection of a more amiable lord and master — that is a point determinately fixed.

I am not quite clear whether I shall make any long stay with him at Bristol, I certainly shall not if I find he is likely to receive benefit from it, having seen him commodioufly settled there, shall return home, where I impatiently long to be, that I may put my thoughts into some kind of train, for they have really for some weeks past been in a state of confusion — adieu, my dear Lady Bell.

I will let you know where to direct to me next,

Your affectionate friend,

CAROLINE WESTBURY.

## LETTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

MY Orlando has been ill, my dear Harriot, yes he has been ill, and his Isabella at a cruel distance from him, he tells me he is nearly recovered; but dare I flatter myself he does not deceive me now, as he has kindly done all the time he has been confined? — kindly the dear creatures intentions were, I well know; and yet I can hardly forgive the well meant despection, since I now reproach myself for having been so chearful, while he was perhaps in danger — he tells me he would still have kept me a stranger to it, could he have contrived any other reason to give me for his not returning immediately to England; but assures me, though not yet able to bear the fatigue of the journey, he is out of all possible danger, it seems he caught a fever from a gentleman, who lodged in the same house with him, who is now, however, perfectly well.

This person is a most agreeable young man, who is going on a tour to the South of France, and has almost tempted my brother to accompany him, if he should be prevailed upon, it will detain him from me about two months longer, and I rather think by what he says, he will comply, for I find he has got a farther leave of his absence from his worthy general, who recommends the plan, as it will not only serve to re-establish his health; but also give him an opportunity of seeing that part of the world, which is well worth his notice — all this convinces me the thing is resolved on, yet I am persuaded, were I to express a wish for his return, he would indulge me; but for this very reason, I have pressed the contrary, indeed I am of the general's opinion, and were I not, I love him too well, not to prefer his satisfaction to my own at any time.

Sir John, I hear, left London last week, and is in a fair way of recovery — that circumstance is so important, that I should have been the happiest creature in the world, had I not now a thousand apprehensions on my Orlando's account; however, if his next letter informs me he is actually set out on his tour, I shall be tolerably easy, as that will be a proof that he is better — for that letter, you may well believe I am impatient, beyond expression — and now a word or two of my new neighbour.

You'll please to recollect 'tis near a fortnight since he came here; I mention this, lest you should wonder to find he has contrived to be introduced to me, though Lord Templeton could not. — see what it is for a man to be passed the age of gallantry, they have many advantages — yet 'tis possible, those who are not, may not envy them.

It seems Mr. Douglas, for that is my new friends name, had heard me warbling to my harpsichord — of course asked Mrs. Bellmour who it was, to whom he was indebted for being so highly entertained, as he politely termed it — to him she thought no reserve necessary, but freely acquainted him with my situation — honestly owning to me, she thought a man of his age, a single man too, and immensely rich, might be a desirable friend, this it seems was her kind motive for so fully gratifying his curiosity — she wished to tell him my real name too, as he might possibly have known some of my family, but would not presume to do it without my permission.

I thanked her for her attention, saying she had acted with her usual propriety; that as to my name, it was of little consequence, since I had taken that of Beverly, I would even continue it till my brother's return.

Mrs. Bellmour, it seems, said so many fine things in my praise, that the old gentlemen expressed a violent desire to see me, that he might himself judge whether I deserved them — in short, she begged me to honor her with my company at tea, a few days after his arrival, and there I met him, not by surprise, I should tell you, for she had asked permission for that also — if he was charmed with me, I do assure you I was no less so with him — how so delightful a man could so long continue a batchelor, Heaven knows! — crossed in love, I suppose, Harriot — not that he is so very, very old, neither: I mention this, lest if we should make a match of it, and you should fancy him as old as the hills — he has seen a great deal of the world, has a fine understanding, great memory, and of course is a most entertaining companion; but music is his passion — not love — he is a great proficient on several instruments, his taste is excellent, and I am not without hopes, mine will be much improved under his instruction, for we are already come to that my dear — I have given him permission to pass an hour with me at any time, when not better engaged, which he as in duty bound, politely says can never happen, I now regret he is to make so short a stay in London — perhaps it may not be quite so short as Mrs. Bellmour fancies, I really shall be sorry when he leaves us, as he makes my time pass more pleasantly than it did before.

Mrs. Bellmour, who I believe is sincerely attached to me, has often regreted that lord Templeton had not an opportunity of being introduced to me, as he bears so excellent a character, and as she is certain I could not fail to be partial to him on a farther acquaintance, she wants to ask Mr. Douglas whether he knows him — I bid her have patience, time is a worker of miracles — his lordship is certainly uncommonly handsome I tell her; but it by no means follows, I should prefer him to all others, merely on that account, this she allows; but adds, he is universally reckoned the most amiable, and accomplished man in England, and is certain we are formed for each other — if so, I reply, we shall certainly manage the business without interference.

I find Harriot, his lordship has contrived to gain her good graces most completely, and I believe she now wishes I would be a little less — I will not say prudent — but in short, less reserved — she must, however excuse me, I cannot prevail upon myself to stoop to conquer, a proper pride, my dear, is necessary, to man and woman too.

I am now going to sing my old friend a song, who is this moment enquiring for me,  
Adieu, yours.

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

SAME TO THE SAME.



LONDON.

THE plot begins to thicken, as somebody says, Harriot — Lord Templeton, has actually, by some means got acquainted with my worthy friend Mr. Douglas— 'tis absolutely a fact my dear: here follows what passed between us this morning on the subject.

I had been playing a lesson to Mr. Douglas on the harpsichord, and afterwards, at his desire sung — in love to pine and languish, yet know my passion vain, &c.

I had no sooner finished, then he smiling, cried, and can you my dear young lady give so much sweet expression to those lines; yet be the cruel, the hard hearted creature I am told you are? — Harriot, I thought I should have expired with confusion — I expected the next moment to see him pop down on his knees at my feet — what else could I think after this speech, but a passionate declaration of love? — I now wished the instrument at Jerusalem, that had been the means of bringing me into such a scrape — he saw my embarrassment, and I have not a doubt, guessed my thoughts.

Pray said I, at last, who is the enemy, who gives me a character, I flatter myself, I so little deserve? — and have you then no idea, who it can be, replied he? is your conscience, my dear Miss Beverly quite at ease? yes, upon my word it is returned, I (gasping for breath) — and your heart too? both I assure you — why then, (cried he, affecting to look wondrous grave) poor Lord Templeton may as well put an end to his torments, by tucking himself up on the first friendly willow he can meet with.

Lord Templeton! exclaimed I with amazement, good Heavens! Mr. Douglas, what can you mean? — Oh, ho! cried he, I have found you out, my lovely young friend, have I? I thought I should bring you in guilty before I had done — upon my honor, (looking exceedingly silly I believe) I never saw his lordship but once in my life, he is absolutely a stranger to me.

I know it Miss Beverly, I know it, and that is the very identical cause of those torments I was talking of, and of which he so much complains — he too saw you once, and strange to tell has been blind, absolutely blind to the charms of every other woman, from that moment.

But how, in the name of fortune came you sir to know all this, supposing it true, which I have not the vanity to think credible? — why, you must know, madam, this same unfortunate lord, finding, I suppose, by some curious means or other, that I was so happy as to be an inmate under the same roof with you, has lately taken it into his head to be particularly charmed with the coffee-house I use, the next whim that struck his lordship, was to be no less charmed with me — that you know was the most natural thing in life, as he could not but discover I was the best companion imaginable, by my very looks; well, we all at once grew wonderfully intimate, I cannot say I am conscious of making any violent advances in order to obtain this honor; 'tis not my way, since a lord to me is pretty much upon a par with a commoner, if I find their understandings upon a par also — I own I have some oddities about me Miss Beverly, and that is one of them.

Some days after this friendship was struck up between us, which to be sure tickled my vanity not a little — he begun to let it down gradually, by convincing me I was not the only object of his attachment, for he asked if I had ever been so fortunate as to see Miss Beverly, who lived at Mrs. Bellmour's?

Oh! ho! thought I — I now begin to see the foundation on which our great friendship is built, and a very pretty foundation it is — seen her my lord, yes, and heard her too, and what is more, have the vanity to imagine she does not behold me with indifference — not behold you with indifference, (Sir, cried his lordship, in the finest agitation you can conceive) — and pray, my lord interrupting him, is that so very extraordinary, am I then so gusting an object? if so, came your lordship to be so taken with me? continued I, (with an expressive smile) — he now seemed at a loss to know whether I was in jest or earnest, which was exactly my intention.

Have you then, really — Sir, cried he, at last, any serious thoughts of Miss Beverly? — many very serious ones I give you my honor — and she does not behold you with indifference? — I have reason to think she does not — then I am the most wretched of men! exclaimed his lordship. — Hey day! why, pray my lord, what has Miss Beverly's honoring me with her esteem to do with your happiness or misery? — Mr. Douglas, said he, I adore her! — very well my lord, I think you cannot give a greater proof of your judgment, but this by no means explains to me why you are therefore to pronounce yourself the most wretched of men — Ah, Sir have you not confessed to me, the lovely creature does not behold you with indifference? — why what an unconscionable being, you acknowledge yourself, my lord granting you do adore her — nay granting she too adored you, is to look with an eye of indifference on every other mortal? I esteem her greatly, and know her to be highly accomplished, to possess an uncommonly fine understanding; all this from personal knowledge, I can justify — more in her favour, were it necessary, I have heard from one, who is still better acquainted with her: I have conceived a very sincere regard for her, and I will add, my lord, were I twenty years younger, I should be tempted to adore her too, would you not, after this, reckon her an ungrateful gypsey, were she to behold me with indifference?

Ah! my dear Sir! my dear Mr. Douglas! (taking my hand — yours Miss Beverly, not being within his reach) — can you forgive my petulance! — I confess you alarmed me — greatly alarmed me — I feared — I was a rival, said I, interrupting him — I thank you for the compliment, my lord, 'tis a very flattering one; but suppose I had been weak enough to entertain views of that nature, I do not think it need have thrown your lordship into despair, Miss Beverly has taste and discernment — he bowed — and now added I, suppose we begin to understand each other; you say, you love this amiable girl to adoration, if I mistake not, and I have a very great friendship and esteem for her — thus stands the case, what comes next — shall I be sincere? cried he — O! by all means my lord — then I will freely confess, I hoped it might be possible through your kind interposition, for me to be introduced to her; I know you to be a man of honor, and trust the world does me the justice to think me so — I have made every possible attempt to obtain that happiness; but hitherto every effort has been ineffectual.

Miss Beverly, (for proper reasons, I make not a doubt) lives retired, I have not, till I had the good fortune to meet with you, been able to find any person of her acquaintance. — Mrs. Bellmour has been deaf to all my solicitations, and miserable as it has made me, I esteem her the more for it; now my dear Sir, if you on a farther knowledge of my character, can procure me this honor, I shall look upon it as the



greatest obligation you can possibly confer — my happiness, my peace of mind depend upon your indulging me in my request.

Now Miss Beverly, said Mr. Douglas, I have done — thus much, this insinuating friend of mine prevailed upon me to promise, I complied with less reluctance; because I have, to tell you the truth, conceived a very good opinion of him, though that alone would not have sufficed; one may be deceived by appearances, but I have made it my particular business to know his character from others, and find it all I could wish.

What can I say Sir? replied I, his Lordship certainly does me a great deal of honor, but situated as I am at present, I cannot according to my ideas of rectitude think of receiving his visits — I cannot indeed, — you have my permission, Sir, to tell him I think myself honored by his attention; but till my brother's return must decline seeing him.

Nay, nay, if you go on at that rate I shall be in love with you myself, and there will be an end of his lordship's hopes at once. — What? — you pretend to tell me you have not sixpence in the world, yet, scruple to break through the forms of decorum, at the hazard of losing the affection of a man, who is dying to make you mistress of such a fortune as might amply gratify the ambition of any woman in England. Look'e Miss Beverly, do not thus tempt an old fellow to play the fool. — I tell you I am determined to withstand all your allurements, I will not fall in love with you, that's positive, so you may as well give up all hopes of it.

Is he not a delightful old man, Harriot? I vow I could find in my heart to be sorry for the resolution he with so much humor says he has formed, — I am to tell him then continued he, you will nor permit me to introduce him? — if you will do me that favour, my dear Sir, I shall think myself infinitely obliged to you— 'tis more than his lordship will do, however, you shall be obeyed;

And pray, Sir, give him to understand I am not as he may perhaps fancy, a woman offortune. I wish not to deceive him, this information may possibly prove as effectual a remedy as the lover's leap. — I shall tell him no such thing, for you know nothing of the matter; how should you know what you are worth? Nay, my dear Sir, — and nay, my dear Madam, — I have lived longer in the world than you, and could tell you a thousand stranger things than that — but adieu. — I am going to the coffee-house, so saying, he left me delighted with his agreeable manner; but utterly at a loss to comprehend his last speech.

Mr. Douglas had no sooner left me than I sat down to give you these particulars: — My mind is now more at ease, so I hope will his lordships, and that he will cease all farther importunity, — I would not for worlds have admitted his visits, situated as I at present am, under a feigned name, and my dear protector absent. — Ah! I could not possibly think of it, yet I will not deny that I am rather pleased to find he is so very serious in the business. — Should his mind prove as engaging as his person, I shall have some cause to be vain of my conquest; yet, who can say when he has gained the point, he seems so extremely solicitous about, I mean when he is better acquainted with me, that he has formed an idea which I shall by no means answer. — Depend upon it his imagination has given me more perfections than happen to fall to my share, I do not mean by this to depreciate those I really do possess neither, I have too much vanity not to have a tolerable opinion of them; but a man so prodigiously in love as he would persuade me he is, must fancy the object of it a goddess at least, — farewell. I am now mistress of a new subject for your amusement you see, as well as for my own; to say truth, it is full time my epistles should be embellished by a dash of love.

Yours,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

DO you know Harriot, I have met with the greatest shock since my last that ever I received in my life? or hope ever shall again. I am still so fluttered by it, though it happened yesterday, that I can hardly guide my pen — it has absolutely affected my nerves — no, never was so insolent, so despicable a creature.

I was sitting in my room yesterday morning, enjoying a letter I had just received from my dear Orlando (who by the way is perfectly recovered, and set off on the tour I mentioned,) when my door opened, and without ceremony in flounced — guess who? — only Lady Benningfield; I rose from my seat at her entrance, not at that instant recollecting her, and was of course, though surprised to see a stranger, going to receive her politely, but her behaviour soon brought her to my remembrance, and also accounted for the honor she did me, seeing plainly she came with no friendly design, I very composedly resumed my seat, leaving her ladyship to find one for herself, in case she chose to follow my example. —

This I saw piqued her most horribly; fine airs, Miss you give yourself upon my word, methinks you might treat a person of my rank (and she bridled) with a little more ceremony — had your rank been properly announced to me, before you thought fit thus to intrude yourself into my apartment, perhaps I should have paid more attention to it; though your behaviour would soon have destroyed any degree of respect that rank might have inspired, — insolent, but 'tis no wonder your silly head should be turned — she was so violently agitated that she could not proceed; I on the contrary felt so much contempt for her, that I was more composed then, than I am now while giving you an account of it. — Pray Madam, may I presume to ask, said I, how I came to be honored with your very agreeable company? I really have not the happiness of being in the least acquainted with you, and consequently am rather at a loss

Acquainted with me! cried she with a sneer, no, really, my acquaintance I would have you to know are in a very different line of life — and to make a little variety I presume Madam, you wish to add me to the number. — Do not attempt to be witty child, I shall be sick of it — I should be sorry for that, said I, since your being ill might be a means to prolong your visit. — Don't be impertinent young woman, that may be still worse. Suppose then, and [by this time Harriot, I had taken up a purse I am netting, and began to work] suppose then we wave all farther ceremony, Madam, and come to the point, — once more permit me to ask what has procured me the honor of this visit?

Why, then without farther ceremony Miss, I should be glad to know what footing you are upon with Lord Templeton? I am not to learn that he has taken some pains to make you believe a thousand most absurd and ridiculous things; I have very particular reasons for making this enquiry; you cannot surely be such a fool as to fancy he has any thoughts of marrying you — that is out of the question: now had you been wise enough to have treated me with that deference I have a right to, I meant to have made

you a very friendly offer; first, however, let me know what it is you really expect from him.

Allow me first, said I, with astonishing calmness, to tell you madam what I expect from you (rising and going to the door) which is, that you will be kind enough to find your way down stairs, as you found the way up.

I really thought the creature would have beat me, Harriot — how dare you, cried she (choking with rage) presume to treat a person of my quality with this unheard of insolence?

Because, returned I, that feather quality on which you very justly set so high a value, conscious you have nothing else to boast of, I pay no sort of regard to, when possessed by a being, I have reason to look down upon with contempt.

So saying, I very quietly walked into the next room, turned the key of the door, lest she should think proper to follow me, and left her to her own meditations — she did indeed attempt it, but finding I had put it out of her power, I heard her march down stairs, muttering, I know not what as she went.

Now my dear Harriot, what say you to this pleasant adventure? I presume the friendly offer she kindly meant to make me, was the dose of poison you once mentioned — shall I confess, that I no sooner heard the creatures carriage drive from the door, than I was simple enough to burst into tears? — simple I say, since so despicable a being was certainly beneath my notice; but though pride kept up my spirits while she was present, they intirely forsook me, when left to reflect on the mortifying scene.

I found myself relieved by them however, and as soon as my eyes were fit to be seen, I rung for my maid, desiring she would acquaint Mrs. Bellmour, I wished to see her — she returned, telling me, she had been out all the morning.

I now sent her to ask, who had shewn Lady Benningfield up stairs, and to my astonishment, found no mortal below, knew she had been with me till they saw her coming down; she had asked, indeed, if I was at home, on her first entering the house, but said no more about it, and when they would have attended her to the door, she would not permit any one to take that trouble; saying, her servant was waiting, shut the parlour door, and instead of going out, as they supposed — she slipped up stairs.

This is the account the young woman gave my Sally — I took no farther notice of it to any of them, but mentioned what had passed to Mrs. Bellmour, when she returned, who was shocked beyond expression, declaring she should never set her foot in her doors again, let what would be the consequence — to this I objected, as she was so good a customer — but in vain — she vowed, she never with her consent should gain admittance.

I am really astonished how I had courage to bear her insolence with so much calmness; but rejoice most truly, that I had so much command of myself, as I certainly mortified her, even more than she mortified me — conscious of my innocence, it was but a momentary pain, while her ladyship must be sensible she had rendered herself an object of contempt, even in her own eyes.

I long much to know, whether lord Templeton has heard of it — ten to one, if the foolish, insignificant woman has prudence enough to conceal the story, though it must set her in so despicable a point of view.

If they have differed (which I shrewdly suspect, or why should she have acted in that absurd manner?) I make no doubt she will inform him, in order to distract him, which it cannot, I think fail to do, if he has any sentimentals of delicacy.

I have desired Mrs. Bellmour to conceal the affair from my worthy friend Mr. Douglas, it hurts my pride, my feelings Harriot, though I have certainly no cause to

blush, whatever her ladyship may have; but as he is now my lords confident, he may chance to hear the story from him.

This, my dear Harriot, is the first occasion on which I have severely felt the change in my situation — but for that change, this could not have happened — I trust and hope it will be also the last.

Adieu, yours, ever,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

SAME TO THE SAME.



LONDON.

IT is, as I guessed, Harriot — my lord is distracted at what has happened — I have had the whole history from Mr. Douglas, and a letter on the subject from his lordship, which I was compelled to receive contrary to my inclinations; but what could I do? my worthy friend (for such I really believe he is) was rather hurt at my attempting to decline it, as it was certainly condemning him for consenting to convey it to me — I saw he was chagrined, and therefore, though unwillingly, took it from him; I will inclose a copy for your perusal.

I fear this may bring on a correspondence, which I really wished exceedingly to avoid till my brother's return, his dear presence would have saved me from all this uneasiness — but there's no help for it, I must be doubly watchful over my conduct, that's all I can now do.

Mr. Douglas, who has seriously conceived a real friendship, for his lordship declares, he is the most accomplished, the most engaging young man he ever met with, gave me the following particulars of the affair yesterday.

Their meetings are no longer confined to the coffee-house, on the contrary, they are seldom asunder; he called upon his lordship, it seems, in the morning, and to his astonishment found him almost frantic — for Heaven's sake! cried he, what has thus disturbed you my lord.

My dear friend, replied his lordship, you see before you the most wretched of men — what again my Lord — Oh! spare your railery, I am really miserable beyond expression; have you then heard nothing, has the charming Miss Beverly concealed from you the unpardonable, the cruel insult she has meet with on my account? — Oh! Mr. Douglas, she never, never can forgive it! — 'tis impossible, every hope, every glimmering of hope is now lost to me for ever! — prithee explain your self, said my good friend, in the name of fortune, what have you done, how have you insulted, how been guilty of this unpardonable offence?

I! exclaimed his lordship — I insult the most lovely of women! — Ah! Heaven forbid! — why then all this distraction, if 'tis not you? — I tell you I am the fatal cause, and is not that to be completely wretched?

Not quite replied Mr. Douglas, in his dry way — your lordship may be the innocent cause, and surely that alters the case, but come — let me hear the whole story, that I may be the better able to judge, whether 'tis time for you to hang or drown yourself.

Allow me Harriot to make this part of the history as short as I can, because you already know the substance of it, I mean her ladyship's passion for Lord Templeton — suspecting from the first time of his seeing me, that I had made an impression on a heart she wished to have wholly to herself, she had him watched, and soon learned he made frequent visits to Mrs. Bellmour — at first she rallied him; but finding this had no effect, she called him false, perfidious and ungrateful, in fine, ranted like any tragedy queen — he pleaded not guilty — she finding no better might be pleaded the

violence of her love, very pleasant that Harriot — he returned a most graceful bow — what could a man do more?

At last she insisted he should swear her suspicions were without foundation — he protested he was not sufficiently acquainted with either the nature or extent of her suspicions, and begged to decline obliging her — she raved — he looked, I suppose as every man must naturally do, who finds a woman making love to him, instead of his making love to her — that is to say rather awkward — finding she could not move his flinty heart, she vowed she would go in person to the creature who had robbed her of it, and know from herself what sooting we were upon.

This threat, which he well knew she was capable of putting into execution, alarmed him; — he swore to expose her conduct to the whole world, if she presumed to entertain an idea of that horrid nature. — She valued not the world, was her reply, having lost all she held dear in it: — he now condescended to sooth, to intreat; but this exasperated her the more, sensible it was for my sake, not her own.

They parted with mutual disgust, he still flattering himself she would not stoop to such meanness — but to his utter confusion, she informed him of what she had done, glorying in the distress she had caused, and vowing it should not be the last.

And now, said his lordship, (having ended his story) What have I to hope? — Why, for the felicity of throwing yourself at Miss Beverly's feet, my lord, cried Mr. Douglas, the very first opportunity, and making your peace the best way you can. — Were she indeed a being cast in the same mould with the gentle creature we have been talking of, I should advise you to take a cordial drop, by way of saving her the trouble of administering it, which she certainly, in that case, would contrive to do; but as she is not, I recommend the first plan as the most agreeable.

Ah! — cried my lord — would to heaven I durst flatter myself with the hopes that she would condescend to hear my defence but if even you, my dear Sir, could not prevail upon her to admit me to her presence, before this cursed affair, how can I now expect it? — impossible! — then after a pause, he added — perhaps, Mr. Douglas, you may have influence enough with the dear and justly incensed angel to persuade her to read a letter from me, I cannot exist unless I have an opportunity of some kind or other to apologize for what has happened. This, said my friend, I agreed to attempt.

He instantly sat down, and wrote the epistle I mentioned having been in a manner compelled to take Harriot — and which I will now transcribe for your perusal, as I promised, having thus told you the substance of what passed between Mr. Douglas and me on the occasion, as well as his dialogue with my lord.

### MISS BEVERLEY.

Madam,

YOUR worthy friend, Mr. Douglas, will, I am persuaded, do me the justice to inform you he has just left me the most unhappy of men — and such I must continue, unless Miss Beverly will be equally just, by believing I would without hesitation have forfeited my life, could I thereby have saved her from the insult — the base, the unparalleled insult, to my utter confusion, I understand she has received, from a being who is not only a disgrace to her sex, but to humanity.

Shocked as my feelings must have been when informed of the distracting circumstance, supposing I had been no way instrumental to it, think what I must suffer, while conscious I am the unfortunate cause of the horrid event — to form an idea of my torture at this moment, is not in nature; those only who love, who revere



your amiable character as I do, can possibly conceive it; — pardon me, Miss Beverly, for daring at this time to mention a passion, which, though fervent as it is respectful, cannot, I fear, but be deemed presumptuous, after what has happened. I know not what I write — my mind is in a state of absolute distraction; the thought of what a heart delicate as yours must have suffered from the outrageous behaviour of that wicked woman, is daggers to mine. — Oh, madam, on my knees let me implore you to pity me, to relieve my agonized mind, by saying you hold me guiltless — heaven is my witness! there is nothing in the power of man, I would not do, or suffer, to convince you with how much respect and esteem I am Miss Beverly's most devoted, though truly wretched,

TEMPLETON.

What could I say to this, Harriot? you will, I imagine, allow, since I had been spite of myself, prevailed upon to read it, some sort of answer was unavoidably necessary — I accordingly sat down, and wrote as follows: —

I have, indeed, been exceedingly mortified my lord, but confess I have pride enough to look down with contempt on a woman, who could so far forget herself, as to descend to such meanness — I am perfectly convinced your lordship has nothing to reproach yourself with, in regard to what has happened, you tell me, my lord, this assurance is necessary to your peace, I send it with pleasure, as I think I cannot in justice do less,

And am your lordships, most obedient,

ISABELLA BEVERLEY.

Having desired Mr. Douglas's opinion of it; who, smiling, said, it was cool enough to freeze the flame I had kindled in his lordship's bosom, I sealed and begged he would do me the favour to deliver it. — so far am I, however, Harriot; from thinking it quite so cool as it ought to have been, that I have ever since wished I had blotted out the word pleasure.

This, you will perhaps say, is being wonderfully prudish — I own it would so, were I not circumstanced as I at present am. His lordship, an absolute stranger to me, Mr. Douglas, almost as much so, though we have certainly conceived a good opinion of each other; yet, who can say I may not be deceived, even in him — sorry indeed, should I be at so mortifying a discovery; but all this makes me more cautious than I should otherwise be.

Appearances, in reality, are rather against me too — a young, and tolerable handsome woman, in lodgings by herself, my family unknown — no acquaintance, and averse from making any — 'tis certainly, rather mysterious, and that can never be an advantage to any one, heartily sick I am of it, I do assure you, particularly since that vile creature has given me such horrid proofs, that appearances, as I was saying, are indeed against me, I am impatient beyond expression for my brother's return, that I may resume my own name — I now regret I was ever called by any other — yet, the same thing might have happened had I not.

I think I ought to write to him, but am fearful of the consequences, however, I will consider of it, for the present my dear girl, I must bid you adieu,

Believe me, ever yours,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

MISS BROWN TO LORD TEMPLETON.



MY LORD,

LONDON.

THE information I am going to give your lordship; will, I trust, be deemed a sufficient apology for this trouble — it pains me exceedingly to confess, I am, and have been a daily witness to the most wicked and shameful plot carried on against your lordship, that ever was invented, tho' not an accomplice, as this letter, I hope, will serve to convince you.

I live with Mrs. Bellmour, my lord, your attachment to Miss Beverley (as she is called) is no secret to any one in the family, 'tis a circumstance too flattering to be concealed — it astonishes me, indeed, that the misterious conduct, they have thought proper to observe, does not alarm your lordship; they, however, find it answers their villanous purpose but forgive these reflections, they are foreign to what I have to relate.

Know then, my lord, that this Miss Beverly is no other than a natural daughter of Mrs Bellmours; well might she say she had the charge of her education; alas! she has educated her for the most infamous purposes; beautiful and accomplished, she is, as every one must allow — Mr. Douglas, her pretended friend is upon the most intimate footing with her — I blush to write it; but her base, her most worthless mother sacrificed her to him, when scarce fifteen — with him, she has lived ever since — I believe, indeed, he has nothing to reproach her with, in regard to her conduct from that time; but he has now views of another nature, and of course finds Miss Bellmour, (for that is her real name) an obstacle to them.

At the time your lordship was so much struck with her appearance on seeing her here, her wretched mother was actually in treaty with a man of fortune, who offered to grant her a settlement for life, as his mistress — the affair was on the point of being concluded, and certainly would before this time, had not your lordship given hopes that you might absolutely, if things were properly managed, be induced to make her your wife — the great difficulty now was, what account to give of her family and connections, which they naturally imagined, would of course be enquired into by your lordship — this was a perplexity not easily got over — they, therefore, determined to adopt the plan they have since so successfully followed. — that is, to acknowledge, there was a mistery in her situation, which she was not yet at liberty to explain.

They mentioned an absent relation, at whose return all would be cleared up — but the truth is, my Lord, they hoped to exhaust your patience, for well do they know no such being exists, though I make no doubt, they could easily produce a person to assume that character, could it answer any good purpose; they hoped, I say your lordship's passion, would at last so far blind you, as to induce you to make honorable proposals, rather than continue to be thus denied permission to visit her.

Can any thing in life, my lord, be more artful? — I confess it was myself; who suffered Lady Beningfield to go up to her apartment, knowing Mr. Douglas was then with her, and easily hoping her ladyship might have proof sufficient to have left her no doubt of those suspicions she at present entertains of the duplicity of her character;

though she mistakes the object, Miss Beverly had however, I found contrived to conceal him in a closet time enough to prevent so important a discovery.

When I wished her ladyship to be fully convinced. I confess it was not from any degree of partiality I felt for her; but concluded your lordship would of course be informed of it; which knowing your worth and amiable character I most sincerely desired.

Indeed, had my wishes been gratified, and she had given your lordship an account of the discovery; 'tis possible it might, coming from her, have appeared the effects of jealousy, and not have gained credit: I am no stranger my lord to Lady Benningfield's motives, for her curiosity, pardon me for taking the liberty to mention this circumstance, it leads to another — which is this!

Finding all her own hopes of gaining your lordship's hand at an end, she now from the most implacable hatred and revenge would give worlds, that you may be drawn in, to marry this beautiful; but unfortunate girl — I should not be surprised, were her ladyship artful enough to attempt, even to persuade you to it; for she has had power sufficient by the help of gold, to learn the truth of Miss Beverly's story from Bellmour, the latter from the tenor of her conversation, found letting her into the secret, would rather promote than frustrate her scandalous design, and when fully informed, she declared, as I mentioned above, nothing on earth would give her so much pleasure as to see your lordship so gloriously taken in, that was her very expression.

Beware then my lord of the whole set, 'tis true, were Lady Benningfield to appear an advocate now, for a match, she so lately dreaded as the greatest of all evils, you might naturally suspect her sincerity; yet, who can say, how much an ingenuous, a generous mind like your lordships (particularly when urged to what at present is so consonant to your inclinations) might be induced to credit?

That I my lord can have no interested motives for what I write, I need hardly mention — on the contrary, were it known by any of the family, I had thus betrayed them, I know not, if even my life would be in safety — but I have so much confidence in your lordship's honor, and am so shocked at the horrible contrivance that I venture it, without hesitation.

Make what use you please my lord of this letter, only for the sake of the very important intelligence it contains, conceal the name of the writer, who now begs leave to subscribe herself,

Your lordship's most obedient and very humble servant,  
JANE BROWN.

## LETTER THE TWENTY-SIX.

LORD TEMPLETON, TO COLONEL ROCHLEY.



LONDON.

WHAT can tempt you thus to prolong your stay, my dear Rochley? after my repeatedly informing you, you have nothing farther to apprehend on Sir John Westbury's account, the fellow is quite recovered, and ready for another tilting about whenever you will be kind enough to put yourself unarmed in his way again, have you no compassion for the divine Caroline? fie upon you Orlando! I believed you a man of more gallantry than to absent yourself one moment longer than was necessary for your safety and her happiness of course.

Do prithee wheel about to the right, and march home as fast as you can — I have such a story to treat you with — but I bar all jokes upon the subject mind that or I am dumb.

I have had such an escape — no, if I live to the age of, what's his name in the bible — I shall not have half time enough to be sufficiently thankful.

Would you believe it? I had absolutely brought myself to think seriously of making an offer of marriage to the Dulcinea I have so heriocrally raved about to you for some time past, true upon my honor, finding no possibility to storm her castle — or rather I should say to gain admission without storming it; I had fully determined, to take her for better for worse — her old friend — ah curse him! — had so wrought on my passions by his flaming account of her mental perfections (those of her person I had seen and admired to my cost) that I actually authorised him to assure her, I wished for nothing so ardently, as to make her honorably mine, and implored him to prevail on her, to accept my offered hand.

Yes, Rochley, thus far had my infatuation for the bewitching the enchanting girl, seduced me from the paths of common sense, when behold my guardian angel inspired one of the infernal pack with sentiments of pity for the scrape I was in, she, for which I am certainly bound to pray for her every day of my life, sent me a full and particular account of the birth, parentage, life, character, and behaviour, of my fair (till then unknown) enslaver. — Ah! "what a falling off was there?" it was a last dying speech to all my hopes of happiness.

All my comfort is, I was wise enough to conceal her name and place of abode even from you. I will not take upon me more merit than I am entitled to however, on that account, since the truth is, I was so wholly engrossed by describing the angel, that those unimportant matters never occurred to me, but now my not having done it, does with no small satisfaction, since had you known one, or either of those particulars, you might possibly have still more reason to laugh at me, by finding I had been sighing for a dear creature, who had not let you sigh in vain.

In short, Rochley, I understand she is neither more nor less at this precious moment, than mistress of that old fellow, who has taken such pains to ensnare me.

This I fortunately learned yesterday from one who resides in the same house, and who knows the whole rise and progress of their infamous intrigue.

That I am horridly mortified I need not tell you, yet would you believe it? I am still fool enough to love the dear charming girl, in spite of my better judgment. 'Tis

absolutely incomprehensible to me, how a passion, violent as this that consumes me, could be excited by such transient views, as merely seeing her twice at her window, and once, when by accident I went there with that friend, Lady Benningfield, and your Caroline, the latter was no less struck with the elegance of her figure than myself, the former affected to have entirely overlooked her, though she has since given too convincing proofs of the falsity of that assertion — but to this there hangs a tale, which as things are turned out, I cannot take the trouble of recounting.

I was driven in my first transports of rage, almost to distraction, and was tempted to commit some desperate act of violence — but that I fortunately recollected the whole crew of them as unworthy my revenge, or rather fear; a lurking partiality for the object of my passion checked my resentment.

I determined therefore to leave them to enjoy the disappointment, to set off instantly for the country, and there endeavour to forget the transcendant charms of my perfidious fair one, who, I am still credulous enough to believe is more to be pitied than blamed.

For this weakness you, Rochley, will probably condemn me — but had you seen her, yes, had you seen the fascinating charmer, you too must have adored her as I did! — did, do I say? the same infatuation still pursues me, and pleads but too strongly in her favor, in spite of the dreadful intelligence, I have received.

That appearances are against her, I must allow — strongly against her — yet she may, — but what a folly is this? — Is there a simple doubt remaining? — no, Orlando, no! — Let me fly then — I dare not longer trust my self to write on the subject; — farewell, my chaise is ordered, my only safety is in flight.

Let me intreat you Rochley, to return without farther delay to England — come and introduce me to your lovely sister. I have often wished to get a sight of her, having heard she is the most lovely of her sex. Come and introduce me to her; that in contemplating her perfections I may forget those of a creature who had she been as virtuous, must I think in beauty equaled even Miss Rochley.

Yours ever, most sincerely,  
TEMPLETON.

## LETTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

I AM all astonishment my dear! Never was there so extraordinary an affair! — every thing that has past since my Orlando left me appears a dream, I really dare hardly trust my senses.

I have told you Harriot, repeatedly told you, if I mistake not, the unremitted endeavours Lord Templeton made to prevail upon me to admit his visits. I have told you I think how very earnest he was to persuade me he had conceived the most violent passion for me, and honorable as violent — all this you have heard, but what I am now going to tell you, will I fancy surprise you infinitely more.

Mr. Douglas delivered the few lines I sent him — his lordship chose to find more beauties than there were letters in the whole performance, he was in raptures, — transported with my amiable condescension, adored me more if possible than ever for my candor — in short, set a far greater value on the favour than it was worth, and swore he could not exist unless I would permit him to thank me in person, and at the same time to offer me his hand and heart, begging Mr. Douglas would do all in his power to procure him this blessing.

All this the worthy man repeated to me almost as much transported with joy as his lordship, and no less earnest with me to grant his request.

Fully persuaded they were both sincere in their professions, I actually found myself beginning to waver in my resolution of waiting for my dear brothers return — so perpetually importuned, what could I do? — at last, I told Mr. Douglas, I would take a day or two to consider the propriety of what he asked this was giving hopes, and with these hopes, he flew to my lord, who was again in raptures.

During my deliberation, my good old friend had been so much engaged in the city, that I had scarce seen him, by the way I am sorry to tell you he talks of leaving London soon, and kindly declares nothing but the interest he takes in my affairs could have detained him here so long.

For two or three days, I say, I scarcely saw him — when yesterday in his way from the city, he called on his lordship, in order, as he drolery said, to enquire how his patience held out; but guess, if you can, Harriot, of his consternation, when informed by the porter, his lordship had left London the day before, ordering him to acquaint any person who might call for him, that he should not return for several months, perhaps not then, as he had some thoughts of going abroad.

Poor Mr. Douglas was quite thunderstruck, and for some time could not believe he understood what the man said — however, after his repeating it many times he was compelled, though much against his inclination to credit the intelligence.

Never shall I forget the various passions displayed on his expressive, his benevolent countenance when giving me this information — rage — contempt, and cruel disappointment were strongly pictured in every feature.

How I looked at that embarrassing moment, Heaven only knows! for Mr. Douglas was too violently agitated himself to make any remarks; but my feelings were hurt beyond all conception — I felt a glow of pride and indignation on my cheek — aud

could not articulate a syllable, might I have had the universe, yet wished to say something in order to persuade him; I was not so much disconcerted, as his honest worthy heart apprehended.

At length, after various essays for utterance? why, my dear Sir, are you thus uneasy? believe me, I am not; consider, I had in fact, very little knowledge of his lordship, consequently could be no way attached to him; have I not great reason to be thankful, this is the case? I might, perhaps, had I been better acquainted with him, have conceived a partiality, then indeed this unaccountable conduct might have given me some pain, but as it is — what have I to regret?

Talk not so calmly, replied he with energy; do not for the first time, since I knew you attempt to play the hypocrite! speak of him, as he deserves! execrate his very name, as I do from my soul! he is a villain! — yes, I say a villain! — none, but a being, who justly merits that harsh appellation, could have behaved in so base, so dastardly a manner; but by Heavens! if ever I meet him, old as I am, I will call him to a strict account, he has not only grossly insulted the most deserving of her sex, but me also; — and dearly shall he pay for it, if ever I am so fortunate, as to set eyes on him again.

Yes, my good, my dear child; he shall know that, I am not a man to be affronted with impunity.

Though I just now blamed your prudent, your calm behaviour, be assured, I honor you for it, 'tis spirited, 'tis noble, and like every other part of your conduct, thank Heaven! you are not attached to so worthless a wretch — no Miss Beverly, I trust a better fate awaits you — I did mean, as I told you to leave town in a few days, but no business shall now oblige me to quit you.

I will stay, at least, till your brother returns, and will before I part from you, see you once more, safely under his protection, and trust he will never again leave so precious a charge to the mercy of strangers.

I mean not to reflect on your friend Mrs. Bellmour. I believe she is a worthy well meaning woman; she could neither foresee, nor have prevented what has happened — but let us forget it.

Come try, if you can so far command yourself as to sing me a song; go to your harpsichord, let it be something chearful to raise our spirits.

I own, Harriot, I thought this request rather mal a propos; but, convinced he meant it well, complied, though I certainly did not either play or sing better than usual — he soon after left me, charging me to think of the fellow as he deserved, were it possible, added he, I would order you not to think of him at all.

This injunction, had he given it, you may believe I could not easily have obeyed.

Now tell me, my dear, what you think of this adventure? for my own part I can make nothing of it, 'tis as I said before, absolutely incomprehensible, have I not infinite reason as I have also before said to be thankful, he had not gained that place in my affections he pretended to be so anxious to obtain? — good Heavens! what cause should I have had to reproach myself, had I been weak enough to have admitted his visits — I shudder at the very idea of it, since 'tis now evident in spite of all his professions of honor and respect, his views were of a very different nature, it must be so — no other way can I account for his conduct — but being by mine at last persuaded, he could not hope to succeed, he thought it needless to throw any more time away upon me.

Does not this, Harriot, appear the most probable conjecture one can form? — yet, but a few days before, how very different did his sentiments seem to be, what agonies did he express for the insult I had met with from that vile Lady Benningfield — in short, I can only repeat 'tis all a mystery, all wholly incomprehensible.



Another circumstance gives me on reflection much pleasure, I mean my never having given a hint to my Orlando of my imaginary conquest — I thought it would have an appearance of vanity to tell him of it; and that it would be time enough, should any thing really come of it: how lucky was this, my dear Harriot, on two accounts.

First, because I am thereby spared the mortification of his knowing I have been thus strangely treated; and in the second, because, had he known it, and by whom, how very fatal might have been the consequences, for that he would not have let the matter pass without resenting it you well know.

There is, you see no situation so bad, as to be void of all consolation — this I look upon as a reward for my prudent conduct, don't you think, Harriot, I have a right to draw this flattering conclusion from those circumstances?

It is not unnatural to suppose you will now ask what my heart says to this affair? — why, my dear I have the pleasure to assure you it behaves very well on the occasion, I will confess it had formed a few mighty pleasant plans of future felicity, in which Lord Templeton had a share; but it was on a supposition, that he was all the world is pleased to represent him, that is to say the most amiable and worthy of men — that he is the most elegant in point of person, there are few I fancy can deny, and were one to judge from the expression of his countenance, one would really be much inclined to believe the character he has acquired is no more than he justly deserves — but it has ever been a maxim with the very wise not to trust to appearances — I have pretty substantial reason, I think Harriot, for adopting it.

All I can say, in short is, had he really been, what we were simple enough to believe him, I should have been very well pleased with my conquest, as it is, I am truly thankful he failed in quite compleating his.

Adieu my dear Harriot, I am now going to press my Orlando's return, indeed the time he proposed being in England, draws very near — I can not express half the gratitude I owe to the worthy, the kind Mr. Douglas; but you I am sure will do me the justice to believe I am deeply impressed by a sense of the many obligations he has conferred upon me, of his friendship I can have no doubt — your's also, I have the happiness to rejoice in,

And am your affectionate,  
ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

SAME TO THE SAME.



LONDON.

IF my last astonished you, my dearest Harriot, I think I may venture to pronounce this will do it still more. I am certainly born to meet with very extraordinary adventures, if one may call them such; and really, though that has rather too much of the romantic in it, I know not what other appellation to give them.

Now prepare, my dear girl, to be delighted, prepare your most eloquent congratulations for your Isabella — all her misfortunes are now I trust at an end — at least, from this happy moment, she may look forward with a certainty of not being again insulted on account of her depressed circumstances. I have such news, my dear, to tell you, as will put you out of your little wits with joy, this you know is ever your lively expression on any particularly happy event.

I wrote, as I told you I intended, to my Orlando, begging he would hasten his return — some time after Mr. Douglas and I were sitting together talking over the affair of Lord Templeton, and forming a thousand fruitless conjectures concerning his unaccountable behaviour, when a post-chaise drove to the door. — I flew to the window, my heart telling me it was my Orlando. It was, Harriot! it was himself! — in a moment I found myself pressed to his affectionate bosom, and such was my transport, I had very near fainted; however, I luckily did not.

My first agitation a little subsided, I recollected my good Mr. Douglas, who stood gazing on us with the utmost pleasure; taking my darling brother's hand, I led him to him. — Orlando, said I, let me introduce you to this gentleman; much are you indebted to him, I do assure you, for the constant attention and friendship he has shewn your poor Isabella; he has, during your absence, been my guardian, my generous protector.

They embraced each other with great cordiality, my brother expressing his acknowledgments of my good friend's kindness in the most grateful and pleasing manner. — The worthy man would now have left us, but we begged he would do us the favour to stay and partake of our satisfaction. He then took his seat, and was diverted with the thousand questions I asked my dear brother, so rapidly as to put it out of his power to answer any one of them.

In this delightful situation were we chatting, when one of Mrs. Bellmour's servants opening the door of my apartment, and just peeping in said, pray Madam, is Colonel Rochley here? the postillions are desirous of being discharged — I observed Mr. Douglas looked amazed; I protest I had quite forgot the poor fellows, cried Orlando, in my hurry to see you my dear Isabella; so saying, he went down stairs.

Did I hear right? said Mr. Douglas; did not the servant mistake your brother's name? did she not call him Rochley? — She did, Sir. How then (cried he, with a kind of impatience, a sort of I know not what in his manner) comes yours to be Beverley? pray explain this mystery; I have very particular reasons for being thus inquisitive. Rochley! — good God! — can it be? is it in nature? — speak, my dear child! and put an end to this suspense.

I was diverted with his emotions, looking upon them as nothing more than his surprise at finding me so much attached to a half brother, which I concluded he now fancied he was, by our names being different; and was preparing to acquaint him with the truth, and why I had taken that of Beverly when Orlando returned to us.

Come, my dear brother, said I smiling, come and help to expound an enigma that seems to puzzle my good friend not a little. I now gave him the reasons which had induced me to adopt what in the end proved so very perplexing. Your name, then, is absolutely Rochley? cried he, with still more energy and expression in his voice and countenance, than we thought the case required. — Both your names are Rochley? — pardon me, I must ask a few more questions. — In what part of England did your father live? — what was your mothers maiden name?

Harriot, this question gave rise instantly to a thousand confused ideas — never till that moment had it once occurred to me that as her name was Douglas (as you well know) there was a possibility that he might be related to her, I now wondered it never had — but there are so many in all parts of the world of the same name, yet not related, that I never thought about it.

In fine, I had no sooner told him it was Douglas, and that our father's seat was in Warwickshire, with some other particulars, than rising from his seat, and gazing on us both with every mark of kindness, affection, and surprise, he exclaimed, it must be — it must be so! I can no longer doubt it; come to my arms, my dear children, let me press to my delighted heart the son and daughter of my lamented, my beloved sister — yes, behold in me her only brother.

Can you, my dear Harriot, figure to yourself our astonishment or our joy?— 'tis impossible — for some moments, it produced a scene of the most agreeable confusion; he continued to ask a thousand questions, to which our answers were so fully satisfactory, that not a doubt remained of the very important truth. No wonder, cried the delighted Mr. Douglas, I was so tenderly attached to this dear child; she made a most extraordinary impression on me the first moment I beheld her — but 'tis now easily accounted for — though then it amazed me, all lovely and deserving as she is, to find how much I felt myself interested in her happiness.

May I not flatter myself, said Orlando, respectfully, taking his hand, the brother of your engaging favourite will also be honored with a place in your esteem? be assured, my dear Sir, it shall from this happy moment be the study of his life to merit that distinction.

Doubt it not, cried our kind uncle, the striking resemblance I find in you to your amiable mother, would alone insure it to you; but you have still better claims; this dear child has said so much in your praise, has set your character in so fair a light, that you possessed it long before I saw you; and I need not add, your manner, person, and address, have confirmed the idea I had formed of you.

He again embraced us both with tender affection, bidding us look upon him as a father, whose greatest pleasure it would be to do every thing in his power to render us happy; and if wealth, continued he, can do it, that power, thank providence, is mine.

The news of this discovery was soon spread through the family, and my kind friend, Mrs. Bellmour, sent up her respectful compliments, begging we would permit her to wait upon us, that she might offer her sincere congratulations upon the fortunate event.

This, Harriot, you may easily guess, was readily granted — she came up, and absolutely shed tears of joy — When we were tolerably composed, and the first delightful emotions began to subside, Mr. Douglas gave us his history in few words, as follows:

At eighteen he went to the East-Indies, in a very lucrative employment, there he soon made a considerable fortune; he married an amiable woman, who brought him a large addition to it; by her he had two sons, who when they were of a proper age, he brought over to England, for their education.

At that time our dear mother was just going to be married; she was many years younger than her brother — he was present at her nuptials, and having placed his boys under the care of proper masters, he returned to India.

He had not been there more than twelvemonths, when he received the melancholy intelligence of his eldest son's death, this was a severe stroke, you may imagine, my dear Harriot, to so affectionate, so tender a parent — but his affliction was soon after greatly encreased by the loss of a wife he adored — I need make no comments on these distressing circumstances, your own feelings will render that unnecessary.

All his care, all his affection now centered in his surviving son; — for several years the accounts he heard of his improvements, consoled him as far as consolation was possible for his former losses.

He had thoughts of coming to England, in order to judge how far the encomiums he heard of his son were just, when he received a letter from this darling son, intreating his permission to join him in India, as his education was now fully completed, and his inclination led him to return to the land of his nativity. To this his father readily consented. He soon after obtaining the desired permission, but alas, Harriot — never reached the destined port, the ship was lost, and every soul on board perished.

This dreadful event gave rise to the conjecture, that my worthy uncle was also dead, as it was believed he was the Mr. Douglas who suffered that cruel fate; and his not returning to England, confirmed his friends in this opinion. You may have heard it mentioned, my dear Harriot, that my mother had a brother who was supposed lost, either going or coming from India.

My uncle had heard of our mother's death before this last affliction, and that she had left a son and daughter. — These he now being deprived of all he held dear, determined should be heirs to his fortune. — He therefore settled his affairs, and returned to England, and was but just arrived, when chance brought him to Mrs. Bellmour.

Having transacted the business he had to do in London, his design was to go into Warwickshire, to enquire for our family — he heard however, in London, of our father's death, and the fatal consequences of his misconduct. He had intelligence also, that his nephew was abroad, and was highly pleased with the character given of him, of me he had no hopes of gaining any information, till he went to the country.

Thus, Harriot, have I in as few words as possible, made you acquainted with the important, but happy change in our situation. —

I am still in so agreeable a flutter, that you must excuse me if I now bid you adieu.

I think, considering all things, I have been very minute. I will write again soon; till then, and ever, believe me to be affectionately yours,

ISABELLA BEVERLEY.

## LETTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.



LONDON.

OUR generous, our worthy uncle has now no motive for leaving London, having found here what he was going to the country in search of, he is therefore busily employed in providing a house, carriage, servants, &c. &c. the former he has met with in Portland-place, the latter you know is easily managed.

In this superb mansion, my dear Harriot, is your Isabella to preside, for he will not enter it, he says, unless we will both consent to reside with him, to this kind request, we could not possible make any objections, as you may readily conceive: — it is to be furnished in the most splendid manner — a most elegant *vis à vis*, is now building for my Orlando, and for me, such a profusion of finery is preparing, that were I going to wed an emperor, nothing would be found wanting.

The worthy man really dotes upon us both, and enjoys the thoughts of a certain lord's astonishment, when he sees me in this state of grandeur, beyond expression, we have not yet found a leisure hour, to treat my brother with his lordship's adventure, but mean to do it the first opportunity — in a few days we hope to get into our house, 'tis what is called ready furnished; but my uncle finds ten thousand things wanting, and many he means to change for more expensive ones, such as glasses, commodes, &c. &c. in short he has the spirit, and I have also reason to believe the purse of a prince.

I confess Harriot I enjoy no less than he does, the amazement Lord Templeton will be in when he finds the insignificant Miss (as he no doubt thought me, or he durst not have treated me in the strange unaccountable manner he did) is thus transformed into a woman of fashion and fortune, all my fear is that he is gone abroad as he threatened, this would be a woeful disappointment to my uncle and me too, for we promise ourselves much diversion from his embarrassment, should we meet.

All his kind purposes of revenge Mr. Douglas's I mean, are now laid aside, our triumph he very justly thinks, will be quite sufficient punishment, when joined to our contempt, for he makes a point of my looking upon him as a despicable wretch; this I am obliged to promise, you know Harriot, but privately add, he is a most intolerably handsome one; this, however is, *entre nous*, I dare not for my life say as much to my uncle.

He is now abroad making some purchases, and my Orlando is on guard, I shall see but little of him for some time, as he has so much extra duty to do, to make up for the time he has been absent: dear creature, he is ten times handsomer than ever; no, you never beheld so fine a figure as he makes in his regimentals; 'tis certainly on a person so graceful as he is, a most captivating dress, it has always been said, we females are partial to a red coat, and I believe 'tis a fact; I am so, I confess.

Think on Miss Westbury's joy on this happy occasion, Harriot, but above all, think of her brother's — he will no doubt be prodigiously delighted — not a spark of envy — O! no to be sure — I wonder if they have yet heard of what has happened — yet I can hardly suppose Orlando could so long refrain from informing her of it, though he might forget to send a few lines to his amiable friend Sir John — Lady Beningfield

too — how I enjoy the thought of meeting her, there I shall indeed triumph. Surely she must sink into the earth with confusion, but she must be callous to every sense of feeling, or she could not have behaved in the horrid, the insolent manner she has done.

I hear my uncle's voice — adieu, my dear friend, I must attend him, my next will be from Portlandplace,

Ever yours,

sincerely,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE THIRTIETH.

COLONEL ROCHLEY.



TO LORD TEMPLETON,

London.

WHY make such a bustle about my returning to England, my good friends? when behold on my arrival, I find you have thought proper to fly from London, the reason your lordship gives for your precipitate retreat, is a most laughable one I confess; but by no means satisfactory.

I think you might have contrived ways and means to have banished the remembrance of your fair, what shall I call her? not jilt, my lord, for I think you certainly jilted her.

Do let me beg you will return to town, I am impatient to have the whole account from yourself, I have it in fifty different ways, already you may be sure; but not one of them so clearly as I wish, I can make nothing of it — so pray set off on the receipt of this, on that condition I promise to tell you a story in return for yours; which, if not quite so laughable, is at least ten times more interesting and important; but not one word till we meet, your lordship may, perhaps, also hear mine fifty different ways, as I have yours; but if you can be satisfied with vague reports, I shall begin to think what I never did before, that you are not so much interested in my happiness, as I have hitherto imagined.

If what I have said, should prevail upon you to leave the shady groves and purling streams, where you are now sighing out your unfortunate love, though by the by, 'tis rather a cool amusement, at this season of the year, your lordship will find me in Portland Place, and there I will have the honor of introducing my sister to you, as you desired in your last.

She is now in town, and I think if a brother's partiality does not mislead his judgment, bids as fair to make you forget your present flame as any girl in England — come and see what you think of my taste,

Yours sincerely,

ORLANDO ROCHLEY.



## LETTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

I Have absolutely exhausted my whole stock of exclamations, Harriot, before I have half got through the wonderful things I had to relate, I shall be compelled to take to your ahs! and ohs! from mere necessity, though they are more adapted to the tragic than my present story, which is rather comic.

We have been settled in our new habitation about a week or ten days, you may possibly think I ought to have told you so before now; but I had something else to do than scribble

You see I begin to give myself airs of importance already, Harriot, could I be a person of fashion and fortune, think you, if I did not? are they not in general a very saucy set of beings? I at least have some reason to know they are not all the reverse; the lady, however, to whom I am indebted for so much knowledge, was a twig of quality, and that to be sure does admit of more hauteur and impertinence than I am yet intitled to exhibit; but all in good time.

Your chief regret, I think, Harriot, during my late retirement, was my being debarred the joys of society — make yourself easy, as to that article now my dear, my uncle seems determined to make up for lost time, he has a numerous acquaintance amongst the Nabobs, — that is to say, amongst those, who like himself have made fortunes in India; not that he confines his attention to those only who have succeeded there — which is indeed by no means all who go with that view, those who have failed are no less welcome to his table, if having failed is their only crime — in short he is the worthiest, the most generous of men, and idolises your friend Isabella.

All I fear is, he may take it in his head, (fond as he is of his niece) to make her a present to some one of these sun-burnt heroes, as a reward for the services they have done their country — however, I have nothing of that kind to apprehend at present, though I have reason to think, I have made some impression on a few of their hitherto impenetrable hearts, for we have had half a hundred of them to dine with us already.

I ought first to have told you the family, on whose account my uncle wished to be at Mrs. Bellmour's (and who are also from the East) begged to be introduced to me, the moment they heard of the happy discovery.

It consists of a Mr. Harcourt, his lady, a most amiable woman; a daughter, who, though not a beauty, is infinitely more pleasing, more engaging than many who figure under that denomination, and two sons, very agreeable young men, they are immensely rich, and live in a princely stile — these are my intimates, for all formality was totally laid aside before we had been an hour in each others company.

Sophia Harcourt and I are inseperable — don't be jealous, Harriot, she is my town friend, you my country one, and being of an older date, must continue to occupy the first place in my heart, the female department in it — I mean my dear — as for the other, — apropos — that leads to the story before-mentioned, and so here it comes.

But first, let me tell you what you will say, when you have read it, Harriot.

How could you Isabella be so provokingly teasing, as to leave such a scene to the fag end of your letter? 'twas really ridiculous particularly as all the rest was mere chit chat, neither worth your writing nor my reading.

Let me know in your next, if these were not your very words — and now for my story.

Orlando was sitting with me in my dressing room the other morning, my uncle was from home, and I had determined to take that opportunity to acquaint him with the history of Lord Templeton, which I had never then found leisure to do; but just as I was on the point of beginning, a violent rap at the door again obliged me to defer it.

A servant now entered, and to my great amazement, announced Lord Templeton — who, following him into the room, ran to embrace my brother with the utmost appearance of friendship and affection; but while in the very act of doing so, casting his eyes on me, he started, turned pale as death, and seemed at a loss whether to credit his senses.

It would require fifty pens, Harriot, instead of one, to give yo an idea of the scene — his lordship stood, as if petrified with astonishment — I no less so, trembling from head to foot, gasping for breath unable to account for his impertinent intrusion, as it appeared me — my Orlando, gazing at us by turns, with looks of surprise and inquietude.

I put on a forbidding air, and went towards the window; my lord, a little relieved, by being no longer under my scrutinizing eye, ventured to exclaim in a half whisper, — good Heaven's! Rochley, what am I to think of all this? I am confounded! amazed! — what must you —

Nay, my lord, interrupted my brother, rather let me ask what I am to think? you will particularly oblige me, if you will be kind enough to inform me, for upon my soul I can make nothing of it.

All I know for certain, is that I was truly glad to see you, and after telling you so, meant to have introduced you to my sister, but you seem to me to be both absolutely thunderstruck by the very sight of each other, so I may as well give up all thoughts of that nature, since 'tis pretty evident it will afford no great pleasure to either.

Your sister, my dear Rochley! cried his lordship, in the most violent emotion — your sister! — Heaven and earth! what do I hear?

All this time, Harriot, I kept my place at the window, my heart beating as if it would burst my stays.

Good God! Orlando, continued his lordship, then I am the most wretched, the most unfortunate of men; I have sinned, yes, I have sinned, beyond all hopes of forgiveness: he then flew to me, and throwing himself on his knees, took hold of my gown, imploring me with the greatest energy to save him from distraction, by explaining those perplexities, which had nearly turned his brain.

Orlando now took my hand, seeing I was greatly agitated; Isabella, my love, said he, if you can oblige my lord in his request, let me intreat you to do it, for I am in no less danger of having my brain turned between you, than his lordship — speak I beseech you, my dear sister, that we may if possible be restored to our sober senses. — It seems you only can restore them, and for heaven's sake be quick in your resolves, lest your power should come too late.

Pray rise, my lord, cried I, turning to him — I confess I was rather surprized to find in a friend of my brother, a man who —

Ah, Miss Beverly! said his lordship, interrupting me, and still on his knees, confess rather, I have infinitely more cause for wonder to find in the woman I have so long adored, the sister of my friend; to find Miss Beverley, the lovely, the inflexible, the

obdurate Miss Beverly! so unaccountably transformed into the no less charming Miss Rochley! — if you can account for it.

My brother now burst into a violent fit of laughter, the name of Beverly having explained to him the hitherto seeming enigmatical puzzle — or at least a great part of it; he had only therefore to learn how we became known to each other, and why his poor sister was treated with so many harsh epithets.

This, Harriot, was all I then fancied he had to be acquainted with, but soon found he had heard more of the matter than I had imagined.

I never saw a creature so much diverted as he was with our perplexity — and to crown all, who should now enter the apartment but my uncle.

My lord was still at my feet, where he seemed determined to remain, notwithstanding all my efforts to raise him; but had no sooner cast his eyes on Mr. Douglas, than he started up as if he had actually seen a ghost. To say truth, his visit had turned out rather extraordinary.

Heyday! cried his old friend — (alas! a friend no longer, Harriot) who have we here? upon my honour, this is as complete a piece of assurance as ever I was witness to. Some men, after a behaviour like yours, my lord, would rather have gone a thousand miles out of their way, than have run the hazard of meeting a lady they had treated as you have treated Miss Rochley. But lords have none of that timid bashfulness in their composition, I presume.

What, you have heard, I suppose, that she is now mistress of a fortune more than equivalent to your merit, and very wisely thought it time to renew your addresses, as she cannot sure do less than reward such merit as it deserves. — Pray, Sir, may I ask what the devil put it into your head to —

Spare me, I entreat you, cried my lord, advancing towards my uncle: how and why I came here, I can answer without hesitation, or even a blush, Mr. Douglas; but all I have met with since I came, appears to me the work of enchantment. — I heard my friend Colonel Rochley was in town, and as I had every reason to flatter myself he would be glad to see me (nay I have it under his own hand) I flew to welcome him on his return to England — he received me with his usual cordiality — but to my utter confusion, the first object that struck me on entering here, was Miss Beverly. Miss Beverly however no longer, but transformed into the sister of my friend, and next (to complete my astonishment) although I have hitherto conceived your acquaintance with that lady, to have been of very short duration, you surprize me with your appearance, and in an authoritative and peremptory manner, which would imply your being perfectly at home here, very politely term my visit the height of assurance.

That I have something to answer for, in regard to Miss Rochley, (or rather to Miss Beverly) I freely confess — and I trust I can in some measure exculpate my apparent unpardonable conduct, if you, my dear Sir, will with your usual candour deign to listen to my defence; that is to say, in case you are still as much interested in Miss Beverly's affairs as when I had first the honor of your acquaintance, but of this I can by no means be certain, as all things seem to have undergone so strange, so incomprehensible a revolution.

My uncle himself, Harriot, could not forbear a smile at his distress, yet far from being satisfied that he could, as he had said, excuse his conduct, instantly checked it, saying, Yes, my lord, I am, and ever shall be, as much interested in Miss Beverly's affairs as I formerly was; and if that circumstance appears a sufficient reason to you, why you should endeavour to justify a behaviour, which I fear it will puzzle your lordship not a little to do fully, I am ready to give all my attention.

Are you, my Isabella, disposed to hear my lord's defence? your connection with the lady in question, I think, demands from you this indulgence — (I bowed assent, Harriot, to utter a syllable was absolutely out of my power) — as for you, Orlando, you being the friend of this very gallant nobleman, can do no less.

My brother smiling replied, 'tis true, my dear Sir, we have long been friends, and I would gladly believe, when this mighty history is fairly unravelled, we shall find no reason why we should not continue such, so pray, my lord, begin.

I, Harriot, was by this time so exceedingly fluttered that I feared I should faint, and was obliged to have recourse to my salts. — Shall I honestly confess I began to feel myself more interested in the business than I had hitherto been, 'tis needless to deny it. I trembled for the event, and most earnestly wished it happily over.

His lordship now took a letter out of his pocket-book, and presenting it to my uncle, begged him to read it to himself.

And why not to the company, my lord?

Pray, Mr. Douglas, indulge me so far as to look it over first, and if you shall then think proper to make the contents known, I shall readily acquiesce, as I am no stranger to the delicacy of your sentiments.

I would now have retired; indeed I wished to have done so before, but my uncle would not suffer it, either then or now, saying, sit still, my child, you can have nothing to blush for.

He had, however, no sooner read a few lines, than I observed him change colour as he went on, rage and indignation appeared visibly in his expressive countenance, vile, abominable wretch (he muttered repeatedly as he perused the scrol) Orlando and I looked on each other, unable to guess how the scene would end.

My lord frequently stole a glance at me; a thousand hopes and fears seemed alternately to agitate his bosom.

I really pitied him, Harriot, a something told me he could not be so guilty as we had till now believed however strong appearances were against him, I began, therefore, to flatter myself he would come off with honor — alas! I little dreamed that appearances in his lordship's opinion had been infinitely stronger against your poor Isabella — but to go on.

My uncle had no sooner finished the vile task allotted him, than turning to me with the kindest look he could assume, — you may retire for a moment, my dear child, said he, I must talk this matter over with his lordship; it will pain your amiable heart to be present. I will say thus much for my lord; he is not perhaps quite so blameable as I have hitherto imagined. Retire, Isabella, the subject is by no means proper for your ear.

I could make no reply, Harriot, I was in the most violent palpitation when I rose from my seat, insomuch that I could scarcely support myself. They all observed it; my Lord and Orlando both flew towards me; the latter in pity to his friend drew back, and gave my lord an opportunity to lead me to the door; he in the mean time ringing the bell for my woman.

My conductor returned a look of gratitude to my kind brother for his indulgence, and his countenance brightened at this proof that his friend did not think his cause entirely hopeless

Can you, my dear Harriot, figure to yourself a more distressing situation than mine during this uneasy state of suspense? — ten thousand conjectures offered themselves to my imagination, but not one that appeared satisfactory.

What that letter could contain, on which his lordship seemed to build all his hopes of justification, I could not possibly comprehend — who was the author? what was

the subject? — when did he receive it? — and why not mention it to my uncle at the time he did receive it, if he then wished to be justified? — and if it was at that time a matter of indifference to him, why so anxious for it now?

These were some out of the many questions with which I was perplexing my poor brain, when a servant came to desire I would if agreeable to me, return to the company.

A moment before, I was dying with impatience for permission to do so, but now found my courage fail me. I paused, I hesitated, wished to go — but after endeavouring to compose the perturbation of my spirits for that purpose, found it impossible, and was obliged to send my compliments, begging my uncle would excuse me, as I had a severe head-ach.

What effect this message had on his lordship, I know not, but in an instant my affectionate Orlando was with me.

My dearest Isabella, said he (throwing his arms around me) why this agitation? — why these tremors, my dear sister? be composed (leading me to a sopha on which he sat down by me.)

Ah! can I be otherwise than in tremors, my kind brother, wha am I to think of all this?

Think! (with one of his engaging smiles, Harriot) why that you have been a sly little gipsey; then had you, as a dutiful sister ough to have done, acquainted me wit the important conquest you ha made, all this fracas would have been prevented, and my poor friend would not have been the miserable being he is at this moment.

He, however, was more communicative than you chose to be Isabella. From him I learned the whole progress of his passion while I was abroad, but little did I dream my sister was the object of it, as he never happened to mention the name of his fair enslaver, either by chance, or taking it for granted I suppose, I should not be the wiser, but so it happened, and so have happened all the consequences that have followed; I mean they have been the consequence of your mutual silence.

Indeed, my dear Orlando, I never thought what had passed between his lordship and me, worth your attention. Besides, would it not have had the appearance of vanity, had I been so impatient to acquaint you with it as not to be able to wait your return, which I every day expected. Had I indeed guessed he was your friend, or even known to you, 'tis possible I might have given him a page now and then in my letters; but pray let me hear what has passed below since I left you.

First tell me cried he (sweetly taking my hand) does my Isabella wish to find his lordship acquitted?

Nay, my dear brother, that is so odd a question (and I fear, Harriot, I felt something very like a blush rise to my cheek) I vow I hardly know whether I do or not. My lord is nothing to me. I cannot strictly say I have any acquaintance with him, though he has contrived to make all this confusion.

Well, then (replied the sly creature) I may without fear of adding to that confusion, tell you his lordship made but an indifferent kind of a defence — our uncle you know, my dear, is not a man to be jested with in such serious matters, especially where the happiness of a lady is at stake, and that lady his darling niece.

Is it possible? is it really so? good heavens! — but how ridiculous, thus to pretend he even wished for a reconciliation — however, 'tis of no consequence — that is — I mean — in short, one would like to have known what apology he had fabricated.

Ah! Isabella, Isabella! — your defence, my dear girl, is ten times worse than his lordship's apology (cried Orlando, laughing.)

My defence, why what defence have I to make, in the name of wonder?

More than you are aware of. That becoming blush, for instance, is one charge I could bring against you, were I inclined to malice; but the truth is, I make the observation with much pleasure, admitting it will bear the construction I wish to put upon it — but I will keep you no longer in suspense, my dear sister, you have suffered too much from that painful sensation already.

Know, then, that whatever appearances have been against my poor friend Templeton, he had reason to think there were abundantly stronger against my Isabella.

Against me! (exclaimed I almost breathless) Ah! for heaven's sake, my dear brother, be quick in explaining to me the horrid cause of such injurious, such ambiguous accusations. How on earth can it be? — in what manner can I have incurred so much censure? is it possible to —

Have patience my love, and I will endeavour to clear up the whole affair.

I was unfortunately obliged to go abroad — for reasons already known to you, and which I thought sufficient, (though I believe 'twas only my anxiety to save you from the very possibility of trouble or insult, as I then told you that suggested the idea, rather than any real necessity) I advised you to change your name till my return.

To this single circumstance, we may impute all that has happened,— 'tis a proof, Isabella, that we are poor short sighted mortals. I advised it in order to protect you, and it has on the contrary occasioned the very thing I hoped it would prevent.

Lord Templeton saw you — your charms made a deep (and I believe it will be a lasting) impression on his heart — how he contrived to inform you of his passion, you already know, and I also now know with what propriety, what true delicacy my Isabella conducted herself on the occasion.

The cause of his quitting London in the strange abrupt manner he did, which so justly gave rise to your astonishment and displeasure, (appearances were undoubtedly strongly against him) the cause I say was the letter he gave my uncle to read — in that letter, my poor sister is most capitally slandered, and our worthy generous uncle no less so — I will not shock your ears my dear with all the infamous, the horrid particulars, suffice it to say, they are such as fully excuses Lord Templeton, the circumstances are but too plausibly put together — but you will never guess who is the diabolical author of it, who nevertheless has not scrupled in order to give the calumny more weight to sign her name to it.

Ah! tell me that, at least my dearest Orlando, let me conjure you; but to inform me who can have been so cruelly, so causlessly my enemy? for sure I am, I am unconscious of ever having to my knowledge given offence to any living creature.

No other my dear, than one of the young women at Mrs. Bellmour's, her name Jane Brown.

Good Heavens! (exclaimed I in the greatest amazement) what on earth could be her motive for so horrid a piece of wickedness? I am confounded! absolutely astonished.

After reflecting a few minutes, Orlando, continued I, she must have been bribed to this, she could have no interest in the affair— 'tis impossible — she must have been tempted to lend her name to some person of more importance, and that person I am positive can be no other than Lady Benningfield.

In order to convince my brother, my conjecture was at least founded on probability, Harriot: I now told him of the treatment I had met with from her — I found he was no stranger to her passion for his lordship, and of course putting those two circumstances together as I had done, was fully persuaded I had cleared up that mystery, which to them had been inexplicable.

However, said my brother, we shall soon put the matter beyond all doubt, for my friend left us in order to wait upon the amiable Miss Jane Brown, and if she has not

had the wisdom and decency to decamp, he will spare no pains to make her speak truth for once in her life.

Now, my dear Isabella, (if you knew all you would) confess that appearances were rather against you, as well as your penitent adorer.

But ought, the said penitent adorer, my dear brother, to have so readily given credit to the vile insinuations whatever they were? — I feel my pride a good deal piqued I assure you, Orlando, at his daring to suspect —

Isabella, your observation in almost any other instance of a similar nature would have been perfectly just, (answered my brother) but if ever a man might be excused for his credulity, I must say, this case is one of them, never was there so infamous a falshood made to appear so like truth, never was there a story of so much plausibility invented, or one so likely to gain belief. — A girl like that could not I verily think have composed it — yet Lady Beningsfield appears to me even less capable — I mean in regard to the stile, and manner of expression, in short 'tis a master piece in its kind — but we shall see.

In the mean time, tell me my love, what am I to say to poor Templeton? for he is as unhappy as any mortal can possibly be.

First tell me what said our uncle? is he satisfied? does he think my lord stands acquitted?

Why, to tell you the truth, my dear Isabella, he too thinks he ought not to have given such implicit credit to the d — nd scrawl, (as he very justly calls it) as not to have made some farther enquiries, and continues rather stately, yet he owns something may be said in the poor culprits favor, but is at present too much irritated to say it himself, or hearken to it from another, — time, however, will I trust, restore him to his favor and friendship; but 'tis in regard to your's my dear, my friend is infinitely more anxious.

Oh, as to mine, that's a trifle, men get over these violent attachments with wonderful ease, be under no apprehensions brother, his lordship will do mighty well, however I may think proper to decide the matter.

Isabella, that is not spoke with your usual candour — and in revenge, I will now tell you, that I know to a certainty — yes, to a certainty, that little heart of thine would be a good deal mortified, if you now spoke your real sentiments, my friend Templeton is not the kind of man to be looked upon with so much cool indifference as my sly sister would persuade me she beholds him with, so you may as well drop a character that is not natural to you my dear, and be again yourself, for believe your Orlando, you cannot possibly assume any other half so amiable.

I kissed his dear cheek, Harriot, for this very kind and pleasing speech, and honestly told him, I believed he had discovered a window in my breast, as he had so easily contrived to get a peep into that heart, whose feelings I had so foolishly wished to conceal.

That's a good girl, now you are again my own Isabella.

No need to let his lordship into this pretty secret, though my dear brother (as he was taking his leave of me) remember that if you please.

O, never fear, I shall leave him to make the flattering discovery as I have done.

So saying, he with a significant smile on his fine face left me, no doubt to go in search of his penitent friend.

Really Harriot, 'tis full time I should now take my leave of you, for this is a most enormous packet, but I wished to give you the whole story without any interruption in my narrative, how it will end, is more than I can at present take upon me to inform you of, though things seem to be taking rather an agreeable turn.

I have had so much to say about myself, that I have had no time lately to write a single word about my Orlando's fair one. I will just mention, however, that he has had a most delightful billet doux from the dear girl, and that she continues all he can possibly wish.

Sir John is in statu quo — which being rendered into plain English, is a bear still, swearing she shall never, if he can prevent it, give her hand to the man who would have taken his life.

If he can prevent it, Harriot — that's a saving clause — for it runs strangely in my head he cannot ergo, she will give it him, and that too e'er, many months ensue.

This I know is your wish as well as mine, adieu my dear girl

Believe me ever, most affectionately your's,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.



## LETTER THE THIRTY-SECOND.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

I Have had a long conversation with my uncle, my dear Harriot, on the subject of a certain lord — but let that rest a while, that I may go on methodically.

Orlando, as I guessed at the conclusion of my last, left me in order to follow his friend Lord Templeton, for this purpose he bent his steps towards Mrs. Bellmour's, and met him just coming out of her house.

Well (cried my brother) what news my lord? have you had an interview with the agreeable Miss Jane Brown?

First tell me, cried his lordship, what have I to hope? what says your charming sister, did you succeed in pleading my cause? will she deign to see me? to pardon me? to —

Not so fast, my good friend, I have said all that could be said in your favour (answered my brother) Isabella, conscious of her innocence is a good deal hurt at your conduct, she has a proper share of pride my Lord — however you may possibly prove a better advocate than I have been.

Shall I then be admitted to the happiness of seeing her, have you my dear Rochley gained that point for me? Ah! if I am so fortunate, I will not despair!

But I shall (said my brother, interrupting him, and smiling) of ever having my question answered, if you go on at this rate, I ask your lordship once more, have you seen that insernal witch or not?

Step in with me (said my lord) for they were by this time at his door, and you shall hear every particular.

Having desired to speak with Mrs. Bellmour, she came to me immediately, when I begged to know if Miss Jane Brown was at home?

I believe she is my lord, was the answer, wondering, I presume what my business could be with the girl, and perhaps fancying, I had now cast my eyes upon her, having failed in my endeavours to succeed with the lovely Miss Rochley — she rung the bell, however (without requiring any explanation) and ordered Miss Brown to make her appearance.

In a few minutes in she came, but no sooner did she see me, than the roses left her cheek and gave place to the lilly — or in other words more suitable to the subject, she grew pale as death, and looked like the picture of horror and dismay.

Taking her epistle from my pocket, and presenting it to her view (though not with the greatest composure I must own, when I reflected on the trouble and misery she had so knowingly and wickedly been the cause of) pray young woman, said I, can you recollect doing me the honor of sending me this?

My lord, replied she (with much hesitation and apparent distress) I am not surprised at the question — I expected it from the moment I heard of the change in Miss Rochley's situation — I did send it my lord, I indeed wrote it; but severely have I reproached myself for being prevailed upon to become instrumental, in so base, so villainous a transaction, to say I was bribed for doing it, but adds to the crime; I will not, therefore attempt to plead that in extenuation of it.

Yet thus much I must beg leave to say, I was a stranger then to the lady, and was persuaded to believe some of the shocking circumstances contained in that letter were true — I now know the whole to be false, and am unfeignedly sorry for what I have done, lady Benningfield, my lord, had art enough to —

Lady Benningfield! (exclaimed I)

Yes, my lord, it was herself, who gave me the letter to copy, swearing in the most solemn manner, the chief articles were matters of fact, that it was with a view to serve your lordship, she wished you to receive it, and that if I complied, she would not only give me fifty guineas in hand, but be my friend as long as she lived.

I was too easily prevailed upon — I blush to confess it — but am somewhat consoled by the reflection that it has produced none of those mischievous effects for which it was cruelly intended.

I once had thoughts of leaving London, in order to avoid this humiliating acknowledgment; but when I considered that by so doing, I should effectually screen the person who most deserved to be exposed, I determined to wait the issue, and if questioned, which I could not doubt I should be, relate the whole truth as the only atonement I could possibly make.

I have now done so, my lord — I am conscious I deserve your contempt only — and from you madam (turning to the astonished Mrs. Bellmour) I have nothing to expect, but dismissal from your house.

We were both so amazed at what we had heard, that 'twas some time before either of us could utter a syllable.

At last, however, great your guilt has been, said I, there is some merit in your so candidly confessing it, your manner of doing it too, is much in your favour, I therefore spare my reproaches — nay, I will do more, I will even intreat Mrs. Bellmour to follow my example.

Ah! my lord, cried the poor girl, bursting into tears — this is too much, I was prepared to bear your indignation, but this unhopd for generosity over-powers me.

She was now near fainting with the violence of her agitation; and so ill, I was absolutely tempted to pity her, wretch as she had been! and wretch as she had made me.

In short, before I left the house, I had prevailed on Mrs. Bellmour to give her hopes of pardon, and that she would continue her in her employment.

And now, Rochley — what think you of that diabolical fury, Lady Benningfield?

Exactly what I thought before you begun your story, for Isabella guessed it could be the work of no other.

All I now wish is, that we could hit on some punishment adequate to the heinousness of the offence, I would give half I am worth, could I contrive to expose her as she deserves.

By Heavens! my dear friend (said his lordship) I know nothing on earth I would not sacrifice for that purpose, except your charming sister — but we may yet fall on some measures for that purpose — at present I can think only of that most injured, most adorable of women, tell me now, my dear Rochley, when may I hope to throw myself at her feet.

Your lordship I fear must first throw yourself at those of my uncle, for to tell you the truth, I am apt to believe you will find in him the greatest bar to your felicity, he is extremely fond of his niece, and does not think the man lives, who can deserve her, particularly him, who has presumed, even for a moment to doubt her character, though with such seeming proof — he will not easily pardon your giving credit to the

story, though I confess it was so plausibly framed, that I cannot (partial as I am to my sister) wholly condemn you.

But do not despair — in me you have a firm friend, and but for this cursed affair, could not I think have failed to find one in the breast of your (at present) rather angry, fair one, I told you she has a proper share of pride, that pride is a good deal piqued — however we must try what can be done.

I will now go and inform my uncle of what has just past, in order to pave the way for your lordship's reception — he was partial to you once, and doubt not in a short time he will become so again, so adieu.

Thus saying, they parted, and Orlando came home, where finding my uncle, and your Isabella tete a tete, he gave us the above particulars.

I like his behaviour to the girl, said he, (my uncle, I mean) there was something generous in that, the poor devil could not resist a bribe, her letters have often found it too powerful for their honesty — she is beneath our notice; but that d — nd lump of quality, by Heavens! I'll have her sent to bridewell, she shall stand in the pillory! and I will hire a mob to treat her as she deserves.

We could not forbear laughing at the punishment he had found out for her, my imagination being pretty lively, it at once set her ladyship before me in that pleasant elevation.

May I presume to hope, Sir, said my brother, that all things considered, you do not think his lordship quite so much to blame as he at first appeared to be.

You may presume what you please, Orlando, (said my uncle) but had his attachment been as violent as he took pains to persuade me it was he could not have been such a puppy, as to be imposed upon by such a confounded improbable story.

The fellow must either be a fool, or a knave; but I am inclined to suspect the latter.

It is now his interest to pretend he cannot live without my poor girl, and so he is come back to try what he can do to obtain her.

No, no! had he married her, when he believed she was not worth a groat, I should have had a tolerable opinion of him, but now — who will thank him?

But, pray my dear Sir, were you not at one time fully convinced, not only of his sincerity? but of his honorable intentions? (said Orlando) had my sister acted as many others in her situation would have done, had she permitted him to visit her, have you any doubt that he would gladly have married her friendless, and pennyless as she then appeared to be?

This rather staggered him, Harriot, for that he once believed so, and had every reason to believe it, he well knew.

What says my Isabella to it? turning from my brother to me, speak freely, tell me sincerely whether you think he ought to be pardoned for his monstrous credulity? as for your brother, he must be looked upon as prejudiced in favor of his friend.

Ah! my dear Sir! not more so, I am sure, than in favor of his sister.

O, ho! — very well! — I see how matters are likely to go, that expressive ah! was not for nothing, and so you can really find in your heart to think, he is neither a fool, nor knave; but a very handsome, and very insinuating fellow?

Come out with it my love, another, ah! my dear Sir! (kindly taking my hand, and smiling in my face) and his lordship's business is done.

Indeed you mistake me, Sir, all I meant was, to justify my brother, I am sure he would be as tenacious of my honor as I could be myself, never would he, I am certain, pardon any man, whether his friend or foe, who should presume to offer an insult to me.

Was that all, my dear child? then I mistook you intirely — well then, we are not to pardon him it seems, yet I could have sworn by a certain expression in your countenance a few minutes ago, you were more than half inclined to be merciful.

We cannot prevail, you see Orlando, so you may tell his lordship, he need not take the trouble of coming here to dinner to morrow, Isabella forbids it, and she is mistress here.

My brother was delighted to find he had carried his point, perhaps I too was not violently displeased; but 'tis certain we were both highly entertained, and diverted by the drollery of my uncle's manner.

I soon after left them to settle the business at their leisure, and with a heart as light as a feather, sat down to repeat the whole to you.

And so Harriot, I am on the point of receiving this same lord, who has made such a bustle amongst us, as a declared lover — well my dear, he must e'en try what he can do in that capacity, if he can contrive to gain my heart, I have no objections; but observe, he has not yet done it, though, that he has occasioned a few palpitations in it now and then, I cannot but own — being the friend of my Orlando is no small recommendation, let me tell you; that circumstance will go a great way with me.

Don't you enjoy the idea of Lady Benningfield's standing in the pillory? it would make a capital picture.

Adieu, my dear friend — I must now dress, as we are engaged to spend the evening at Mr. Harcourt's.

To morrow! — aye child, to morrow! will be a day indeed! big with the fate of "Templeton and Isabella!" ah! these names will by no means do — too long by half a hundred syllables, the speech is ruined by them— 'tis a pity, Harriot, as I think 'tis my first attempt in heroics.

Once more adieu, I am, and shall be ever, most affectionately your's,  
ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE THIRTY-THIRD.

SIR JOHN WESTBURY, TO SIR JAMES HENDERSON, BART.



WESTBURY-HALL.

DEAR JAMES,

YOU must, before this, have undoubtedly heard of the sudden and most astonishing transformation in Rochley's circumstances, owing to the unexpected appearance of a rich uncle from India, who had for many years been supposed dead; but now, to my chagrin and bitter disappointment, "as I could wish the fellow steeped in poverty to the very lip," is this said uncle returned loaded with wealth, which he takes pains to display with all the pomp and splendor of eastern pride and magnificence, in order (as I am told) to do honor to the man, whom of all others, I hold in the greatest abhorrence.

Now Caroline will in a very short time be of age, and of course her own mistress, the consequence of which is easily foreseen, as she will then most assuredly give both herself and fortune to him, who has so long reigned over her infatuated heart.

Sooner than this event should take place, I would see her consigned to the extremest penury and distress.

One way there is to frustrate, and perhaps render abortive their vile machinations, and but one.

You have often told me you liked the girl, and was desirous of marrying her, you have indeed offered such terms as proves you are in earnest, if this inclination still continues, I have a proposal to make you, which cannot, I think, fail insuring her your's, if you coincide with my plan, which is this.

If you, James, will agree to play the Knight errant for once, and carry her off to Scotland, I will undertake to put her fairly into your hands, to accomplish which, I have a scheme, that I am morally certain will prove successful.

I would see that fellow d — nd before he should marry a sister of mine (he will triumph sufficiently as it is) say the word, therefore, have you love enough to engage in this enterprize, have you also a sufficient stock of courage for it? — she has a cursed deal of the woman in her temper, let me tell you, that is to say, a devil of a spirit, so you must expect to be finely rated, when she learns the trick we have played her.

But what of that? drive on without heeding her tongue, your designs are honorable as they call it, what would she have more?

You cannot be less than three days upon the road, she will be tired of scolding before you reach the end of your journey — the larum cannot last for ever, and when you have reached it, send instantly for the blacksmith, alias the parson, who will better you both fast enough in the hammering of an anvil.

What if she proves restive? you'll perhaps ask, what's next to be done?

Why lock the door, and order the fellow to read the ceremony in her hearing, then whip her into the chaise again, swear she is to all intents and purposes your wife, or at least so much so as to prevent her being lawfully the wife of any other.

I her guardian will on your return confirm the union, this will terrify her, if any thing can, and finding no better may be, she may chance to think, the man she does not like better than none at all.

What say you to this? have you a mind to try the experiment? I again, swear by all that's sacred, Rochley shall never have her, if I can by any possible means prevent it, she deserves to be punished for daring to think of marrying a fellow who had nearly murdered her brother.

Send me a line to let me know your mind; take care however, your messenger delivers it into my own hand. I have a shrewed suspision, a former one of your's (which was indeed intended for her perusal) fell into her's, though she denied it.

We have no time to lose, so be quick in your resolutions, remember you are to be upon honor — you marry her James — no tricks upon travellers — nothing less than matrimony, mind that, she is my sister,

Your's ever,

JOHN WESTBURY.

## LETTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH.

SIR JAMES HENDERSON TO SIR JOHN WESTBURY, BART



DEAR JACK,

I Have just received your's, I have often told you, and with great truth, that I would give half my estate to possess your sister, as I really love her.

Your scheme is a wild one; but if you absolutely think it practicable, I am your man.

It is a new whim to run away with a girl by the consent, nay by the advice of her guardian.

It will be a devilish job I fear, but 'tis a comfort the tongue of a woman does not wound mortally, so one may live to get over it.

I enjoy the idea of jockeying Rochley too, who thinks himself absolutely sure of her.

Depend upon my honor, the day she is mine, I make a bonfire with your bond.

Let me know how I am to proceed, and you shall find me ready at a moments warning.

Do you intend to be of our party Jack? I think that would clinch the business — but do as you like, so as you grant us your forgiveness, when at our return from the North, we throw ourselves at your feet to demand it.

Should she have scruples in regard to the insufficiency of the chains we shall be confined in, I will marry her again when we come back with all my soul.

What can a fellow do more? but she may perhaps rather wish to knock off those, she brings with her than straighten them, you'll take care of that however.

I send this by Frank, who has instructions to deliver it with his own hand into yours, for fear of accidents.

I now only wait for the word of command, which I shall impatiently expect, so my dear brother elect, farewell,

JAMES HENDERSON.

## LETTER THE THIRTY-FIFTH.

SIR JOHN WESTBURY, TO SIR JAMES HENDERSON, BART.



WESTBURY-HALL.

DEAR JAMES,

BE upon the road to Stamford next Friday, about five o'clock in the afternoon with your post-chaise, &c. &c. I have agreed to take my sister to spend a few days at Lord Sandford's, 'twas this intended visit put the scheme into my head.

One of my horses shall fall lame, but not till I perceive you at a proper distance, then let your carriage advance with the blinds up, as if empty — I will ask the postillion to convey us the few miles we have to go, you may prepare him to agree to it.

Sit snug in the corner and say nothing, till I pop her into the chaise, to this she can make no possible objections, not suspecting any trick.

When in, I, instead of following her, shut the door, wish you a good journey, give your horses a farewell smack, and then getting into my own, drive quietly home again, (there's a fine contrivance for you).

No use in my going with you, none in the world — my blessing and pardon shall be ready, when you return to ask it.

Don't fail — be punctual to the time, and my life for it we carry the day,

Your's as before,

JOHN WESTBURY.



## LETTER THE THIRTY-SIXTH.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

WELL Harriot, the important interview, so long desired, so ardently solicited, is at length happily over — and all things are en train.

Should his lordship on a farther acquaintance find, or which is exactly the same thing to him, continue to fancy, I really do possess all those perfections his passion had decorated me with, 'tis not difficult to guess what may in due time be the consequence.

For to tell you a secret, I actually believe he possesses many more than I had given him credit for.

As to his person, 'tis infinitely more elegant than I should have insisted on, I never — no, never beheld one half so graceful, so completely, what a man ought to be, excepting my brother, who is in my eyes equally accomplished.

But, though this I grant, is no small recommendation, yet had I found his mind and manner, did not deserve so finished a casket, believe me it would not have produced the smallest effect.

A handsome coxcomb is of all beings to me, the most unsufferable, I have too long had a pattern of excellence before me in my dear Orlando to be easily pleased; however, I begin to think Lord Templeton bids fair to succeed.

My uncle was for the first half hour of his visit rather stately and wavering in his opinion, the idea of his having dared to think lightly of his Isabella, (whatever appearances might be against her) still dwelt on his mind.

He could not forbear a few severe hints on the subject; but my Lord was so attentive to him, made use of so many obliging conciliating expressions in regard to his past conduct, &c. &c. that before the second course was over, I could plainly see he was intirely restored to his good graces, and by the time they had finished their claret, and joined me in the drawing-room to take their coffee, 'tis hard to say which appeared the greatest favourite, his lordship or me.

My beloved Orlando is more delighted than I can express, to think the very man of his choice should prove to be the man of mine, for this will certainly be the end of it, and a very agreeable ending too, Harriot, don't you think so my dear?

I had some thoughts of being more circumstantial, more minute than I have been: I meant to have told you, as well as I could, how we both looked, when introduced to each other in form; but I have changed my mind— 'twas all very fine — very pretty indeed, as the old song says.

Amongst many other questions in the course of the day, I asked my lord, who the elegant creature was, who was with him and the amiable Lady Benningfield, the first time he saw me?

Guess Orlando's surprise and mine, Harriot, on his answering Miss Westbury.

He now told us, she had found so striking a resemblance between my brother and me, that had not my name of Beverly convinced her to the contrary, she could have sworn I was his sister — drole enough, is it not?

Ah! my charming Miss Rochley continued his lordship but for that unfortunate name, I never should have appeared to you the guilty wretch you must have thought me.

Nor I neither, my lord (smiling) and therefore I shall detest it as long as I live,

And don't you begin to find a kind of dislike growing upon you Isabella (said my uncle with one of his arch looks) for that of Rochley too? — young women are very apt to tire of the name they have been known by eighteen or nineteen years.

And do they never tire of that they are simple enough to exchange it for? my dear Sir — for unless you can assure me they do not, I will be in no hurry to part from mine.

But if I can assure you of it, (laughing) we are at liberty to suppose you do not care how soon that event happens, is it not so my dear? — don't you think her speech implies as much, my lord? what say you Orlando?

I desire they will take care how they presume to put a forced construction on any words of mine, you my dear Sir, I allow to divert yourself at your Isabella's expence; but I would advise them to beware how they attempt to be witty on such a subject.

See what it is to be a favorite, (cried Orlando) my uncle may say what he pleases with impunity, while my friend and I here are only at liberty to think what we please, was not this very saucy, Harriot?

Never will I, said my lord (taking my hand) presume either to say or think any thing that can be displeasing to Miss Rochley.

Aye, aye, this is fine talking, (said my uncle) but make no rash vows my lord, you do not yet know her so well as I do, at present you no doubt take her for a downright divinity, an angel — but you will find her an artful insinuating little baggage for all that.

I know not what you may take her for, replied his lordship, my dear Sir, but this I know, I can form no higher idea of felicity, than to take her as she is.

Well, well, when I am tired of her company, perhaps I may make you a present of her.

Not till then? ah, Mr. Douglas!

She will not by that time be worth your acceptance (cried my uncle, interrupting him and laughing) is not that what you was going to say? speak honestly.

Indeed he shall not speak honestly, I hate to hear disagreeable truths.

Apropos my lord, pray have you been to pay your respects to your good friend lady Benningfield? I wish your making so long a visit here, may not tempt her ladyship to pay me a second.

Let her try that joke, cried my uncle, (interrupting me, and much disturbed by the recollection of what had passed) by the lord! she shall meet with a warm reception, by heavens! I'll trim her better than ever she was trimmed in her life, though it may not do for a birth-day suit.

We all smiled at his energy, and my lord replied, he had called the moment he found the infinite obligations she had laid him under, in order to thank her as she deserved; but was informed she had just set off for Dover in her way to Paris.

Where I sincerely hope she will never arrive, cried my uncle, for I think the packet can hardly escape sinking that carries such a load of iniquity.

May the first news I hear be, that she is at the bottom of the ocean, yet the poor fish will be sorely disappointed, since they must be confoundedly hungry indeed, before they will venture to attack such a mass of paint and corruption.

We again smiled at the drollery of his expressions, (though in fact they were very severe) and at the emotions with which he never fails to speak of her ladyship, nor can

one be surprised, for by what I can gather from some hints Orlando has dropped, he has not escaped the venom of her tongue in the letter before mentioned, any more than I have done — the contents must be horrid I fancy, since I have not yet been able to obtain a sight of it.

I took an opportunity to ask my lord, whether he had ever sent a person to enquire my name.

He owned he had — adding, that having seen me at my window two or three times, he was so struck with my appearance, that he could not resist it; but after meeting me so unexpectedly in Mrs. Bellmour's apartment, he found he was no longer master of his heart.

What followed, Harriot, you already know, and what is still likely to follow, you may without the second sight venture to guess.

Having now brought matters this length, I must bid you adieu. I have a thousand engagements upon my hands, a thousand things to see in this great metropolis, to which I am at present intirely a stranger, his lordship, I presume (being almost one of the family) will contrive to give us his company in all our future parties.

My affairs being now brought nearly to a crisis (as I said before) our next care must be to conclude those of my dear Orlando, engaged as he has been in mine, he has not, however, quite neglected his own, the sprightly epistles he frequently receives from his beloved, prevents despair.

In a few short weeks, Miss Westbury will, I fancy, give him convincing proofs he need be under no apprehensions of losing her — short I call them, but he makes a different calculation I presume.

Farewell, my dearest Harriot, believe me at all times, and in every situation of life, your most affectionate and sincere friend,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

MISS WESTBURY, TO COLONEL ROCHLEY.



SANDFORD-HOUSE.

AS I believe, my dear Rochley, you interest yourself more in my affairs than any other person. I am now going to give you an account of an adventure that I have lately been concerned in, which though I can now laugh at, and allow you to laugh with me, was by no means agreeable, or pleasant at the time.

You was terribly out of luck my good friend, not to find yourself ready on the spot, (Don Quixote like) to deliver your poor Dulcinea from the hands of the base ravisher, who made so bold an attempt to rob you of her for ever.

Sadly out of luck I say, for had you on so important an occasion rescued me from him, I could not have done less according to all the laws of romance, than have rewarded you with my lilly hand to kiss at least, if not to keep.

But you, I suppose, while your poor terrified Caroline was in such a distressful dilemma, was flirting away with some of your London Belles, not so much as bestowing a single sigh upon her — was it so Orlando?

To tell you a secret, did I believe as much, you should not be treated with the following delectable history.

You must know my brother, and I had promised to spend a week or ten days at Lord Sanford's, near Stamford, and you know without my telling you, his dear and worthy friend and companion Sir James Henderson, has long fancied himself most violently in love with your humble servant, a thing I absolutely deny, fully convinced he is as incapable of love as the pen I write with.

Be that as it will, the creature had set his foolish heart on making me his wife — my brother was, if possible, more desirous he should succeed than he was, for reasons best known to himself, though shrewdly suspected by somebody else.

Thus stood matters, when we set off on our intended visit.

I had observed my plotting brother made a more than usual bustle on the occasion, (considering it was but a short journey) but little dreamt I was the cause.

Well, away we drove — when behold, just as we had got within a mile or two of my Lord's seat, one of our horses fell lame — or rather I presume the postillion had orders to say so, for I believe it was no more lame than I was.

I had before we set out, expressed my surprise at my brother's going with two only, he gave some silly reason for it, I forget what.

I then, however said, had you as usual had four horses Sir John, this disaster would not have been of any great consequence, as we could have finished our journey with two; but now I suppose we must enjoy the pleasure of tripping it on foot.

At that moment, an empty post-chaise, as I then thought it appeared in view, coming towards us — he called to the driver, who stopping, was asked, if he could convey us to Lord Sandford.

The lad replied, he had just carried his master there, who he durst say would not object to it.

I was very well pleased at being so conveniently accommodated, and followed my brother, who giving me his hand, put me into the carriage; but instead of getting in himself, to my astonishment hastily shut the door, and told the fellow to drive on.

I now found it was not as I had supposed an empty vehicle, for to my utter confusion and amazement, I beheld my torment, Sir James Henderson squeezed into one corner of it.

Merciful Heaven! (cried I) who are you? what am I to think of all this? where is my brother? how came you here? these interrogations were all in a moment, as I was almost out of breath with surprise — the horrid wretch now made an attempt to take my hand, which I found means to prevent with a look of ineffable contempt.

Hear me patiently, my adorable Miss Westbury, (said the creature) and I will immediately explain this mystery. —

That I have long and ardently loved you, you well know, that your brother approves my passion, you also know — I had every reason to fear you would soon bestow that dear, that invaluable, tho' cruelly withdrawn hand on another; on one, who though more fortunate in possessing the inestimable treasures of your esteem and affection, is not perhaps more worthy of those blessings than him, you have so repeatedly, so scornfully rejected.

I could not bear the thought of being robbed of a felicity I value more than my life, and have therefore had recourse to this innocent stratagem to get you into my power, as the only method to overcome that unaccountable aversion you have so unjustly entertained for one, whose passion will end but with his existence.

We are now, my dearest creature on the road to Scotland, where as soon as we arrive, I swear to make you honorably mine, by every solemn tie,

Ah! Heaven forbid! (interrupting his vile harrangue, at the same time wondering at my own patience in listening so long to it.) have you then the vanity, the assurance to believe the being honorably your's, would be a sufficient reparation for this horrid, this unpardonable insult.

No Sir! do not deceive yourself, be assured I would sooner perish than be your's at any time, or on any terms.

If these were my sentiments, when in my brother's house; can you be absurd enough to imagine the affronting usage I have received will alter them, and render me more complying? or that you can possibly force me to marry you contrary to my inclination; you cannot I think be quite so ridiculous, though after such an instance of your wonderful contrivances and matchless confidence, it would be very near as ridiculous in me to be surprised at any thing you either do or say.

This is being rather severe, Miss Westbury; I own I flattered myself, the sincerity of my passion (which after this proof of it, I believed you could no longer doubt) would have induced you to treat me with more indulgence, knowing too I am authorised by your brother in what I have done.

Why, surely you have not the effrontery to give this insolent behaviour as a proof of your love?

But I scorn to argue the matter with you, as I am sure we never shall be of one opinion, so all I have to beg of you Sir James is, that you will be kind enough to set me down at Lord Sandford's without loss of time: on that condition I will endeavour to forget your egregious folly.

No, by Heavens! madam I will not so soon, nor so easily part from you, with justice then might you accuse me of solly, if after having taken so much pains to make you mine, I should suffer myself to be dissuaded from my purpose.

I have, as I told you before, (your brother's consent) and even instructions for what I have undertaken, which will fully justify me in the public opinion for any idea of presumptuous temerity, whatever it may do in your's, which indeed I am most solicitous about.

The wisest thing, therefore, my dear Miss Westbury you can now do, is to make me the happiest of men, by joining your consent to that of your brother's — my fortune! my family!

Talk not to me of your fortune and family! were I certain you were heir to the crown of Great Britain, I should hold you in as much contempt and detestation as I do at this moment.

So, pray Sir James order your postillion to turn back, going farther this way, you may be assured can answer no other purpose than exposing you, you have an enterprising spirit, it must be confessed; but I am not such an idiot as to fancy you can succeed in this noble feat of heroism, while I have my senses about me.

He bit his lips with vexation, my cool, my composed manner provoked him beyond expression.

Do me the favour to give the orders I desired (continued I) to your servants.

Still he paid no attention to my request.

If you will not Sir James, I must, so saying I made an attempt to let down the glass.

Look ye Miss Westbury, cried the horrid wretch (holding my hands to prevent me) by all that's sacred, you go to Scotland, on this I am determined, and if after being a week or ten days alone with me on such an expedition, a woman of your delicacy can think it prudent to face the world in any other character, than as my wife, I shall have a worse opinion of you than I have at present.

The story will be rather against you madam.

People will not easily be inclined to credit, you could be forced into a trip of this nature, 'tis not every day ladies are run away with against their will.

I gave him the most contemptuous look I could assume, but was silent.

At length, finding all my rhetoric had been ineffectual to make him relinquish his horrid purpose, I resolved to make myself as easy as I possibly could, till we reached the next inn, not doubting but I should then be able to interest some persons in my favour, by whose means I might be delivered from the wretches tyranny.

We arrived at our last stage about nine o'clock in the evening, when I suffered him to lead me in.

This condescension, I really believe gave him hopes that his last wise speech had made a due impression on me.

I desired the people of the house, as soon as we entered, to shew me into a room, as I found myself much satiated, both in mind and person.

Sir James now took the mistress aside, (and as I suppose) gave her a strict charge to be watchful over me, fearing, if left to myself, I should elope from him.

This was natural enough you know, so I took no notice, but soon after followed our hostess up stairs.

In about an hour he sent his compliments to me, begging the honor of my company to supper.

Down I went, and in spite of my gloomy prospect, and very whimsical situation, eat the wing of a chicken, the creature appeared delighted with my apparent change of disposition, fancied all resistance was at an end, and that he should shortly triumph in the conquest he had gained, our conversation indeed was not very brilliant, but I answered all his silly questions with cheerfulness and temper.

When I was going to retire, (which I did early) he ventured to take my hand, wishing to know at what hour I would chuse to proceed on our tour next morning.

O! I should not chuse it at all, if I could possibly avoid it, but if I must absolutely go, one hour is equally agreeable to me as another.

So saying, I left him fully persuaded (as I said before) I should make no further opposition, and as this was what I wanted him to believe, I did not repent the moderation I had observed.

The servant, who conducted me to my room, was a decent looking girl — I at once told her the disagreeable predicament in which I was, and added, if you can contrive to get me a post-chaise, when all the family are gone to rest, no matter at what hour, this purse in which you will find ten guineas shall be your's — if not, I must wait till I get to the next inn.

The maid confessed her mistress had given her orders to lock all the doors leading from my apartment, and charged her to sleep, or rather sit up in one adjoining to it, in case I made any attempt to escape.

However, madam, said she, I think I may very lawfully disobey her orders on an occasion like this, and certainly will do so.

I am luckily wife to one of our postillions, and if he is at home, I think I can easily prevail upon him to convey you hence — nor can I imagine either our master or mistress will blame us, when I inform them of the story.

Go my good girl, and see what you can do.

Away she went, and presently returned, telling me I might depend on her husband's being ready with the carriage at a little distance from the house, this he proposed, lest the noise of it might alarm the family.

When all was quiet, which was not till near three o'clock in the morning, my honest friend conducted me to it, I gave her the purse, with which she was extremely well satisfied, and got in, bidding the fellow drive as fast as his horses could gallop to Lord Sandford's, he feared it would be too far, he said, without changing, but said he would try what he could do.

Away we flew like lightening — about six we were within a few miles of his lordship's seat, and as my apprehensions were now pretty well subsided, I gave him leave to go to the next inn — there I got another chaise, took leave of my friend's husband, having more than gratified him for his trouble, and soon after arrived in safety at Lord Sandford's.

The servants were no doubt surprised at my early appearance — but judge how much more so my friend Lady Sandford was, when on entering the apartment, she beheld me seated at the breakfast table.

I am amazed (said her ladyship) Miss Westbury!

Even so my dear Lady Sandford, you see I am an early riser.

An early riser indeed! but where is Sir John? we expected you both yesterday.

Sir John, is for ought I know to the contrary in his bed at home.

How do you mean, my dear Caroline? there is certainly some mystery in this, your looks indeed confirm it, pray explain it, for I am wholly at a loss to comprehend you.

Why, you must know (said I very gravely) I, yesterday set off for Scotland on a matrimonial trip with Sir James Henderson; but as we females will do some times, happening to change my mind, before I reached the end of my journey, I left him to enjoy his nap this morning about three o'clock, and very quietly getting into a post-chaise, came here to make my apology for disappointing your ladyship yesterday.

They now all stared upon me with looks of astonishment, firmly believing I had lost my senses.

Come good folks I beseech you, give me a cup of tea, for I am horridly fatigued I do assure you, not having rested much since I left home, so saying, I began to help myself — do my dear Caroline, said her ladyship (with an anxious kind of concern in her voice and manner) tell us what you mean, you really look so exceedingly fatigued, that I am rather alarmed, and fearful you are not quite well.

O, perfectly so at present, tho' say the truth, I have been a good deal hurried, and very much disconcerted.

This alarmed them still more and finding they began to be seriously uneasy, I at last told them the whole affair; adding, I mean with their permission to make the, a longer visit than they perhaps either wished or expected.

Than we wish, I am certain you will not my dear girl (said his lordship) nor would you I am sure have proposed it, had you now known how happy you make all in so doing.

My fingers are too much cramped with writing, my dear Rochley, to tell you all that was said on the subject of my marvellous adventure.

Suffice it to add, that I am safely under my good friends hospitable roof, where I intend to continue till a certain day arrives, which, thank Heaven is not now far distant.

I shall then expect that you will be kind enough to take me under your protection, and should you wish to see me before that event takes place. I am commissioned in the name of all this family to promise you a welcome reception.

Even my very honorable brother has now I presume, made his last effort to prevent our union, he will never attempt any thing farther I am persuaded, on condition that this ill-concerted and illfated plot is buried in oblivion.

Beware then, my dear Orlando how you mention it, leave that to others; if himself and friend have discretion enough to keep their own counsel, it shall ever remain a secret for me.

Do you think you can spare a day or two for an excursion to this charming place? (it is indeed delightfully situated) if you can, I am sure you require no pressing to accept the invitation made you by this family.

My lord is impatient to be personally acquainted with you, to your merit, he is no stranger; Lady Sandford having said so much in your praise, that I had no occasion to add my mite — he is a most agreeable (and what is still better, a most amiable man) they are indeed the happiest couple I at present know; in a few weeks I expect, and hope there will be another pair as happy, I am studying the “art of pleasing,” and the “way to keep him,” from my lovely friend — in the character of a wife, I mean Orlando.

Did you ever know a Miss talk with so much composure of matrimony as I do? — I believe not.

But I hate all affectation, all disguise, and therefore, without farther ceremony, am going ingenuously and sincerely to assure you, I am, most affectionately your's,

CAROLINE WESTBURY.



## LETTER THE THIRTY-EIGHTH.

MISS ROCHLEY, TO MISS LENOX.



LONDON.

MY dear Orlando has just given me leave to send you my Harriot the inclosed letter from his beloved, which you will be much pleased with; the great length will not admit transcribing, so must beg you will return it to me again as soon as you have perused it, and at the same time let me know your opinion of Sir John, and his very valorous and gallant friend Sir James? don't you think they make capital figures?

Never, sure was there so foolish, so preposterous a contrivance, nor one more easily eluded, the poor creatures were at their wits end, no doubt, (the road was not very long you'll say) or they never would have engaged in so absurd, so contemptible an enterprise.

Don't you admire Miss Westbury? how happy must my brother be with a woman so uncommonly amiable, and so sensible of his great worth.

My uncle, who is now informed of their long and tender attachment, and the difficulties they have had to encounter, is quite charmed with her character, and says, she beats me all to nothing; because I stand shilly shally, (as he calls it) and do not know my own mind, not having yet determined, whether I shall accept Lord Templeton, as my lord; or refuse his generous offers.

He forgets I have not yet been so long acquainted with him, as Caroline as been with my brother; but whatever my uncle pretends to believe, or, however, he talks in such a jesting stile, I dare say he has no doubt about the matter any more than his lordship: tho' I have yet made no vows either way I do assure you.

Orlando sat off for Lord Sandford's seat this morning, what transport must he experience to be at length at liberty to visit the mistress of his affections, and freely to give vent to the grateful effusions of his heart.

You never, Harriot, beheld so lively, so chearful a creature as he is become, judge then of my feelings, who so truly have sympathised and lamented every misfortune that has happened to one, so justly dear to me, (much more as you know than I did my own) and now so gladly participate in his present felicitous prospects.

Do not, my dear Isabella, said my brother (when just going to leave me) play the tyrant to my poor friend, let me find him as happy when I return as I am, were I not from a thorough knowledge of his heart, certain he is worthy of possessing your's, believe me I would be the last to urge you in his favor.

Promise me then, my dear sister, that you will put an end to his cruel suspense before I see you again, let me find your day fixed.

Ah! my dear brother! (interrupting him) that is going rather too far, you know it is impossible, 'tis time enough yet to talk of —

And, why impossible? or why time enough? (interrupting me in his turn) can it be ever too soon to act ingenuously with generosity and with candor; or too soon to confer happiness on the man who adores you, take example by my Caroline.

Let her then set me the example, let her name her day, and I here promise my Orlando it shall be mine.

Her's cannot be so early as my ardent wishes would make it, you know it cannot, my sly sister, or you would not be so ready with your promises.

Why, she will be at age in less than a month, and consequently at liberty, and the deuce is in it, if the man cannot bear my tyranny, (as you call it) during that short time, when I am to take my chance of bearing his for ever after.

You agree then, Isabella, to give him your hand on the day I receive my beloveds?

I do! I here promise it! but for your life, not a word of this to his impatient lordship— 'tis intirely entre nous, mind that Orlando.

I should hate his knowing my mind so long before hand, though I wish to conceal nothing from you, the creature would be so triumphantly happy, besides I should lose half his attentions, his assiduity, once secure of his prize, he might chance to value it the less — so pray remember he is to know nothing of our agreement, I made the promise merely to please you, I do assure you Brother.

Very well, my dear, I am much obliged to you, (laughing) I shall certainly observe your directions as far as I think them consistent and reasonable.

Ah! brother! —

And, ah! my dear sister! (again laughing) but adieu, till I have the pleasure of seeing you again, saying this, he disappeared in an instant.

I saw him no more, Harriot; but in less than an hour, came Lord Templeton, and by the joy that sparkled in his fine eyes, (which seemed expressively thankful) I was fully convinced he had both seen and heard him.

He did not, however, I must say, give himself any airs upon the occasion, nor utter one word tending to betray his friend, who had certainly betrayed me.

We go this evening to the Opera, his lordship is to dine with us, the Harcourt's also. (who are of our party) Sophia is quite in love with him, and vows if I do not make haste to secure him to myself, she will do her endeavours to rival me in his affections — to tell you the truth, Harriot, I should be desperately mortified, were she to succeed, though I cannot say I am under much apprehensions.

In about a month from the date of this, I begin to fancy I shall once more change my name, in the mean time I intend to make the most of my present liberty.

When a wife, I shall give up all the follies of my youth, and (like Lady Sandford, and as Miss Westbury promises) be an example to all those who now figure in that sober line — I mean to astonish the world by my conduct, it shall be quite on a new plan, so wise! so prudent! so —

Here he is again I declare, and I am not yet half dressed, when my head was decorated, I sat down to my pen, meaning to finish the business, when I had finished my letter; but that never happens till I get to the end of my paper; for once, however, it must yield to so powerful a summons, or I shall be an absolute fright.

So adieu my dear girl, I am in haste, ever your's,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE THIRTY-NINTH.

### THE SAME TO THE SAME.



LONDON.

I Plead guilty, my dear Harriot, yet you ought to make some allowance for my present situation, consider how very near it is to the time, in which I shall cease to be Isabella Rochley, though to whatever name I shall become intitled, I can never cease to be your friend.

This day fortnight, Miss Westbury will be of age — and you know what the consequences of that long and ardently desired event are likely to prove, no less than a pair of wives, added to the venerable list of matrons.

I need hardly tell you I am of course immersed in business, mantua-makers, milliners, &c. with me from morning till night — carriage, jewels, and so forth, my delighted uncle, and no less delighted lover, have taken upon themselves to provide, which is no more than they ought to do, as you must allow, and a most joyous bustle the good souls are perpetually in.

I was compelled to confirm the hasty promise I had inadvertantly made to my brother, as I soon found he had betrayed me, (which indeed I had before suspected) to his friend, the moment I had been drawn in to make it. —

Well, it does not signify, I do not intend to retract, for since this grand affair must be complied with some time or other, one would not differ about a day or two.

I am heartily rejoiced the story of Sir John and his friend Henderson has not transpired, I should like to be a witness to their meeting, or rather to have been, for 'tis no doubt, long since past, as I presume the latter would hardly be so fond of the excursion, as to proceed on his journey alone.

My uncle received a letter yesterday from the happy Orlando; containing a very polite, and pressing invitation from Lord and Lady Sandford to himself, your Isabela, and Lord Templeton.

They intreat we will all pay them a visit immediately, and stay there till the awful ceremony is over. His lordship's chaplain (Orlando says) has undertaken the important business of uniting us, it seems he did the same good office for his amiable benefactors.

After discoursing over the matter amongst ourselves it was at length agreed, we should, without delay, accede to their obliging wishes, my brother presses it very much, as he says, he is impatient to introduce his Caroline to my uncle and me; I long also for that pleasure no less than he does.

You remember, Harriot, I once saw her, though I little dreamt at that time, either who she was, or of what is now going to happen — she is lovely beyond expression in her person, and if I may believe my dear Orlando, (and her letters should be a transcript of it) her mind is no less so.

An answer was dispatched to my brother this morning, desiring him to inform Lord and Lady Sandford, we should do ourselves the honor to attend them next Monday to dinner.

Before that time, I dare say all my paraphernatia will be finished, and I shall have nothing to think of, but the day on which I suppose, and am sadly afraid I shall look exceedingly like a fool; but a person may submit to that for once in their life, Harriot.

I have given a good deal of employment to my friend Mrs. Bellmour on this occasion, we are both (Caroline and myself I mean) to be presented at court immediately after our transformation, so I have left the care of my dress for that day intirely to her, I have seen many proofs of her taste, and as I have laid her under no restriction in point of expence, one may presume I shall be immensely fine.

The poor plotting girl, (Jane Brown) has hardly yet had courage to look up — She is, I believe, as sincere a penitent as ever sinned, and as I am sensible of this by many circumstances, I have been particularly kind to her, and no mortal can be more grateful.

Adieu my dear Harriot, I will, if possible write again before all is over, though I fancy I shall scarcely find more time for it at Lord Sandford's than I do at present, busy as I am — half a dozen lines you shall have, however, coute qui coute, were it only that this may not be the last opportunity I shall have of subscribing myself,

Your affectionate friend,

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE FORTIETH.

### THE SAME TO THE SAME.



SANDFORD-HOUSE.

HERE we are my dear Harriot, and I defy the world to produce a happier set of beings, our reception was exactly such as I wished to find it, Lord and Lady Sandford are a most delightful couple, both handsome and pleasing in their manners beyond expression.

Ah! it is! it is the very same charming creature! (cried Miss Westbury, while my Orlando introduced me to her) it is the lovely Miss Beverly! with whom I was so struck some months ago; your very picture Rochley, never were two creatures so much alike — he pressed her hand to his heart, which seemed to exult with transport.

And I, my dear Miss Westbury, could, were it necessary, bring many witnesses to prove that the elegance of your person, and sweet affability of your manner, made a no less favorable impression on me, the partiality I instantly conceived for you, was wholly disinterested, as I found no resemblance between you and any favoured lover — perhaps I am as much indebted to that circumstance for your very flattering attention as to any other cause.

Indeed, but you are not (smiling at the turn I had given her compliment) it was wholly owing to your own charms, not his I do assure you, yet I will honestly confess — not if you listen though my good friend, turning to Orlando, who stood looking at us with pleasure, sparkling in his expressive, countenance — you are not to hear all our secrets, don't you know Rochley, listeners seldom hear good of themselves.

No rule without exception, my lovely Caroline, and I am determined to believe the sweet confession you was going to make would have evinced it.

Ah! the vanity of some men, (smiling on him) don't he deserve to have his lowered a little my dear Miss Rochley? was he always thus vain?

No, indeed! nor had he ever before you deigned to smile upon him, so much reason, who would not be vain, thus highly honored —

Heavens! (exclaimed the lively Caroline) what an agreeable pair of flatterers.

O! cried Lord Sandford, coming up to us (just as she said this) if you are only engaged in flattering each other, I may as well break up your party, since we wish for some share of your conversation; but I shall change the nature of it I can tell you, Lady Sandford knows I never could flatter in my life.

And, yet my lord, (said her ladyship) I have not the vanity to imagine you can really fancy I deserve all the fine things you so kindly say to me, I should be too happy, durst I believe them your real sentiments, and perhaps too vain also.

Come, come, (cried my good uncle) let me make one amongst you, and I will set you all to rights presently, nobody will suspect me I presume of that failing, my sincerity has never yet been called in question.

Then I know, (my dear Sir, said I) who has great reason to guard against a certain foible, for if that is the case, she must be the most perfect of all human beings.

We were now, Harriot, interrupted by a summons to table, which we found covered in the most elegant and sumptuous manner, the entertainment, indeed was

such as would have amply gratified the palate of the most finished epicurean, but was nearly thrown away upon us lovers, who chiefly feasted on each others looks.

Happiness was depicted in every countenance, and pleasure sat smiling in every feature, the conversation as you may imagine was chearful and expressive of the satisfaction we enjoyed in our happy meeting.

A good deal of company assembled in the evening, some sat down to cards, others to chat, in the latter class were included Miss Westbury, and your Isabella, our beaux, you may believe, followed our example.

Great things are talked of for a certain day, we proposed a masked ball, since they were at all events determined to make a show of us; but to this, my uncle objected, politely complimenting us by saying faces like ours were not made to be concealed; a ball, however, is resolved on, and half the country is to be invited.

Caroline and her Orlando intend writing to Sir John on the occasion, his having behaved ill is no rule to them, his consent to their union is to be asked, though it is in fact a mere compliment, since it certainly does not depend upon his answer — what that answer will be, Heaven only knows, not very gracious we apprehend.

Our good uncle has put it in my brother's power to offer such settlements as Sir John cannot refuse however, he may object to the settler — to your Isabella he presents twenty thousand pound on the day she gives her hand to Lord Templeton.

Can I ever, my friend, be sufficiently thankful to providence for raising us so generous, so noble a benefactor, who with such unbounded liberality, has contributed to our felicity, may Heaven preserve his precious life, and enable us by our grateful attention, to his every wish, render his latter days happy.

Now, my dear, adieu: ah! Harriot! I am going for the last time to subscribe myself your truly affectionate and sincere friend, by the loved name of

ISABELLA ROCHLEY.

## LETTER THE FORTY-FIRST.

LADY TEMPLETON, TO MISS LENOX.



SANDFORD-HOUSE.

I AM actually married, Harriot! — absolutely a wife to all intents and purposes!

Yet would you believe it, I am still the very same kind of girl I was before the important event took place? I do all I can however to assume a grave, matronly appearance, and try to give myself a few consequential airs; but I make a sad hand of it, nor does my sister succeed much better, nay worse I verily think, for she is, if possible, more giddy, more lively than ever, however time may do much, indeed my lord insists upon it I am already in every respect a pattern of all perfection.

Orlando seems inclined to think, that his Caroline alone merits that character, though I believe he allows his Isabella is intitled to stand second on the list.

Dear creatures! all I ask of Heaven, is that they may continue through life to think of us, as they do at present; can we flatter ourselves this will be the case, Harriot? — I dare not answer that question.

Sir John has not thought fit to take any notice of either of the letters, and as he did not, his silence was taken as consent, this he no doubt expected — they did their duty, if he would not follow their example, who can help it?

Lord and Lady Sandford have agreed to accompany us to town, and to spend the rest of the winter there, my kind uncle makes a point of it, that Orlando and his fair wife are to take up their residence with him in Portland-Place, saying he should be miserable, were he deprived of us both.

As for poor Isabella! you know, Harriot, I must follow my lord and master, his house is in Portman-Square, and I am told superb.

And to that house, Harriot, I am ordered by him to give you an invitation, which you are earnestly intreated to accept of immediately.

Set off then, my dear girl without loss of time, come and congratulate your friend on her felicity, 'tis as perfect as I can wish, and more so than a frail mortal has any right to expect, (but if there is a possibility) it will receive a considerable augmentation, if my Harriot will be so obliging as to indulge me with her company.

I have some thoughts of making a match between you and my good uncle, he can have no objections, and surely you will not presume to object becoming the aunt of one you have from infancy loved, and who will ever remain,

Your most affectionate, and sincere friend,

ISABELLA TEMPLETON.

FINIS.



*End of Sample*