

Part 1

Evelyn

Evelyn

To Miss Mary Lloyd

The following Novel is by permission Dedicated, by her Obedt.
humble Servt.
The Author

In a retired part of the County of Sussex there is a village (for what I know to the Contrary) called Evelyn, perhaps one of the most beautiful Spots in the south of England. A Gentleman passing through it on horseback about twenty years ago, was so entirely of my opinion in this respect, that he put up at the little Alehouse in it and enquired with great earnestness whether there were any house to be lett in the parish. The Landlady, who as well as every one else in Evelyn was remarkably amiable, shook her head at this question, but seemed unwilling to give him any answer. He could not bear this uncertainty—yet knew not to obtain the information he desired. To repeat a question which had already appear'd to make the good woman uneasy was impossible. He turned from her in visible agitation. "What a situation am I in!" said he to himself as he walked to the window and threw up the sash. He found himself revived by the Air, which he felt to a much greater degree when he had opened the window than he had done before. Yet it was but for a moment. The agonizing pain of Doubt and Suspence again weighed down his Spirits. The good woman who had watched in eager silence every turn of his Countenance with that benevolence which characterizes the inhabitants of Evelyn, intreated him to tell her the cause of his uneasiness. "Is there anything, Sir, in my power to do that may releive your Greifs? Tell me in what manner I can sooth them, and beleive me that the freindly balm of Comfort and Assistance shall not be wanting; for indeed, Sir, I have a simpathetic Soul."

"Amiable Woman" (said Mr. Gower, affected almost to tears by this generous offer) "This Greatness of mind in one to whom I am almost a Stranger, serves but to make me the more warmly wish for a house in this sweet village. What would I not give to be your Neighbour, to be blessed with your Acquaintance, and with the farther knowledge of your virtues! Oh! with what pleasure would I form myself by such an

example! Tell me then, best of Women, is there no possibility?—I cannot speak—You know my Meaning—."

"Alas! Sir," replied Mrs. Willis, "there is none. Every house in this village, from the sweetness of the Situation, and the purity of the Air, in which neither Misery, Ill health, or Vice are ever wafted, is inhabited. And yet," (after a short pause) "there is a Family, who tho' warmly attached to the spot, yet from a peculiar Generosity of Disposition would perhaps be willing to oblige you with their house." He eagerly caught at this idea, and having gained a direction to the place, he set off immediately on his walk to it. As he approached the House, he was delighted with its situation. It was in the exact centre of a small circular paddock, which was enclosed by a regular paling, and bordered with a plantation of Lombardy poplars, and Spruce firs alternatively placed in three rows. A gravel walk ran through this beautiful Shrubbery, and as the remainder of the paddock was unincumbered with any other Timber, the surface of it perfectly even and smooth, and grazed by four white Cows which were disposed at equal distances from each other, the whole appearance of the place as Mr. Gower entered the Paddock was uncommonly striking. A beautifully-rounded, gravel road without any turn or interruption led immediately to the house. Mr. Gower rang; the Door was soon opened. "Are Mr. and Mrs. Webb at home?" "My Good Sir, they are," replied the Servant; And leading the way, conducted Mr. Gower upstairs into a very elegant Dressing room, where a Lady rising from her seat, welcomed him with all the Generosity which Mrs. Willis had attributed to the Family.

"Welcome best of Men. Welcome to this House, and to everything it contains. William, tell your Master of the happiness I enjoy—invite him to partake of it. Bring up some Chocolate immediately; Spread a Cloth in the dining Parlour, and carry in the venison pasty. In the mean time let the Gentleman have some sandwiches, and bring in a Basket of Fruit. Send up some Ices and a bason of Soup, and do not forget some Jellies and Cakes." Then turning to Mr. Gower, and taking out her purse, "Accept this, my good Sir. Believe me you are welcome to everything that is in my power to bestow. I wish my purse were weightier, but Mr. Webb must make up my deficiencies. I know he has cash in the house to the amount of an hundred pounds, which he shall bring you immediately." Mr. Gower felt overpowered by her generosity as he put the purse in his pocket, and from the excess of his Gratitude, could scarcely express himself intelligibly when he accepted her offer of the hundred pounds. Mr. Webb soon entered the room, and repeated every

protestation of Freindship and Cordiality which his Lady had already made. The Chocolate, the Sandwiches, the Jellies, the Cakes, the Ice, and the Soup soon made their appearance, and Mr. Gower having tasted something of all, and pocketed the rest, was conducted into the dining parlour, where he eat a most excellent Dinner and partook of the most exquisite Wines, while Mr. and Mrs. Webb stood by him still pressing him to eat and drink a little more. "And now my good Sir," said Mr. Webb, when Mr. Gower's repast was concluded, "what else can we do to contribute to your happiness and express the Affection we bear you. Tell us what you wish more to receive, and depend upon our gratitude for the communication of your wishes." "Give me then your house and Grounds; I ask for nothing else." "It is yours," exclaimed both at once; "from this moment it is yours." The Agreement concluded on and the present accepted by Mr. Gower, Mr. Webb rang to have the Carriage ordered, telling William at the same time to call the Young Ladies.

"Best of Men," said Mrs. Webb, "we will not long intrude upon your Time."

"Make no Apologies, dear Madam," replied Mr. Gower, "You are welcome to stay this half hour if you like it."

They both burst forth into raptures of Admiration at his politeness, which they agreed served only to make their Conduct appear more inexcusable in trespassing on his time.

The Young Ladies soon entered the room. The eldest of them was about seventeen, the other, several years younger. Mr. Gower had no sooner fixed his Eyes on Miss Webb than he felt that something more was necessary to his happiness than the house he had just received. Mrs. Webb introduced him to her daughter. "Our dear freind Mr. Gower, my Love—He has been so good as to accept of this house, small as it is, and to promise to keep it for ever." "Give me leave to assure you, Sir," said Miss Webb, "that I am highly sensible of your kindness in this respect, which from the shortness of my Father's and Mother's acquaintance with you, is more than usually flattering."

Mr. Gower bowed, "You are too obliging, Ma'am. I assure you that I like the house extremely, and if they would complete their generosity by giving me their eldest daughter in marriage with a handsome portion, I should have nothing more to wish for." This compliment brought a blush into the cheeks of the lovely Miss Webb, who seemed however to refer herself to her father and Mother. They looked delighted at each other. At length Mrs. Webb, breaking silence, said, "We bend under a weight of obligations to you which we can never repay. Take our girl, take our

Maria, and on her must the difficult task fall, of endeavouring to make some return to so much Beneficence." Mr. Webb added, "Her fortune is but ten thousand pounds, which is almost too small a sum to be offered." This objection however being instantly removed by the generosity of Mr. Gower, who declared himself satisfied with the sum mentioned, Mr. and Mrs. Webb, with their youngest daughter took their leave, and on the next day, the nuptials of their eldest with Mr. Gower were celebrated.

This amiable Man now found himself perfectly happy; united to a very lovely and deserving young woman, with an handsome fortune, an elegant house, settled in the village of Evelyn, and by that means enabled to cultivate his acquaintance with Mrs. Willis, could he have a wish ungratified? For some months he found that he could not, till one day as he was walking in the Shrubbery with Maria leaning on his arm, they observed a rose full-blown lying on the gravel; it had fallen from a rose tree which with three others had been planted by Mr. Webb to give a pleasing variety to the walk. These four Rose trees served also to mark the quarters of the Shrubbery, by which means the Traveller might always know how far in his progress round the Paddock he was got. Maria stooped to pick up the beautiful flower, and with all her Family Generosity presented it to her Husband. "My dear Frederic," said she, "pray take this charming rose." "Rose!" exclaimed Mr. Gower. "Oh! Maria, of what does not that remind me! Alas, my poor Sister, how have I neglected you!" The truth was that Mr. Gower was the only son of a very large Family, of which Miss Rose Gower was the thirteenth daughter. This Young Lady whose merits deserved a better fate than she met with, was the darling of her relations. From the clearness of her skin and the Brilliancy of her Eyes, she was fully entitled to all their partial affection. Another circumstance contributed to the general Love they bore her, and that was one of the finest heads of hair in the world. A few Months before her Brother's Marriage, her heart had been engaged by the attentions and charms of a young Man whose high rank and expectations seemed to foretell objections from his Family to a match which would be highly desirable to theirs. Proposals were made on the young Man's part, and proper objections on his Father's. He was desired to return from Carlisle where he was with his beloved Rose, to the family seat in Sussex. He was obliged to comply, and the angry father then finding from his Conversation how determined he was to marry no other woman, sent him for a fortnight to the Isle of Wight under the care of the Family Chaplin, with the hope of overcoming his Constancy by Time and Absence in a foreign Country. They accordingly prepared to bid a long adieu to England. The young

Nobleman was not allowed to see his Rosa. They set sail. A storm arose which baffled the arts of the Seamen. The Vessel was wrecked on the coast of Calshot and every Soul on board perished. This sad Event soon reached Carlisle, and the beautiful Rose was affected by it, beyond the power of Expression. It was to soften her affliction by obtaining a picture of her unfortunate Lover that her brother undertook a Journey into Sussex, where he hoped that his petition would not be rejected, by the severe yet afflicted Father. When he reached Evelyn he was not many miles from — Castle, but the pleasing events which befell him in that place had for a while made him totally forget the object of his Journey and his unhappy Sister. The little incident of the rose however brought everything concerning her to his recollection again, and he bitterly repented his neglect. He returned to the house immediately and agitated by Greif, Apprehension and Shame wrote the following Letter to Rosa.

Evelyn
July 14th

My dearest Sister,

As it is now four months since I left Carlisle, during which period I have not once written to you, You will perhaps unjustly accuse me of Neglect and Forgetfulness. Alas! I blush when I own the truth of your Accusation. Yet if you are still alive, do not think too harshly of me, or suppose that I could for a moment forget the situation of my Rose. Believe me I will forget you no longer, but will hasten as soon as possible to — Castle if I find by your answer that you are still alive. Maria joins me in every dutiful and affectionate wish, and I am yours sincerely.

F. Gower.

He waited in the most anxious expectation for an answer to his Letter, which arrived as soon as the great distance from Carlisle would admit of. But alas, it came not from Rosa.

Carlisle
July 17th

Dear Brother,

My Mother has taken the liberty of opening your Letter to poor Rose, as she has been dead these six weeks. Your long absence and continued Silence gave us all great uneasiness and hastened her to the Grave. Your Journey to — Castle therefore may be spared. You do not tell us where you have been since the time of

your quitting Carlisle, nor in any way account for your tedious absence, which gives us some surprise. We all unite in Compliments to Maria, and beg to know who she is.
Yr affectionate Sister,
M. Gower.

This Letter, by which Mr. Gower was obliged to attribute to his own conduct, his Sister's death, was so violent a shock to his feelings, that in spite of his living at Evelyn where Illness was scarcely ever heard of, he was attacked by a fit of the gout, which confining him to his own room afforded an opportunity to Maria of shining in that favourite character of Sir Charles Grandison's, a nurse. No woman could ever appear more amiable than Maria did under such circumstances, and at last by her unremitting attentions had the pleasure of seeing him gradually recover the use of his feet. It was a blessing by no means lost on him, for he was no sooner in a condition to leave the house, that he mounted his horse, and rode to —— Castle, wishing to find whether his Lordship softened by his Son's death, might have been brought to consent to the match, had both he and Rosa been alive. His amiable Maria followed him with her Eyes till she could see him no longer, and then sinking into her chair overwhelmed with Greif, found that in his absence she could enjoy no comfort.

Mr. Gower arrived late in the evening at the castle, which was situated on a woody Eminence commanding a beautiful prospect of the Sea. Mr. Gower did not dislike the situation, tho' it was certainly greatly inferior to that of his own house. There was an irregularity in the fall of the ground, and a profusion of old Timber which appeared to him ill-suited to the stile of the Castle, for it being a building of a very ancient date, he thought it required the Paddock of Evelyn lodge to form a Contrast, and enliven the structure. The gloomy appearance of the old Castle frowning on him as he followed it's winding approach, struck him with terror. Nor did he think himself safe, till he was introduced into the Drawing room where the Family were assembled to tea. Mr. Gower was a perfect stranger to every one in the Circle but tho' he was always timid in the Dark and easily terrified when alone, he did not want that more necessary and more noble courage which enabled him without a Blush to enter a large party of superior Rank, whom he had never seen before, and to take his Seat amongst them with perfect Indifference. The name of Gower was not unknown to Lord ——. He felt distressed and astonished; Yet rose and received him with all the politeness of a well-bred

Man. Lady — who felt a deeper Sorrow at the loss of her Son, than his Lordship's harder heart was capable of, could hardly keep her Seat when she found that he was the Brother of her lamented Henry's Rosa. "My Lord," said Mr. Gower as soon as he was seated, "You are perhaps surprised at receiving a visit from a Man whom you could not have the least expectation of seeing here. But my Sister, my unfortunate Sister, is the real cause of my thus troubling you: That luckless Girl is now no more—and tho' she can receive no pleasure from the intelligence, yet for the satisfaction of her Family I wish to know whether the Death of this unhappy Pair has made an impression on your heart sufficiently strong to obtain that consent to their Marriage which in happier circumstances you would not be persuaded to give Supposing that they now were both alive." His Lordship seemed lossed in astonishment. Lady — could not support the mention of her son, and left the room in tears; the rest of the Family remained attentively listening, almost persuaded that Mr. Gower was distracted. "Mr. Gower," replied his Lordship, "this is a very odd question. It appears to me that you are supposing an impossibility. No one can more sincerely regret the death of my Son than I have always done, and it gives me great concern to know that Miss Gower's was hastened by his. Yet to suppose them alive is destroying at once the Motive for a change in my sentiments concerning the affair." "My Lord," replied Mr. Gower in anger, "I see that you are a most inflexible Man, and that not even the death of your Son can make you wish his future Life happy. I will no longer detain your Lordship. I see, I plainly see that you are a very vile Man. And now I have the honour of wishing all your Lordships, and Ladyships a good Night." He immediately left the room, forgetting in the heat of his Anger the lateness of the hour, which at any other time would have made him tremble, and leaving the whole Company unanimous in their opinion of his being Mad. When however he had mounted his horse and the great Gates of the Castle had shut him out, he felt an universal tremor through out his whole frame. If we consider his Situation indeed, alone, on horseback, as late in the year as August, and in the day, as nine o'clock, with no light to direct him but that of the Moon almost full, and the Stars which alarmed him by their twinkling, who can refrain from pitying him? No house within a quarter of a mile, and a Gloomy Castle blackened by the deep shade of Walnuts and Pines, behind him. He felt indeed almost distracted with his fears, and shutting his Eyes till he arrived at the Village to prevent his seeing either Gipsies or Ghosts, he rode on a full gallop all the way.

On his return home, he rang the housebell, but no one appeared, a second time he rang, but the door was not opened, a third and a fourth with as little success, when observing the dining parlour window open he leapt in, and pursued his way through the house till he reached Maria's Dressing room, where he found all the Servants assembled at tea. Surprized at so very unusual a sight, he fainted, on his recovery he found himself on the Sofa, with his wife's maid kneeling by him, chafing his temples with Hungary water. From her he learned that his beloved Maria had been so much grieved at his departure that she died of a broken heart about 3 hours after his departure.

He then became sufficiently composed to give necessary orders for her funeral which took place the Monday following this being the Saturday. When Mr. Gower had settled the order of the procession he set out himself to Carlisle, to give vent to his sorrow in the bosom of his family. He arrived there in high health and spirits, after a delightful journey of 3 days and a 1/2. What was his surprize on entering the Breakfast parlour to see Rosa, his beloved Rosa, seated on a Sofa; at the sight of him she fainted and would have fallen had not a Gentleman sitting with his back to the door, started up and saved her from sinking to the ground—She very soon came to herself and then introduced this gentleman to her Brother as her Husband a Mr. Davenport.

"But my dearest Rosa," said the astonished Gower, "I thought you were dead and buried." "Why, my dear Frederick," replied Rosa "I wished you to think so, hoping that you would spread the report about the country and it would thus by some means reach —— Castle. By this I hoped some how or other to touch the hearts of its inhabitants. It was not till the day before yesterday that I heard of the death of my beloved Henry which I learned from Mr. Davenport who concluded by offering me his hand. I accepted it with transport, and was married yesterday." Mr. Gower, embraced his sister and shook hands with Mr. Davenport, he then took a stroll into the town. As he passed by a public house he called for a pot of beer, which was brought him immediately by his old friend Mrs. Willis.

Great was his astonishment at seeing Mrs. Willis in Carlisle. But not forgetful of the respect he owed her, he dropped on one knee, and received the frothy cup from her, more grateful to him than Nectar. He instantly made her an offer of his hand and heart, which she graciously condescended to accept, telling him that she was only on a visit to her cousin, who kept the Anchor and should be ready to return to Evelyn, whenever he chose. The next morning they were married and

immediately proceeded to Evelyn. When he reached home, he recollected that he had never written to Mr. and Mrs. Webb to inform them of the death of their daughter, which he rightly supposed they knew nothing of, as they never took in any newspapers. He immediately dispatched the following Letter.

Evelyn
Augst 19th 180—

Dearest Madam,
How can words express the poignancy of my feelings! Our Maria, our beloved Maria is no more, she breathed her last, on Saturday the 12th of Augst. I see you now in an agony of grief lamenting not your own, but my loss. Rest satisfied I am happy, possessed of my lovely Sarah what more can I wish for? I remain respectfully Yours.
F. Gower

Westgate Builgs
Augst 22nd

Generous, Best of Men,
How truly we rejoice to hear of your present welfare and happiness! and how truly grateful are we for your unexampled generosity in writing to condole with us on the late unlucky accident which befel our Maria. I have enclosed a draught on our banker for 30 pounds, which Mr. Webb joins with me in entreating you and the aimiable Sarah to accept.
Your most grateful,
Anne Augusta Webb

Mr. and Mrs. Gower resided many years at Evelyn enjoying perfect happiness the just reward of their virtues. The only alteration which took place at Evelyn was that Mr. and Mrs. Davenport settled there in Mrs. Willis's former abode and were for many years the proprietors of the White Horse Inn.

Part 2

Catharine

Catharine
(also known as *Kitty* or *The Bower*)

To Miss Austen

Madam,

Encouraged by your warm patronage of *The beautiful Cassandra*, and *The History of England*, which through your generous support, have obtained a place in every library in the Kingdom, and run through threescore Editions, I take the liberty of begging the same Exertions in favour of the following Novel, which I humbly flatter myself, possesses Merit beyond any already published, or any that will ever in future appear, except such as may proceed from the pen of Your Most Grateful Humble Servt.

The Author

Steventon, August 1792

Catharine had the misfortune, as many heroines have had before her, of losing her parents when she was very young, and of being brought up under the care of a maiden aunt, who while she tenderly loved her, watched over her conduct with so scrutinizing a severity, as to make it very doubtful to many people, and to Catharine amongst the rest, whether she loved her or not. She had frequently been deprived of a real pleasure through this jealousy; been sometimes obliged to relinquish a ball because an officer was to be there, or to dance with a partner of her aunt's introduction in preference to one of her own choice. But her spirits were naturally good, and not easily depressed, and she possessed such a fund of vivacity and good humour as could only be damped by some very serious vexation. Besides these antidotes against every disappointment, and consolations under them, she had another, which afforded her constant relief in all her misfortunes, and that was a fine shady bower, the work of her own infantine labours assisted by those of two young companions who had resided in the same village. To this bower, which terminated a very pleasant and retired walk in her aunt's garden, she always wandered whenever anything disturbed her, and it possessed such a charm over her senses, as constantly to tranquillize her mind and quiet her spirits. Solitude and reflection might perhaps have had the same effect in her bed chamber, yet habit had so strengthened the idea which

fancy had first suggested, that such a thought never occurred to Kitty who was firmly persuaded that her bower alone could restore her to herself. Her imagination was warm, and in her friendships, as well as in the whole tenure of her mind, she was enthusiastic. This beloved bower had been the united work of herself and two amiable girls, for whom since her earliest years, she had felt the tenderest regard. They were the daughters of the clergyman of the parish with whose family, while it had continued there, her aunt had been on the most intimate terms, and the little girls tho' separated for the greatest part of the year by the different modes of their education, were constantly together during the holidays of the Miss Wynnes. In those days of happy childhood, now so often regretted by Kitty, this arbour had been formed, and separated perhaps for ever from these dear friends, it encouraged more than any other place the tender and melancholy recollections of hours rendered pleasant by them, at once so sorrowful, yet so soothing!

It was now two years since the death of Mr. Wynne, and the consequent dispersion of his family who had been left by it in great distress. They had been reduced to a state of absolute dependance on some relations, who though very opulent and very nearly connected with them, had with difficulty been prevailed on to contribute anything towards their support. Mrs. Wynne was fortunately spared the knowledge and participation of their distress, by her release from a painful illness a few months before the death of her husband. The eldest daughter had been obliged to accept the offer of one of her cousins to equip her for the East Indies, and the infinitely against her inclinations had been necessitated to embrace the only possibility that was offered to her, of a maintenance. Yet it was one, so opposite to all her ideas of propriety, so contrary to her wishes, so repugnant to her feelings, that she would almost have preferred servitude to it, had choice been allowed her. Her personal attractions had gained her a husband as soon as she had arrived at Bengal, and she had now been married nearly a twelve month. Splendidly yet unhappily married. United to a man of double her own age, whose disposition was not amiable, and whose manners were displeasing, though his character was respectable. Kitty had heard twice from her friend since her marriage, but her letters were always unsatisfactory, and though she did not openly avow her feelings, yet every line proved her to be unhappy. She spoke with pleasure of nothing, but of those amusements which they had shared together and which could return no more, and seemed to have no happiness in view but that of returning to England again. Her sister had been taken by another relation the Dowager Lady Halifax as a

companion to her daughters, and had accompanied her family into Scotland about the same time of Cecilia's leaving England. From Mary therefore Kitty had the power of hearing more frequently, but her letters were scarcely more comfortable. There was not indeed that hopelessness of sorrow in her situation as in her sister's; she was not married, and could yet look forward to a change in her circumstances, but situated for the present without any immediate hope of it, in a family where, tho' all were her relations, she had no friend, she wrote usually in depressed spirits, which her separation from her sister and her sister's marriage had greatly contributed to make so. Divided thus from the two she loved best on Earth, while Cecilia and Mary were still more endeared to her by their loss, everything that brought a remembrance of them was doubly cherished, and the shrubs they had planted, and the keepsakes they had given were rendered sacred.

The living of Chetwynde was now in the possession of a Mr. Dudley, whose family unlike the Wynnes were productive only of vexation and trouble to Mrs. Percival and her niece. Mr. Dudley, who was the younger son of a very noble family, of a family more famed for their pride than their opulence, tenacious of his dignity, and jealous of his rights, was forever quarrelling, if not with Mrs. Percival herself, with her steward and tenants concerning tithes, and with the principal neighbours themselves concerning the respect and parade, he exacted. His wife, an ill-educated, untaught woman of ancient family, was proud of that family almost without knowing why, and like him too was haughty and quarrelsome, without considering for what. Their only daughter, who inherited the ignorance, the insolence, and pride of her parents, was from that beauty of which she was unreasonably vain, considered by them as an irresistible creature, and looked up to as the future restorer, by a Splendid Marriage, of the dignity which their reduced situation and Mr. Dudley's being obliged to take orders for a country living had so much lessened. They at once despised the Percivals as people of mean family, and envied them as people of fortune. They were jealous of their being more respected than themselves and while they affected to consider them as of no consequence, were continually seeking to lessen them in the opinion of the neighbourhood by scandalous and malicious reports. Such a family as this, was ill-calculated to console Kitty for the loss of the Wynnes, or to fill up by their society, those occasionally irksome hours which in so retired a situation would sometimes occur for want of a companion. Her aunt was most excessively fond of her, and miserable if she saw her for a moment out of spirits; Yet she lived in such constant apprehension

of her marrying imprudently if she were allowed the opportunity of choosing, and was so dissatisfied with her behaviour when she saw her with young men, for it was, from her natural disposition remarkably open and unreserved, that though she frequently wished for her niece's sake, that the neighbourhood were larger, and that she had used herself to mix more with it, yet the recollection of there being young men in almost every family in it, always conquered the wish. The same fears that prevented Mrs. Percival's joining much in the society of her neighbours, led her equally to avoid inviting her relations to spend any time in her house. She had therefore constantly regretted the annual attempt of a distant relation to visit her at Chetwynde, as there was a young man in the family of whom she had heard many traits that alarmed her. This son was however now on his travels, and the repeated solicitations of Kitty, joined to a consciousness of having declined with too little ceremony the frequent overtures of her friends to be admitted, and a real wish to see them herself, easily prevailed on her to press with great earnestness the pleasure of a visit from them during the summer. Mr. and Mrs. Stanley were accordingly to come, and Catharine, in having an object to look forward to, a something to expect that must inevitably relieve the dullness of a constant tête à tête with her aunt, was so delighted, and her spirits so elevated, that for the three or four days immediately preceding their arrival, she could scarcely fix herself to any employment. In this point Mrs. Percival always thought her defective, and frequently complained of a want of steadiness and perseverance in her occupations, which were by no means congenial to the eagerness of Kitty's disposition, and perhaps not often met with in any young person. The tediousness too of her aunt's conversation and the want of agreeable companions greatly increased this desire of change in her employments, for Kitty found herself much sooner tired of reading, working, or drawing, in Mrs. Percival's parlour than in her own arbour, where Mrs. Percival for fear of its being damp never accompanied her.

As her aunt prided herself on the exact propriety and neatness with which everything in her family was conducted, and had no higher satisfaction than that of knowing her house to be always in complete order, as her fortune was good, and her establishment ample, few were the preparations necessary for the reception of her visitors. The day of their arrival so long expected, at length came, and the noise of the coach and as it drove round the sweep, was to Catharine a more interesting sound, than the music of an Italian opera, which to most heroines is the height of enjoyment. Mr. and Mrs. Stanley were people of large fortune and

high fashion. He was a Member of the House of Commons, and they were therefore most agreeably necessitated to reside half the year in Town; where Miss Stanley had been attended by the most capital masters from the time of her being six years old to the last spring, which comprehending a period of twelve years had been dedicated to the acquirement of accomplishments which were now to be displayed and in a few years entirely neglected. She was elegant in her appearance, rather handsome, and naturally not deficient in abilities; but those years which ought to have been spent in the attainment of useful knowledge and mental improvement, had been all bestowed in learning drawing, Italian and music, more especially the latter, and she now united to these accomplishments, an understanding unimproved by reading and a mind totally devoid either of taste or judgement. Her temper was by nature good, but unassisted by reflection, she had neither patience under disappointment, nor could sacrifice her own inclinations to promote the happiness of others. All her ideas were towards the elegance of her appearance, the fashion of her dress, and the admiration she wished them to excite. She professed a love of books without reading, was lively without wit, and generally good humoured without merit. Such was Camilla Stanley; and Catharine, who was prejudiced by her appearance, and who from her solitary situation was ready to like anyone, tho' her understanding and judgement would not otherwise have been easily satisfied, felt almost convinced when she saw her, that Miss Stanley would be the very companion she wanted, and in some degree make amends for the loss of Cecilia and Mary Wynne. She therefore attached herself to Camilla from the first day of her arrival, and from being the only young people in the house, they were by inclination constant companions. Kitty was herself a great reader, tho' perhaps not a very deep one, and felt therefore highly delighted to find that Miss Stanley was equally fond of it. Eager to know that their sentiments as to books were similar, she very soon began questioning her new acquaintance on the subject; but though she was well read in modern history herself, she chose rather to speak first of books of a lighter kind, of books universally read and admired.

"You have read Mrs. Smith's novels, I suppose!" said she to her companion. "Oh! Yes," replied the other, "and I am quite delighted with them. They are the sweetest things in the world." "And which do you prefer of them?" "Oh! dear, I think there is no comparison between them—Emmeline is so much better than any of the others." "Many people think so, I know; but there does not appear so great a disproportion in their merits to me; do you think it is better written?" "Oh! I do not

know anything about that—but it is better in every thing. Besides, Ethelinde is so long." "That is a very common objection I believe," said Kitty, "But for my own part, if a book is well written, I always find it too short." "So do I, only I get tired of it before it is finished." "But did not you find the story of Ethelinde very interesting? And the descriptions of Grasmere, are not they beautiful?" "Oh! I missed them all, because I was in such a hurry to know the end of it." Then from an easy transition she added, "We are going to the Lakes this autumn, and I am quite mad with joy; Sir Henry Devereux has promised to go with us, and that will make it so pleasant, you know."

"I dare say it will; but I think it is a pity that Sir Henry's powers of pleasing were not reserved for an occasion where they might be more wanted. However I quite envy you the pleasure of such a scheme."

"Oh! I am quite delighted with the thoughts of it; I can think of nothing else. I assure you I have done nothing for this last month but plan what clothes I should take with me, and I have at last determined to take very few indeed besides my travelling dress, and so I advise you to do, when ever you go; for I intend in case we should fall in with any races, or stop at Matlock or Scarborough, to have some things made for the occasion."

"You intend then to go into Yorkshire?"

"I believe not—indeed I know nothing of the route, for I never trouble myself about such things. I only know that we are to go from Derbyshire to Matlock and Scarborough, but to which of them first, I neither know nor care. I am in hopes of meeting some particular friends of mine at Scarborough. Augusta told me in her last letter that Sir Peter talked of going; but then you know that is so uncertain. I cannot bear Sir Peter, he is such a horrid creature."

"He is, is he?" said Kitty, not knowing what else to say.

"Oh! he is quite shocking." Here the conversation was interrupted, and Kitty was left in a painful uncertainty, as to the particulars of Sir Peter's character; she knew only that he was horrid and shocking, but why, and in what, yet remained to be discovered. She could scarcely resolve what to think of her new acquaintance; she appeared to be shamefully ignorant as to the geography of England, if she had understood her right, and equally devoid of taste and information. Kitty was however unwilling to decide hastily; she was at once desirous of doing Miss Stanley justice, and of having her own wishes in her answered; she determined therefore to suspend all judgement for some time. After supper, the conversation turning on the state of affairs in the political world, Mrs. Percival, who was firmly of opinion that the whole race of mankind were

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