

T H E

Lady's Drawing Room.

D A Y the F O U R T H.

N E V E R had I found *Ethelinda's* Apartment so full of Company as on this Day: There were not only most of those I had seen before, but also such a Number of others, that, as large as her *Drawing Room* is, they made a Kind of Crowd. I had not been there three Minutes, before I perceiv'd there were many of them whose Visits that Lady could very well have dispens'd with, tho' her excellent Good-breeding, and Sweetness of Disposition, made her treat them with the same Politeness, tho' less Familiarity, as she did those whose Society was more agreeable to her. In a Multiplicity of Company there cannot fail of being a great deal said; but then it is generally on trivial Matters, and, though however agreeable they may be in first speaking, would not sound well in the Repetition. Those who are capable of Conversation, being generally too polite to aim at engrossing it,
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give those who are the least so, the full Liberty of talking on those Subjects which are most pleasing to themselves ; and People who have small Judgment, and great Vivacity, either are apt to imagine the Topick they are full of is equally entertaining to the Hearers, or are too careless to consult whether it is so, or not. This happen'd to be the Case: *Philetes*, *Dorinthus*, *Acasto*, and *Aristo*, were entirely silent. *Bellimante*, *Emilia*, and *Miranda*, spoke but little, and *Ethelinda* no more than bare Civility requir'd ; while half a Dozen Fops, and near twice the Number of fine Ladies, display'd their Volubility on as many Subjects. All Speakers at the same Time, and with an equal Vehemence ; it was hardly possible to distinguish either one Voice, or one Matter, from another ; yet every one seem'd pleas'd, and testify'd it in a Concert of loud Laughter, 'till it was on a sudden interrupted, as was their Plurality of Discourses, by an Accident which appear'd to take up all their Attention. One of the Ladies cry'd out, O my Head ! ——— My Heart ! ——— I am going ! ——— Then roll'd her Eyes wildly round the Room, wreath'd her Neck, and distorted a Face, which Nature had made extremely lovely, into such Looks of Anguish, that one could never have imagin'd, without being assur'd it was so, that she should do it through Choice ; at last she fell in a Swoon, as I then believ'd, and was expressing some Part of my Concern for her Disorder, in common with the rest, when a Lady, who stood near me, whisper'd to me, That it was all Affecta-

Affectation, and, that she never appear'd in any publick Assembly, without pretending to fall into these Fits.———She fancies, added my fair Informer, that it gives her an Air of Delicacy, and, having little, very little indeed, either in her Person or Conversation, capable of attracting the Regard of the Company, hopes to find that compassionate Notice for her Distemper, which neither her indifferent Circumstances in the World, nor the Misfortune she has lately met with of being forsaken by the Knight, has the Power to excite even from her best Friends. These last Words were accompany'd with so malicious a Look and Accent, that, however blameable I thought the other Lady, I could not judge with less Severity on this. I made but little Answer, being unwilling either to affront the Lady, or to say any Thing which might look like an Encouragement of a Temper so pernicious to Society ; and, as I was not desirous of hearing any further Particulars of the same Nature, retir'd to a distant Window, and fell into a deep Musing. Heavens ! said I to myself, how is it possible that Persons, who are admitted to behold the Behaviour of *Ethelinda*, can indulge themselves in such contemptible Follies ? Would they be all as zealous in correcting the little Vanities of their own Humours, as they are in exposing those of their Acquaintance, how truly valuable might they make themselves ? What I had just observ'd of these two Ladies reminding me of a Thousand whimsical Passages of the same Kind, which I had remark'd among
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some of those I had conversed with, I became so lost in Thought, that, for a good while, I was altogether ignorant of what was said or done in the Room, and might possibly have continued much longer in that Revery than I did, if the excellent *Ethelinda* had not vouchsafed to call to me, desiring me to join Company, and at the same Time *Aristo* plucked me by the Sleeve, and reminded me that the little Impertinencies, which it was impossible for a Lady of her Rank not to be troubled with sometimes, ought not to make me forget what was due to the other Part of the Assembly. I could no less than apologize, in the best Manner I could, for the Absence of Mind I had been guilty of; which having done, I resumed my Seat, and saw with no small Satisfaction, that the counterfeit Indisposed, and the Lady who had betray'd her to me, were both gone, and, as I was afterwards inform'd, went in the same Chariot together, with all the Appearance of the greatest Friendship on both Sides. Several others also, who could justly be call'd no other than Disturbers of Conversation, had taken their Leave; and what seem'd now to engross the Attention of all present, was a young Lady in a new Suit of Clothes. Every body in the Room were ask'd, How they liked her Fancy in the Choice of the Brocade? The Manner of its being made? The Air of the Sleeve? And I believe it took up little less than an Hour to answer all the Interrogatories she made on each particular Part of it. From that, she fell into a most learned Disser-

Dissertation on Dress in general, condemning one of her Acquaintance for wearing Red, another for being seen in Blue, a third for affecting Yellow.—— One had her Petticoats too scanty, another was as extravagant in the Fulness of them:——Some had them too Long, —— others too Short.—— Lady *Sophia* discover'd an unbecoming Assurance, in exposing her bare Neck, because it was the only handsome Thing about her.—— Lady *Pru*, to conceal the Deformity of her's, sweated under the Weight of a *Capuchin* in *July*.——In fine, she took abundance of Pains to prove, That no body had any Understanding in the Elegancy of Dress but herself; and, whoever had an Inclination to be perfect in that Art, might have listen'd to her with Pleasure. But, thank Heaven, at last she ended, having said every Thing she could think of on the Subject, and shew'd herself sufficiently, as she thought, to be talk'd of with Admiration after her Departure, she took wing to carry her Instructions to some other Place, and none now remain'd but Persons of real Taste, or who had Discretion enough to enable them to conceal that Deficiency, and render their Discourse agreeable on such Subjects as would not betray a Defect in Judgment. And indeed a Person, who knows how to hold his Tongue in Matters, which to talk much on would be to his Disadvantage, cannot, I think, be properly said to want Judgment; and I know not if to avoid (in a Manner which may not seem as if we did so) all Speech of what we know

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is above our Capacity to talk judiciously upon, be not as great an Argument of good Sense, as to be able to declaim with the utmost Oratory. As the best *Rhymer* is not always the best *Poet* ; so he that *talks* most *fluently* does not always *think* most *justly*. It has ever been allow'd, That to know oneself is the most useful Part of Knowledge ; and if so, these prudent *Chusers* of Conversation merit more Applause than the World is sensible of, and, tho' they desire not to receive, nor are paid any, find their own Account in the Praise of this silent Virtue. But, to return,

Well, said *Philetes*, we are now as it were all of a Family again ; we have indeed fewer Stars than we had just now, yet methinks our Hemisphere shines not the less bright.— That is, because too many obstruct each other's Influence, reply'd *Lucillius* ; it makes however a Confusion of Light, which is not disagreeable to the Eye : Therefore, I think the Comparison would be more just to say, The Musick of our Spheres has been for a good while interrupted, and Discord usurp'd its Place.—Not at all, cry'd *Bellimante*, for, to make your's good, we must all hold our Tongues, at least if it be true, as the Philosophers tell us, That the Musick of the Spheres consists in a profound Silence. — That is a Truth which I believe no body disputes, Madam, said *Aristo* ; but then we must lose the Faculty of Speech ourselves, before we can be able to taste it : When we become all Soul, and every Sense is absorb'd in Contemplation, Stilness will be Harmony, more

ravishing than *Handel's* Notes are to his fair Admirers.—This, however, is a Pleasure which none of us seem very hasty to enjoy ; and while we carry this Flesh and Blood about us, and have Vessels susceptible of Sound, we can have no other Notion of the Musick of the Spheres, than what Voices, such as yours, convey to us ; and I think therefore *Lucillius* perfectly right in the Metaphor he made choice of.

Not to take from the Gallantry of this Compliment, said *Ethelinda*, I think there is somewhat, which, more than the most transporting Sounds, enables us to conceive that pure Delight we hope hereafter to enjoy in the Musick of the Spheres, and that is, when our Memory internally repeats the admirable Things we either may have heard or read ; for, though we are originally indebted to others than ourselves for it, it then becomes merely intellectual, and is excited by no Object from without.

A Mind elevated like yours, Madam, reply'd *Dorinthus*, is doubtless capable of furnishing Ideas for itself, which may very much anticipate the Blessings of Futurity. The Soul being in its own Nature altogether divine, retains or loses its Power, in proportion as it is more or less clogg'd with sensual Objects ; and where no Anger, Fear, Despair, Ambition, or any of the turbulent Passions are admitted, it will have room to exert itself in the most rapturous Contemplations.

Nothing, said *Acasto*, can be more just than this Observation ; and I must beg Leave to add, that it is my Opinion, That even those unhappy Persons, who, either by being embark'd

in a Life of continual Cares, or are afflicted with bodily Distempers, are render'd incapable of any sublime Reflections, have, in the Moment of their Releasement, a clear and distinct Prospect of what they vainly sought the Knowledge of before, as one of our best Poets very elegantly expresses it.

*Leaving the Old, both Worlds at once they view,
Who stand upon the Threshold of the New.*

If it be so cry'd *Bellimante*, I am afraid some People, that I could name, will see a good deal more than they desire.

True, my Dear, rejoin'd *Ethclinda*; What Discoveries must that Person make, who, for the Sake of some temporary Satisfaction, gives up or betrays the Liberty of his Country, and entails all the Miseries of Slavery on unnumber'd Generations? How must he tremble, when he beholds Millions on Millions of pre-existing Souls, all doom'd to groan in Flesh beneath a Yoke his Crimes impose on them? — His own Posterity, stripp'd of the short-liv'd Honours he so dearly purchas'd, the Scorn of future Times, and all upbraiding him as the Author of their coming Woes; he surely then must feel, tho' perhaps not 'till then, some Part of those Agonies which our excellent *Milton* so well describes in the Character of the first Man, mourning the Miseries of his wretched Race, as foreshewn him by the Arch-Angel, *Michael*.

*O Visions ill foreseen! better had I
Liv'd ignorant of future, so had born*

*My Part of Evil only, each Day's Lot
Enough to bear ; those now that were dispens'd,
The Burthen of many Ages, on me light
At once, by my Foreknowledge gaining Birth
Abortive, to torment me e're their Being,
With Thought that they must be. O Voice once heard
Delightfully,——Encrease and multiply,
Now Death to hear ! for what can I encrease
Or multiply, but Curses on my Head ?
Who of all Ages to succeed, but feeling
The Evil on him brought by me, will curse
My Head, Ill-fare our Ancestor impure,
For this we may thank ADAM ; but his Thanks
Shall be the Execration : So besides
Mine own that 'bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce Reflex on me redound,
On me as on their natural Center light,
Heavy, tho' in their Place.——*

Of all the Kinds of Treason, said *Philetas*, that to our Country is undoubtedly the worst, and I am of Opinion, that Ambition, in the worst of Princes, never did half the Mischief to Mankind, as the Avarice of private Men.

True, reply'd *Acasto*, because no Prince can carry on any Design against the Interest of his People, without the Assistance of some among themselves. I can easily forgive the Desire of becoming absolute in a Monarch : The Love of Power is but too predominant in us all ; and a Throne is placed so high, that he who sits upon it may easily become giddy ; the Guards, the Parade, and all the Farce of Royalty, intoxicates the Brain, and, being told he is a God by his Flatterers, he

imagines he is so, and becomes impatient of Controul; whereas, if like *Philip* of *Macedon*, he was often reminded, That he was but a *Man*, I am apt to think he would neither be so vain, nor so impetuous. All those Nations, whom we now see groaning under the Weight of Tyranny, were once free, nor could have been made otherwise, had they not had Traitors among themselves, who, to attain some favourite Point, sacrificed the Liberties they were intrusted with, which is sure a Crime of the most enormous Size Humanity can be guilty of, or Heaven forgive.

Yet, horrible as it is in any Shape, rejoin'd *Philetas*, it is yet greatly heighten'd, when he, who happens to be the Betrayer of his Country, is one who, by a long Series of Hypocrisies, had endear'd himself to their Affections, lull'd them, by specious Pretences, into a fatal Dependance on him, gain'd their entire Confidence, and made himself be look'd upon as the Bulwark of their Freedom, whilst he was forging the Fetters of Slavery, and contriving Means to render it everlasting, by becoming constitutional.

And need such a Man, cry'd *Emilia*, attend the Hour of Death to feel those Terrors *Ethelinda* has describ'd? Will he suffer nothing during Life from his Remorse, or from the Fears of the Resentment of an injur'd People, so basely deceiv'd, and impos'd upon by his vile Arts?

A Man, before he can be capable of such an Action, answer'd *Dorinthus*, must, as the Scripture has it, have *sear'd his Conscience with*

a hot Iron ; have banish'd all Relentings from his Heart ; become entirely dead to all Sense of Honour, Compassion, or even common Humanity, and center his whole Views in Self-gratification. He might, indeed, have every Thing to dread from the just Rage of those he has so cruelly deluded ; but, to prevent the Effects, he will doubtless take care to render it enervate, before he ventures to pluck off the Mask. I cannot, however, with *Acasto*, make any Excuse for a Prince who suffers himself to be misled by the Insinuations of such a one, against the Interest of his People ; but more especially if it happens to be a Prince who has no other Tenure to his Crown than meer Compact between him and those he governs ; who, it is to be supposed, had never call'd him to the Sovereignty but in the Belief he would in their King be their Protector also. In hereditary Governments it would be unnatural for him not to love, with a fatherly Affection, the Nation he is born to govern ; and, in elective ones, it doubtless is the utmost Ingratitude to omit any Thing in his Power to compleat the Happiness of those who put the Crown upon his Head. A Prince chosen by the People, and supported by the People, is, in effect, no more than the Servant of the People ; and tho' they give him the Power of conferring Dignities, making Peace and War, and a thousand other Privileges, yet ought he to consider all this meerly as a Compliment, and never exert it in Contradiction to the Will of those whose *Salary* he receives : He should look on all Attempts to inspire him with Notions of becoming abso-

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lute, as so many Snares for his Virtue, and give up the Authors of them to such Punishment as those they would have injur'd shall think proper to decree.

Dorinthus speaks, said *Ethelinda*, with the most graceful Smile, as in the Supposition, that Wisdom was always the Attendant on a Crown ; whereas, on the contrary, we have often found it inspires only vain Glory, Insolence of Nature, a Forgetfulness of themselves, and of those to whom they owe the Obligation. A Prince, who has strong Passions and a weak Judgment, (as the one is a sure Token of the other) will always be the Dupe of those who want only the Sanction of his Name to become the Tyrants of the People.—— Such a one, therefore, is rather to be pity'd than hated ; and though, it must be own'd, is altogether unfit to be trusted with any Power, and unworthy of the Dignity he enjoys, yet the national Resentment ought to fall chiefly on the artful Fomenters of his unwarrantable Aims, who encourage in him a Disposition to oppress, then put into his Hands the Means of accomplishing it, and have, for the most part, the greatest Share of that Plunder acquir'd by his Authority. Kings, in all limited Governments, are but a kind of Holiday-show, and may justly enough be compar'd to the Pageants we formerly had on a Lord-Mayor's Day, adorn'd and dress'd up meerly to attract the Eye, and manifest the Riches of the Company that set them up ; and of as little real Use.

Were they equally innocent too, Madam, briskly rejoin'd *Lucillius*, it would be well for the Nations

Nations subjected to their Sway ; for, as one of our apostate *Patriot's* said not so long ago as to be forgotten, *The best that can be expected from a King is, That he shall do no Hurt.* But the Misfortune is, they are no sooner mounted, than they ride, *Jehu* like, o'erleap the Bounds of Limitation, and trample down all that stands between them and their belov'd Goal of arbitrary and despotick Power.

As I said before, answer'd *Acasto*, the Love of Power is common to us all ; none but ungenerous Minds indeed will make an ill Use of it : But the Propensity is in Nature, and to be corrected by nothing but Religion and good Sense. To prove it, let us descend from Princes even to the lowest of their Subjects, and I believe we shall find, among private Families, the same Tyranny exercis'd in petty Matters, which from a Throne is so justly complain'd of as a publick Oppression.

I have often observ'd this among People in low Life, said *Miranda*, but I always thought a polite Education gave a greater Softness to Behaviour.

Neither that, reply'd *Philetes*, nor even, what one should imagine more prevalent, a real Affection, is a sufficient Check, where Pride and Ill-nature are predominant. I sometimes visit a Family, where the Master of it is a Person of Condition, married to a Lady of Birth and Fortune superior to his own, and who has a Share of Wit, Beauty, and Sweetness of Disposition, that might make any Man think himself happy in possessing her ; nor is he at all dissatisfy'd with his Lot, or insensible of her

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Merits,

Merits, tho' he testifies not that Regard for them as he ought. She may be said to be the Sovereign of his Heart, yet is she the Slave of his Humours: By the most unaccountable Caprice he treats the Object of his Affections with all the Marks of Hatred.—Contradicts every Thing she says, finds Fault with even those of her Actions which in reality please him most. — When silent, accuses her of Sullenness, yet, if she speaks, pretends to take Offence at every Word: When gay, he wonders at her Levity: When pensive, she must be thinking on something she would conceal: Each alike furnish out a Matter of Dispute, which, though on her Part, is always conducted with the greatest Softness and Good-breeding, is, on his, return'd with Expressions such as would ill become me to repeat it, and what, without hearing, one would think impossible should proceed from the Mouth of a Gentleman. Nay, to such a Degree does his Tyranny extend, that he not only treats her in this Manner before all Company, but takes a Pride in shewing them how absolutely he has enslav'd her very Mind; for the Moment after having said and done Things, which one would think impossible to be forgiven, he will, all at once, assume an Air of Good-humour, at which she instantly puts on a Smile, seems transported to make Peace with him, and own herself to have been alone to blame for the Occasion of this Quarrel: He gives her a gracious Nod, in Token of Forgiveness, and bids her offend no more in the like Manner. Tho' I dare take upon me to aver none, who have been present

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at these ridiculous Contests, had ever Penetration enough to find out in what she had offended ; nor, had he been ask'd, could he have assign'd the least Cause given him for this pretended Resentment.

How I pity this poor Lady, whose Life must be one continued Scene of Dissimulation, said *Bellimante* ; for 'tis impossible she can have either Love or Esteem for a Man who acts in such a Manner.

I am very certain, resum'd *Philetas*, she had an Infinity of both on their first Marriage, but am apt to believe his Ill-humour has since render'd her more indifferent ; because, as she does not want Spirit, did she retain her former Sentiments for him, she would either be provok'd by his Usage, to testify some Indignation, or, in endeavouring to suppress it, fall into a Melancholy, neither of which does any of her Words or Actions denote ; and she appears to me merely to comply with his Passions for her own Ease, and to think no more of them after they are past. As I know he loves her more than perhaps he is sensible of himself, I am in Pain to think how miserable he will be, should he ever discover he has lost, by his mistaken Behaviour, a Heart which he now flatters himself with having so much Dominion over, and that it is not to any implicit Obedience, or fond Affection he is indebted for the Patience with which she supports his Ill-humour.

He cannot suffer too much, cry'd *Emilia* hastily, and if I knew who the lordly Crea-

ture was, I would this Instant write to him, and undeceive his Vanity.

The Company laugh'd heartily at the Warmth with which this Lady express'd herself; but all agreed, that a Man of such a Disposition merited the severest Mortification. — After some general Reflections on the Difference of Tempers, it is strange to consider, said *Dorinthus*, the Pains some People take to render themselves unhappy: I know an Incident, which, tho' the Reverse of what *Philetas* has related, proceeded not from a less Extravagance of Humour, and brought on a Catastrophe equally, if not more melancholy than what he seems to apprehend for his Friend. As there is something very particular in the Story, I believe it may not be disagreeable in the Repetition.

Every Body having assur'd him they should listen with Pleasure, he resum'd his Discourse in these or the like Words.

ARABELLA, said he, was one of the most lovely Women I have ever seen; nor did her Wit and Good-humour render her *Conversation* less pleasing to the *Ear*, than the Charms of her *Person* were to the *Eye*. — She was born in *London*, always liv'd in it, except at those Seasons of the Year which make it yield to *Bath* and *Tunbridge* for the Variety of Pleasures; and, as she was of Rank to be visited by the politest of both Sexes, she behav'd herself, amidst the Temptations of a Court, and the Flatteries of her Admirers, in a Manner which oblig'd every Body to look on her as
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the most accomplish'd Pattern of Modesty and Regularity: Chearfulness, and unaffected Gaiety seem'd to go Hand in Hand with Prudence, and made her Company equally coveted by Age and Youth. I was for some time a pretty near Witness of her Conduct, and indeed it would have puzzled the most envious curious Eye to have discover'd the least Defect, either in her innate Principles or outward Deportment. — Among the Number of those who address'd her for Marriage was *Bellair*, a Gentleman whom, it must be confess'd, was every Way deserving her; but so perhaps were some others, who were less fortunate: She became, however, possess'd of such a Passion for him, as I know not if any History affords us an Example of. — Not all her Moderation was of any Use to her on this Occasion. — The mischievous little Deity brought at once all his Attendants with him; Hope, Fear, Distrust, restless Wishes, disorder'd Joy, and causeless Grief, ravag'd without Controul in her defenceless Breast. She grew immediately another Creature, and as before her Conversation was affable, sweet and entertaining, it now became dull, reserv'd, and sometimes peevish. — The Truth is, she was never easy out of his Company, and, when she saw not him, car'd not to see any Body.

A Disagreement happening between their *Parents*, on account of a Jointure to be made her, the Marriage seem'd to be broke off. — *Bellair* was oblig'd to desist visiting her, and she gave herself up wholly to Despair: All her Prudence, her Modesty, the Care of Reputation was entirely swallow'd up in more

prevailing Grief. She loudly declar'd she could not live without him ; but, all she either said or did having no Effect on the old People, 'tis impossible for Words to express the Calamity of her Condition. ——— I have seen her in Agonies which one would think were impossible for Life to sustain ; but, not to prolong the Narrative beyond what Necessity requires, after three Years Separation, the Father of *Bellair*, prevail'd upon by the incessant Importunities of an only and beloved Son, consented to do what was insisted on by the Parents of *Arabella*.—Writings were immediately drawn, and the so much wish'd for Nuptials celebrated in a Manner befitting their Quality and mutual Affection. I had not the Satisfaction of being present, happening to be at my Country Seat ; but, coming to Town in a few Days, I waited on her to congratulate the happy Event.——But how was I amaz'd, when, instead of the Gaiety of a Bride, adorn'd with Blushes, and beautify'd with Smiles, I found her rather an Object of Condoleance: A gloomy Melancholy hung upon her Brow ! Her lovely Eyes were swell'd with new fallen Tears ! Her Voice falter'd when she spoke, and sometimes was wholly stopp'd by Sighs, which she in vain endeavour'd to restrain. I could not presently find Words to express the Concern it gave me to see her thus, nor the secret Rage I conceiv'd against the Falshood and Ingratitude of a Husband whom she had so tenderly lov'd, and suffer'd so much for : For who could impute that Deluge of Sorrow, in which she seem'd so overwhelm'd,

to any other Source than his ill Treatment? But, when I had got so far the better of my Surprise, as to be able to talk with her, and take Notice of her Answers, I fell into a much greater one at the unhappy Whim she had entertain'd, than I had been before at the Sight of her Disorders. She told me she was now in Possession of every Thing her Soul could wish:——That she look'd on herself as on the Summit of all human Felicity:——That Fortune had bestowed on her a Happiness so immense, such a Profusion of accumulated Blessings in the Society of her dear *Bellair*, that she was certain they could not be of long Continuance; and then, said she, bursting into a Torrent of Tears, How can I support so terrible a Reverse? It was in vain for me to represent the little Probability there was of any such Change coming to pass:——That, as they were young, Fate seem'd to promise them a long Succession of happy Years together; and that *Bellair* had a sufficient Portion both of Love and Honour, to render the last Moment no less agreeable than the first. She own'd the Justice of my Reasons, but could not conquer this unaccountable Chimera, which every Day gain'd Ground in her distemper'd Imagination, 'till at last, by fancying herself too happy, she became completely miserable, and render'd her Husband, and every Body about her so too, by the continual Grievs they saw her in.——She would lie awake whole Nights, counting over in her Mind how many Accidents, which, however unlikely, were within the Compass
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of Possibility to happen, to lessen *Bellair's* Affection for her, which always concluded in an assur'd Belief, that it would be so in Time, one Way or other. It is indeed reasonable enough to suppose, that this Behaviour in her might have done, what I believe no earthly Thing besides could have the Power to have done, brought on the Neglect and Indifference she so much dreaded ; For who can bear continual Teazing ? This Mortification was however not decreed for her. His Passion for her was not the least abated by the Discontent she gave him, he did all he could to bring her into a better Temper of Mind ; but his Endearments serv'd only to encrease her Malady, and the more he endeavour'd to give her Comfort, the less she was capable of receiving it.—Thus did she languish for many Months in an incessant Waste of Spirits, and dy'd, without the least visible Sign of any bodily Indisposition, leaving her Husband less inconsolable for her Loss, than he would doubtless have been, if occasion'd by any other Motive than what it was.

Tho' this was certainly a Distemper of the Mind, rather to be pitied than condemn'd, said *Ethelinda*, yet I do not see how it was possible for any of her Friends to regret her being deliver'd out of it, by the only Means which seem'd effectual for that Purpose ; but I am of Opinion, that whatever Moderation this Lady testify'd in the Beginning of her Life, there were some Seeds of Impatience and Discontent lurking in the Soul, which waited

waited only the Calls of Passion to shew themselves to as high a Degree as human Nature is capable of. The Vehemence of her Love for *Bellair*, that Despair, and the little Regard she took to conceal either the one or the other, and the strange Caprice which, after she had nothing left to wish, she gave way to, and indulg'd ; all these, I say, seem'd to denote a weak Mind, and an unhappy Disposition. I know, indeed, pursued this admirable Lady, that there are a great many of both Sexes, who, by the Formation of imaginary Ills, disquiet themselves to a very great Degree ; and it is certain, that most People are wretched more by the Fears of what they may endure, than any Thing the present can inflict ; but this is a Temper which no Person of real Wisdom will indulge, because, in the first Place, such a Habit of Mind is the direct opposite of *Religion*, which enjoins not only an entire Renunciation to the Divine Power in every Thing, but an implicit Dependance on Him also, for all we desire or think a Blessing : And, secondly, it is a manifest Contradiction to Good-sense ; for who, with the right Use of that, would lose the Enjoyment of a *real Comfort*, to lament a *Misfortune* only in *Supposition*, which, ten to one, never comes to pass, or we live to see if it does?——I grant one sometimes meets with Trials in this World, which justly may be call'd fiery ones ; but then one should consider that Fortitude is the most needful, as well as most heroick Virtue a Mortal can possibly attain, and the greater our Misfortunes are,
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the greater Opportunity we have, by nobly bearing them, to make the Courage and Eminency of our Souls conspicuous. I am intimately acquainted with a Lady, who, in the little Struggle the unfortunate King *James* made for the Preservation of his Crown, lost a Father, to whom she was extremely dear, and a Husband, whom she married merely for Inclination, both at the same Time; yet bore so terrible a Misfortune with that Patience which testify'd she hop'd to meet them in a better World. One Son was the only Fruits of her Marriage; and the ill Fate of his Father and Grand-father, made her resolve to breed him in a different Sphere from that of War; yet did the ill Genius of their Family prevail above her Care to save him. Happ'ning to pass thro' *Preston* in the Year *Fifteen*, he was accus'd of an Intention to join those who were then attempting to restore the *Stuart* Family, and, as such, try'd and condemn'd,——She was then out of *England*, and hear'd the dreadful News That he had suffer'd with others the Death of a Traitor, and that those Limbs, which she with so much Tenderness had cherished, were mangled, and exposed to the View of every gazing Spectator on the City Gates.—She heard it, I say, without the least Murmur against that Providence which had depriv'd her of her last remaining Comfort, the only Support and Joy of her declining Age; and, tho' never Mother more truly lov'd, more truly griev'd, committed not the least Extravagance, but behav'd, even in the first Shock, with such a Presence of Mind, and

Calmness

Calmness of Deportment, as made some who knew not, nor were capable of judging the Greatness of her Soul, imagine her insensible, and without natural Affection; but afforded Matter of the highest Admiration to those who had been Witnesses of that uncommon Tenderness which she had always shewn in her Care of him. For my Part, I never reflect on the Behaviour of this Lady, and of some others who have maintain'd an equal Fortitude under very great Calamities, but it confirms me in the Opinion I always had, That those wild Exclamations we sometimes hear, are only so many Proofs of the Violence of their Tempers who utter them, and not in the least of the Sincerity of their Passions.

Nothing can be more just than this Observation, reply'd *Acasto*: A real Passion, of what Kind soever, is too mighty for Words: Weak Minds are agitated with every little Trifle, and the Emotions presently break out into the most turbulent Excess; but then the Passion they express is like a sudden Gust of Wind, which gives a momentary Shock, and is felt no more. *Araminta*, on the Death of her Parrot, tore her Hair, and cry'd out, There was nothing left worth living for!——*Beraldus* was going to fall upon his Sword, when News was brought him of the Loss of his Wife, yet married again within a Month.——*Celadon*, when rejected by the beautiful *Clotilda*, sent immediately for a Dose of Poison, but, when it was brought, very wisely threw it into the Fire, and sought his Consolation in the Arms of a more relenting Fair.——In fine, whether

whether it be a real or imaginary Ill, the Grief occasion'd by it is the more shortliv'd in Proportion to the outward Show.

This Argument will hold equally good, said *Bellimante*, in relation to those Professions of Love or Friendship made to the Living. Certainly, Madam, cry'd *Emilia*, and I would no more believe a Man truly lov'd me, who told me he was dying for me, than I would an avaricious Guardian, who deny'd me the Necessaries of Life, under Pretence of making me the greater Fortune.

You cannot be assur'd, Madam, that either the one or the other is false, 'till you have the Proof, answer'd *Lucillius*; but you are so great an Enemy to Love, that, on whatsoever Topic we discourse, you are sure, some Way or other, to draw Conclusions to the Disadvantage of that poor Passion,

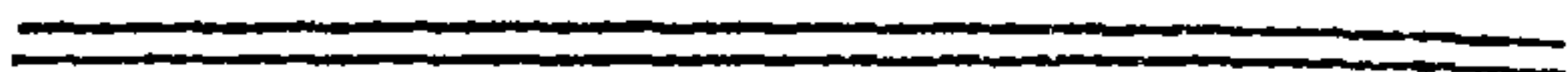
The beautiful *Emilia* must be cautious, however, said *Philetas*, how she declares too great an Aversion to it, lest we judge her Sentiments by the same Rule *Acasto* has laid down.

I dare answer for that young Lady, reply'd *Acasto*, that she will always be govern'd by right Reason; and I would not have the Interest *Lucillius* takes in the Sensibility of her Heart, render him too apprehensive that every Thing is meant in Opposition to his Wishes. These Words, deliver'd with a very serious Air, made every Body turn their Eyes on the Persons they concern'd; but the Gentleman who spoke them, prevented any little Raillery he imagin'd what he said might occasion, by going on.

I would advise all the Ladies, pursued he, not to be over-hasty in giving Credit to the Protestations made them by their Admirers, and, above all Things, to be most upon their Guard against those which are accompanied with any Extravagance, either in Words or Actions; because, as I have already said, all Excess is fleeting.——Nature cannot bear perpetual Transports; after a while those violent Emotions sink into a dead Calm, and we often see the most impatient *Lover* dwindle into the most insensible *Husband*. But then, on the other Hand, I would not have them shut their Ears altogether against the Addresses of a worthy Man, or be blind to the Demonstrations he gives of his Affection; for that would be carrying the Reserve too far, and, perhaps, at last, deprive them of a Heart they may know the Value of too late. I could give, if the Evening were not far advanced, a very particular Instance of this, in the History of a young Lady, with whose Friends I was very well acquainted some Years ago.

Ethelinda, on this, entreated him not to be under any Apprehensions that any Thing he could say would be tiresome to the Company, and *Lucilius* cry'd out to him, with Impatience, to begin. *Bellimante*, *Miranda*, and *Emilia* told him, That, tho' they had Reason to believe, by what he had said last, that the Adventure, he was going to relate, was more in Favour of his own Sex than theirs, yet the Pleasure they took in hearing him discourse on any Thing, would more than atone for any Partiality

tiality he could be guilty of. I protest to you, Ladies, replied he, I shall only repeat a melancholy Truth, and leave it to yourself to judge as you think proper. The Story is this. I once thought to communicate it to the Publick under the Title of,



T H E

ADVENTURES of *MARILLA*.

MARILLA was a young Lady, who, from her most early Years, discover'd an uncommon Capacity, and, as she grew up, made a wonderful Progress, not only in those Accomplishments usually allowed to her own Sex, but also in some of those which more properly appertain to ours. While a Child herself, she despis'd all childish Diversions, and, as she was not a Companion for those of riper Years, instead of playing with those of her own, she amus'd herself with Reading, in which she took such an infinite Delight, that, for a Book she had never seen before, she would forego any other Satisfaction could be offer'd her; and, tho' any one who had been present when she was thus employ'd, and saw with what Swiftnefs her Eye pass'd from the Top of every Page to the Bottom, would have

have thought it impossible for her to receive much Advantage from the Contents, yet was her Apprehension so acute, and her Memory so retentive, that whatever she look'd over in this Manner was as much her own, as if she had been the Author of it.—What could be more amazing than to hear a Girl, of ten or eleven Years of Age, quote Passages from *Pliny*, *Livy*, and *Sallust*, talk of the Policies of Princes, compare their several Interests, and the Motives on which War and Peace were made, and make such Observations on them as could rarely be contradicted! What might not have been expected from such a Genius when Time had ripen'd it to Perfection?—She had also strong Notions of Philosophy, Morality, and Divinity, and had only such Books, as tended to the Improvement of her Mind, been thrown in her Way, she had doubtless made one of the most shining Characters that any Age or Nation has produced; but unhappily, she was likewise too well acquainted with *Cassandra*, *Cleopatra*, *Grand Cyrus*, *Pharamond*, and other fabulous Treatises, which poison'd her Way of Thinking, and gave her a certain Bent of Mind, to which she ow'd all the Misfortunes of her future Life. Indeed, I think, there cannot be any Thing more pernicious to Youth, than the suffering them to read those idle and voluminous Adventures, which have no Foundation either in Truth or good Sense, and I heartily wish, for the Sake not only of the young Lady I am speaking of, but of many others whose Reason has been perverted by

by them, tho' perhaps not in an equal Degree, that the Government would forbid all such Books from being sold or printed.

As to the Person of *Marilla*, she was what, without being a Beauty, one might call extremely lovely: Her Eyes were bright and sparkling, her Complexion clear, her Shape admirable, all her Motions perfectly easy and genteel, and had something in her Air infinitely attractive, but undescribable. Such as she was, however, she no sooner arriv'd at the Age of Thirteen, than she became the general Admiration of our Sex, and the Envy of her own: You'll pardon me, Ladies, pursued he, with a Smile, if I say one is too natural a Consequence of the other.—Had these Words been spoke in any other Company, 'tis probable all the Fans in the Room had been up to chastise a Reflection, which none it is made on will allow the Justice of; but the Fair Ones who composed this Assembly, were well convinced what he said was but too true in the general, and therefore offer'd nothing to interrupt the Prosecution of his Narrative, which he thus went on with:

As her Father was a considerable Person in the World, the Fortune it was expected he would give her, join'd to the Charms of her Person and Qualifications, made a great Number of young Gentlemen ambitious of gaining her in Marriage; but she treated all, who address'd her on that Score, with a Reserve which came pretty near Disdain, and gave her Enemies a Pretence for taxing her with Pride and Vanity; two Vices which
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in reality she was far from being addicted to ; on the contrary, she was always ready to do good Offices, generous in allowing Merit wherever she found it, liberal, and compassionate to those who stood in need of her Assistance, and I believe set a much less Value on herself, than any one, who truly knew her, did. Setting aside a little Raillery sometimes on the Follies of those she conver'd with, which rather was occasion'd by the extreme Vivacity of her Humour, than any real Ill-nature to the Persons guilty of them, she was always obliging, and affable to every Body, but those who, as I said before, declared themselves her Lovers ; nor was this owing to either the Insensibility of her Heart, or to an Imagination, that all who address'd her were unworthy to do so, but to those romantick Notions she had imbib'd, by reading in what Manner the fictitious Ladies of Antiquity had behav'd. She has often, since Time and a melancholy Experience of the World, has mortify'd this Foible, confess'd, 'That at that Time, she thought it the most audacious and presuming thing in the World for a Man, to make any publick Declaration of his Passion, 'till he had suffer'd the Pangs of it, in secret, for three or four Years.—That, even then, he ought not to do it, unless Fortune had presented him with the Opportunity of ushering it in by some extraordinary Service, and that, whenever he express'd himself on that Head, it should be in such ambiguous Terms, and with so much Timidity, that it should rather be from his alter'd Countenance, and despairing

ing Air, the Object of his Affections should perceive he lov'd her, than by any Words he could be able to speak.—Then, as to her own Part in this Farce, it seem'd to her the utmost Indecency in a Woman to listen to any amorous Proposals, 'till the Lover had griev'd himself to a Skeleton, and was on the Point of falling on his own Sword; nor, when he had arriv'd at that Pitch of Desperation, was she to vouchsafe him any greater Favour than a Command to live.—That, after seven Years, she might, tho' with an infinite Shew of Reluctance, allow him to kiss her Hand, confess she pity'd him, but no more:—And, if he persevered a second Apprenticeship in the same Manner, perhaps, that is, if she found none more worthy, reward his faithful Service, by giving herself to him.

These, she acknowledged, were the Ideas she had of Love and Courtship; but, none of her Admirers acting in any Degree answerable to them, she look'd on all the Professions of Love made to her, as so many Affronts, and return'd them only with picquant Repartees, or sullen Silence.

The careful Father, who desir'd nothing more than to see this Darling of his Heart well settled in the World, was extremely troubled to find her equally averse to all he told her had ask'd his Permission to address her, some of whom were Fortunes superior to what either his Birth or Circumstances could have flatter'd him with the Hope of; but neither Youth, Wit, Good-humour, Quality, or Riches, had the least Effect upon her, and
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if he press'd her to consider the Advantages she might find in being the Wife of such a one, or such a one, she would beseech him, with Tears, to permit her to continue as she was. Unwilling to put any Force on her Inclinations, he had still continued to dismiss as many as came to offer themselves, 'till at last, being extremely solicited by a young Gentleman, whose Principle, Character, and Humour, he was perfectly well acquainted with, having known him from his Infancy, and for whom he had a kind of natural Affection, he was not to be influenced on his Score so easily as he had been on that of others, but told *Marilla*, with an Air of Authority, That he was assur'd she could have no reasonable Objection to the Person he now propos'd, and therefore insisted, that she should receive *Carlos* (for by that Name I shall distinguish him) as one he intended should be her Husband.

A Thunder-clap could not have been more dreadful to *Marilla* than this Command: In vain she wept, in vain she begg'd; but, having nothing to alledge against this young Gentleman, her Refusal seem'd so capricious, that her Father knew not how to account for it; and, when he reflected how many Offers she had before rejected, began to fear her Insensibility to all those he had recommended, proceeded from her having placed her Affections on some less worthy Object, and who durst not avow himself her Lover. This Apprehension had no sooner enter'd into his Head, than he began to reproach her, as if certain it were justly founded; but the many

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Protestations she made of her Innocence, at length made him easy as to that Point, though he dissembled his Conviction, and told her, That nothing, but entertaining *Carlos* in the Manner he desir'd, should convince him, that he had not injur'd her by any unjust Suspicion.

Of all her Acquaintance, there was none she had half the Regard for she had for *Carlos*. — He it was whom she ordinarily made choice of to wait on her to the Play, the Opera, the Mall; on every Occasion she preferr'd him to all who made Offers of their Service; she had continually prais'd his good Humour, the Agreeableness of his Conversation, and, in fine, had always talk'd of him with a Kind of Pleasure: But no sooner did she find he had entertain'd Hopes of marrying her, than she was uneasy at the bare Mention of his Name, avoided his Presence as much as possible, and, when compell'd, as it were, to suffer it, appear'd so discontented and melancholy, that he soon found the Friendship, with which he had been flatter'd, was not the least a-kin to Love. And yet, as she has since told me, she had a thousand Times wish'd to see him her Lover, before she knew he was so, and found nothing in herself repugnant to his Addresses, but that they were not made in the Form she had read of. Had he told some Friend how much he ador'd, yet durst not discover the Ardency of his Flame, and this had been overheard by her, she would doubtless have been transported with the Effect her Charms had on him; but to entertain Hopes of gaining her, and mentioning his Desires

to her Father, was a Piece of Presumption her Delicacy could by no means forgive, and she resolv'd to punish it by treating him with as imperious and disdainful an Air, as she had been us'd to do with one all Complaisance and Freedom.

Carlos, who lov'd her as a reasonable Man would do, could impute this Change of her Behaviour to nothing but an extreme Dislike to his Person, and often complain'd of his Ill-Fortune to her in the most tender Terms ; but as he mention'd not one Word of dying, nor attempted any Act of Desperation, all he could say was far from having the Effect on her he desir'd ; on the contrary, it serv'd only to heighten her Displeasure, as it seem'd a new Proof of his Temerity, or Insensibility of her Charms.

Her Father at last insisted on her being married, and even fix'd a Day for the Celebration : All she had already urg'd in Opposition having prov'd ineffectual, she now seem'd more ready to comply, and resolv'd to take another Method, which, if she fail'd in, to run to any Extremities, rather than be dispos'd of to a Man who, it seem'd to her, had taken such unworthy Methods of obtaining her. What, said she to herself, shall I be sacrificed to one who has not the least Notion of a true and perfect Passion ? One who is incapable of feeling any of those Transports which fir'd the Breast of *Oroondates*, or *Artaxerxes* !——One whom all the Disdain I have treated him with has not been able even to throw into a Fever !——No, I will hazard every Thing, suffer any Thing, rather

ther than be the Victim of such spiritless Indifference.

Carlos receiv'd the Confirmation of his Happiness, as he imagin'd, with as sincere a Joy as a Heart can be capable of feeling, and, flying to the Apartment of *Marilla*, My Angel, said he, your Father had this Moment acquainted me, that he has at last gain'd your Consent to make me blest.——As how? demanded she, scornfully.——As how? repeated he, does not the charming *Marilla* know that the fifth Day from this, is that which must give her to her faithful Lover's Arms? Are we not to be marry'd?——My Father would have it so, answer'd she; but there are little Blessings to be expected in a Union of Hands, where Hearts and Dispositions are so widely distant as yours and mine:——Judge, *Carlos*, continued she, with the utmost Haughtiness, by the sincere Declaration I am now about to make you, what Happiness our Marriage will bestow.——Know, that Death is not more terrible to me, than the Thoughts of being yours; and whatever favourable Sentiments I had of you, as an Acquaintance, they all vanish'd, since I found you cherish'd such presumptuous Hopes.——That, if compell'd by my Father's Authority to go with you to the Altar, I shall be so far from thinking myself oblig'd to love you by that Ceremony, that I shall ever after regard you as the Murtherer of my eternal Peace.

The poor Gentleman was strangely confounded at these Words; he really lov'd her, should have thought himself the Happiest of Man-

Mankind in possessing her with any Degree of mutual Affection, but had too much good Sense to wish to pass his Days with one who had a fix'd Aversion for him. Her late Treatment, and the Manner in which she now spoke, convinced him that she was but too much in earnest, and, conscious that he was no way her Inferior, could not help thinking she derogated from that fine Understanding and Politeness she was celebrated for, in not making Use of more gentle Terms at least, in her Refusal of him. This then, Madam, said he, I must look upon as your final Determination. — It would be the Height of Insolence in you to doubt it, answer'd she. — Well then, resum'd he, with a Sigh, whatever I may suffer in this Self-denial, you shall find, Madam, I have more Regard for your Peace, than to offer any future Interruptions. — My luckless Passion shall make but one of us unhappy : — Perhaps hereafter you may own I merited a better Fate.

He accompany'd these Words with a low Bow, and was going out of the Room, but she call'd him back : Hold, *Carlos*, said she, do you desire I should think well of you ? — That Hope was once the Height of my Ambition, reply'd he, but you have thought fit to banish it for ever. — There is a Way, resum'd she, to engage my Esteem, if not my Love, and that is to let the Breaking-off this ill-concerted Match appear wholly your own Act. — Make what Pretence you please to my Father for quitting me ; lay the Blame on my Want of Beauty, Wit, Conduct, or any
L 3 Thing,

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Thing, rather than Disobedience to a Command I was in a Manner forced to seem willing to comply with.—This will shield me from the Displeasure of a Parent whom I should be sorry to offend, be doing me a real Service, and oblige me to restore you some Part of those good Wishes I had for you, before the Declaration of your vain, fruitless Passion.

Whatever Reluctance *Carlos* found within himself, to appear the fickle and inconstant Creature she desir'd, or affront a Gentleman, whom he had always look'd upon as a kind of Father to him, his Affection, or rather his Generosity got the better of all other Considerations ; and after a Pause, Yes, *Marilla*, said he, you shall be obey'd even in this, hard as it is : I have this Consolation however, that it is not even in your own Power to make me guilty of any Thing, that might give you a just Excuse for the Treatment you have shewn me, and wish that, whenever you think fit to bestow some happier Man, it may be one not less devoted to you than the unfortunate *Carlos*.

The Oppression of his Spirits was so great, that he was scarce able to utter these last Words, with which he went out of the Room, fearing the excessive Grief he then was in, should have drawn something from him unbecoming the Courage of his Sex.

Marilla saw, and exulted in the Confusion he was in, and, tho' she pity'd him, was far from repenting the cruel Occasion she had given. This she thought, as indeed it was, a Proof of the respectful Passion he had for her, but was mistaken in the Consequences : Had she been told

told afterwards, that he had attempted to destroy himself, 'tis possible she would have vouchsafed to have abated somewhat of her Severity ; but he, imputing her Behaviour merely to an invincible Dislike of him, on the contrary, made use of his utmost Efforts, to banish so unhappy a Passion from his Heart. He was however at first extremely perplex'd, in what Manner he should perform the Injunction she had laid on him, and, after many various and disturb'd Emotions, wrote to her Father in these Terms :

S I R,

An unforeseen and unfortunate Accident renders it impossible for me to accept the Honour I so long solicited, and you were so good to promise.—Forgive, I beseech you, what only a cruel unavoidable Necessity enforces : Believe that to be ally'd to you, in the Manner I lately flatter'd myself with, was the dearest Wish my Heart had form'd, and the next to that is, that your fair Daughter may find with some other, that Happiness which she could not have shar'd with the

Unfortunate CARLOS.

The Astonishment, which the Father of *Marilla* felt at reading these Lines, is not to be express'd : He sent immediately for him, in order to get an Explanation of this Mystery, but heard he took Post for his Country-seat the Moment he had wrote. He then interrogated his Daughter, but she answer'd in Terms, which seem'd to him no less ambiguous than the

Letter he had receiv'd from *Carlos* : Upon the whole however he shrewdly suspected this sudden Turn had been owing to her Behaviour, and accus'd himself of having shewn a too great Indulgence to her Humours, as she was not yet of an Age, in which her own Judgment was to be depended on, and resolv'd hereafter more to exert the Father. Accordingly, another Proposal being made to him, by a Person whose Fortune and Character was every Way agreeable, he gave his Consent without once consulting that of *Marilla*, 'till the Writings were drawn, and every Thing necessary concluded on for the Marriage : He then told her what he had determin'd, and at the same Time forbid her, on Forfeit of all she had to hope from him, not by any Means, directly or indirectly, to oppose what he had ordain'd for her.

Thus began those Misfortunes, which her Refusal of *Carlos* drew upon her : The Person now intended for her Husband, having neither the good Qualities, nor Agreeableness of that rejected Lover, she saw, and was sensible of the Difference between them, and wish'd the former would return and renew his Addresses ; she had flatter'd herself with the Opinion he would do so ; and had brought herself to think, that, after having punish'd his Presumption and receiv'd this Proof of his Obedience to her Will, she might, without Breach of Decorum, treat him with somewhat more Gentleness ; but he was too ignorant of Romances to imitate the Example of those suffering Lovers, and pass his Time in Hunting, and such other
Exer-

Exercises as he thought most conducive to extinguish a Flame he had all the Reason in the World to believe would never be rewarded. She was excessively mortify'd, to find she receiv'd no Letter, complaining at least of the Agonies he suffer'd in this Banishment, and no less griev'd to think, that she should now fall to the Lot of one, whom she had as real a Dislike to, as, thro' the Caprice of her Humour, she had affected to the other. Her Father seem'd now to have converted his former Tenderness for her into Austerity ; and, on her only offering something that look'd like a Desire of delaying this Marriage, commanded her to be silent ; and she was oblig'd to see all the Preparations for it going forward, without daring to open her Lips in Contradiction to them. The Eve of the destin'd Day at last arriv'd, and fill'd her with Horrors little different from Distraction.—Death or Beggary seem'd to her trifling Ills to that decreed for her, and, not able to submit to it, resolv'd to hazard all.—In fine, she left her Father's House by Night, and retir'd to a distant Relation, whom, with Tears and Prayers, she prevail'd upon to give her Shelter from the Cruelty of her Father. The Person she address'd knew very well the Miseries of an enforced Marriage, and for a Time conceal'd her ; but the enrag'd Parent took such Methods as soon discover'd to him where she was, and, when she least suspected it, seiz'd and conducted her Home : It would be needless to repeat in what Condition, and how much she suffer'd from the Reproaches of her Father, and all those of her Kindred,

who, not sensible of the true Motive of her Flight, imputed it to one less innocent. The intended Bridegroom not only flew from his Engagements, but contemn'd what he had so lately ador'd, making her ill Conduct, as he call'd it, the Subject of his Conversation in all Companies. The discreet Part of her Acquaintance knew not how to judge of her Behaviour, and those who most had lov'd her, on this mistaken Step, refrain'd their Visits: Those who envy'd her good Qualities rejoiced in an Opportunity of blasting her Reputation, and representing even the most innocent of her Actions as criminal.—Even this once tender Father look'd on her as a lost Child, and withdrew great Part of the Affection he had for her.—To prevent her from falling into any farther Inconveniencies, however, and silence, as much as he was able, the Censures of an unpitying World, he took a Resolution of secluding her in a Convent for Life, as he then threaten'd; but, as he afterwards acknowledged, he intended it only for a certain Time, 'till the Memory of what had past should be forgotten, and herself brought to a more reasonable Way of thinking. The Thoughts of being a *Nun* were no less dreadful to her than those of Marriage.—In spite of the Mortification she had receiv'd, she still lov'd the World, and flatter'd herself with being one Day able to make a shining Figure in it, to the Disappointment of her Enemies; but, alas! she took wrong Measures to gratify so laudable an Ambition. Terrify'd at the Thoughts of being compell'd to take the Vail, she made a
second

second Elopement: Nor could all her Father's Search avail to find her again. She sent a Letter entreating his Forgiveness, and reiterated Protestations, that no other Motive but to avoid a *Nunnery*, had oblig'd her to abscond, hoping that Time would make him more relenting to a Daughter, whom he once thought merited his Affection above any of his other Children; and that he would not give Ear to any Stories that might be told to her Disadvantage, and ended with an Assurance, that her Honour, and that of his Family, should be ever dearer to her than Life.

But all she wrote was far from mitigating the Indignation he was now possess'd of; he renewed his Search, spar'd neither Money, nor Labour, to discover the Place of her Retreat, but she was too wary, and too artful, not to escape all the Pursuit was made after her. She went not near any Person who knew her, never stirr'd out by Day, nor undisguis'd, and shifted her Lodgings so often, under various Names and Pretences, that it was impossible for any true Information to be given of her. For upwards of a Year had she sculk'd about in this Manner, living on the Sale of some Jewels she took with her; 'till one Evening, being in a Shop for something she wanted to buy, she heard two Gentlemen mention her Father as lately deceas'd, with this aggravating Circumstance, that it was the Behaviour of his Daughter had shorten'd his Days. This was a Shock indeed! scarce had she the Power to convey herself away, without testifying by some Action, how sad a Concern she had in their Discourse.

After

After she had vented in her little Privacy some Part of the Agitations of her Soul on this Occasion, having no longer the Authority of any one to dread, she appear'd publickly, but found herself wholly disregarded, even by those most near to her in Blood. Her Father, in the Height of his Passion against her, had struck her entirely out of his Testament ; and tho', to my Knowledge, he intended to alter it, and give her a Child's Portion, yet the ill Fate of *Marilla*, by one Accident or other, delay'd it ; and his Death happening so suddenly, that he had not the least Time, even as they say, to testify his Desires in any Particular, she was cut off from all the Expectations she was born to, and made an Alien to her Family. Every one now rejected, shunn'd her Sight ; her ill Conduct was the Pretence, but her Necessities were the real Excitement to this Usage ; and, among all the numerous Acquaintance she had in her Days of Happiness, she now found not one to pity or relieve her. Her Spirit was indeed too great to suffer her to make repeated Applications ; those who had once look'd slightly on her, were certain of being eas'd of any future Visits from her ; and, as great Minds become most haughty in Adversity, she no sooner found herself ill-treated by the World, than she resolv'd to contribute nothing toward rendering it more gentle, and, in her Turn, never met any Person by Accident whom she knew, without making them sensible, how much she despis'd the Injustice had been done her.

Being

Being reduced at last to want even the common Necessaries of Life, she took it into her Head to go to a Relation, who for many Years had liv'd far from Town, and knew little of the Particulars of her Affairs : She was at first kindly receiv'd, but had not been there many Months, before she perceiv'd a certain Weariness of her Company ; and at last a Sort of a commanding Air, which shewing her she was look'd upon but as a Dependant, and a kind of troublesome one too, made her Heart frequently ready to burst.

These Distresses had however very much chang'd her former Ideas ; she had never found that the Heroines of Romance were slighted for Want of Money, or that they ever stood in Need of any ; a mournful Experience convinc'd her, that Mankind was of a different Nature from what was represented in those Stories, and her Usage of poor *Carlos* often brought as many Tears into her Eyes, as the Sufferings it had occasion'd drew from her : But that was an Evil now past Redress ; she had heard nothing of him for a long Time, nor was there any Probability of their ever meeting more. Portionless as she was, a young Officer in the Army, who happen'd to be in those Parts, became passionately enamour'd of her : She receiv'd his Addresses with the utmost Indifference, not excited to it by the Motive which had sway'd her in the Time of *Carlos*, but because she really felt it ; yet so much had her Misfortunes chang'd her, that, having been one Day more than ordinary piqu'd with the Behaviour of the Family where she was, she
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all at once consented to marry him, and the very next Day made good her Promise.

This brought her into new Misfortunes, and such as before she had not any Idea of; and, as by obstinately flying from Marriage, she had began her Ruin, so, by precipitately running into that State, she compleated it. Her Husband was a Man of the most dissolute Principles imaginable; and, after the first Week, he became so, treated her with an Indifference, which could not but be stabbing to any Wife, much more to a Woman of her Humour; she saw herself slighted and abandon'd for the most Profligate of her Sex, with whom he pass'd his Days and Nights, never coming Home but to recover the Fatigue of his Debaucheries, and then return to them again. He had no Estate, and his Commission was insufficient to support his Extravagancies Abroad, so that at Home nothing but the Miseries of Penury was to be found.

Marilla was but sixteen when she became a Wife, all her Charms were in the Bloom, and the ill Usage of her Husband encourag'd many young Men of Condition, to make Offers of their Service to take her from this Scene of Woe; but not all the Assurances they propos'd of defending her, while Life continued, from the Frowns of Fortune, nor all the Hardships she so severely felt, had the Power to make her hesitate one Moment what Answer she should make, tho' unloving this most unworthy Husband, and unlov'd by him, she preferr'd a Life of Misery and Innocence with him, to all the Pomp of guilty
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Grandeur with any other Man. — Her Virtue stood like a Rock impregnable to all Efforts, and unshaken either by Force or Fraud. — Both it seems were try'd, and both alike found ineffectual. A Person who liv'd in the same House with her, and was an Eye-witness of her Conduct amidst these Trials, assur'd me with many Protestations, that never Woman was more greatly tempted, nor with greater Strength of Virtue resisted. Yet neither this, the Beauties of her Mind and Person, nor the exemplary and most amiable Patience, with which she bore the worst of Usage, had Power to reclaim the dissolute Possessor of so great a Treasure: He was, it seems, one of those Wretches who are only sensible to Injuries, and look on all good Offices and Benefits as Things of course, and what they have a Right to expect: Whether such a Disposition proceeds from Pride, or meerly Want of Sense, I will not take upon me to say, but, whichever it is, nothing can be more uncomfortable than to have any Concern with Persons of that Turn.

Tir'd out at last with a continued Series of Matters of Disquiet, and having lost the only Thing in which she took any Sort of Pleasure, an Infant of about five Months old, she resolv'd to quit the Society of a Man, who seem'd to take Pains to render himself as disagreeable as he could; she took the Opportunity of his being absent for a Fortnight, and went into a private Lodging, acquainting none with the Place of her Retreat, but such whose Secrecy she could depend upon.

But

But see the Inconsistency of some Tempers, he no sooner perceiv'd what she had done, than he behav'd with all the Distraction of the most violent Love and Despair ; swore that, if she did not return, or he was not successful enough to find her, nothing should persuade him to live, and scarce allow'd himself Time to eat or sleep for the Search he was perpetually making in Person, as well as employing others : At length he came where she was, and, with ten thousand Promises of reforming the Irregularities of his past Conduct, won on her Good-nature to forgive, and cohabit with him as before. After this he treated her with more good Manners, but his natural Tendency to an abandon'd Life by Degrees prevail'd, and, forgetting the Terms on which he had recover'd her, relaps'd into all his former Extravagancies. She continued with him, however, 'till Death gave her a final Divorce, which happen'd about five Years after their Marriage, at which Time she was no more than one and twenty.

Here, said *Acasto*, I must beg Leave to close my Narrative, what afterwards befel this unhappy Lady not seeming of a Piece with her foregoing Life ; besides the Accounts I have, of the remaining Part of her Adventures, are too dark and indistinct for me to repeat them, without Danger of being guilty of an Injustice either to her or Truth. All I can venture to say is, that her Misfortunes ended not with her Husband's Life, but rather fell more thick and heavy on her than ever ; and that a Person of any tolerable Degree of Penetration, may

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still discover in her the Ruins of a noble Mind, but not the least of a beautiful Person: Tho' now of an advanced Age, Grief has made a greater Waste than Time on her Charms; dejected, spiritless, oppress'd by Fortune, and an ill-natur'd censorious World, and doubtless more so by the sad Reflection, that all she suffers is owing to herself, she drags on a Life of Misery, obscure, unknown, unaided, and deserted by all but her own Fortitude.

I should indeed be sorry, said *Ethelinda*, to hear any Thing that might destroy my Admiration of this Lady's Virtues, or my Pity for her Sufferings; but I am apt to think *Acasto*, if you have heard different Accounts of her Behaviour since the Time you mention, that which is most in her Favour, is also the most just; for I cannot think a Mind, such as you have painted out to us, and which had so long withstood Temptations, could at last descend to any Thing unworthy of itself.

One cannot, Madam, be ascertain'd, reply'd *Acasto*, what Time, and Accidents may be able to produce in the most determin'd Minds, but so far I dare answer for *Marilla*, that she has never been capable of any mean or base Action; and that, if any Thing has happen'd derogatory to her former Character, the Cruelty of the World has exaggerated it into ten times its real Magnitude.

For my Part, said *Lucillius*, I can forgive her every Thing but her Behaviour to poor *Carlos*, and even that too, if the Relation of it may serve, as I am sure *Acasto* intended it,
for

for a Lesson to some Ladies, not to trifle too much with a Heart that adores them.

At these Words the whole Company turn'd their Eyes on *Emilia*, who, either to prevent any further Discourse on that Head, or because it really was so, reminded them, without seeming to regard what *Lucillius* had said, that it was very late; on which we all rose up, and, having paid the Compliments of the Night, withdrew to our respective Habitations.
