

Advice

Two anonymous letters

about 1740s

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1. Saterdag Morning 6 a clock

Tho their appear'd a great difference between our concern last night, yet I assure you it left so deep an impression on me that I haue suffer'd abundantly since the tenderness which you was? wittness to, was after you left us, againe repeate'd to mee with all the violence of pascion?, that bashfullness which in some measure was a confinement before you submitted ___to friendship, and made me at most doe where though an impossability, I could have ___they had loved me less, or I them, for to be only capable of hearing their greife without the least power of redress, was insupportable to so sincere a freindship as mine. Had you but heard what was said it wou'd have made you mad. Never as I ___more if they are particular to yours, for upon my word I find it so much more than I ___ thought that I shal rather Endavour to lessen it, then sing yr praises, lest I thind ther is more hopes of happyness then I haue reason at this time to beliue and that in consideration of thier ____, for danger there is non the imprecations that was used, if euer they saw you more after y you were married to another, the many times they made me promise never to ask it, never to name you, but if possible suss? the very thought of you, and all this concern was augment'd by the great tenderness which appear'd on yr part, which to

doe you justice was very moveing, you reproach'd me of not being sensible of when you suffer'd, but indeed yr thoughts were then unjust, for those Arguements of pascion whcih you let fall, went to my very soule, and tho I am more sincere then to tell you I feele yr anxiety equall to hers, yet I can swera to you that what you suffer giues me great uneasiness, so much that I beg you will take great consideraction before you resolve to marrie this frein? this advice I fear is taken with great disadvantage, my freinship? but upon my word tis meant with the utmost sincerity, and wou'd not be ___ ___ possibility to ___ yr happyness when you are sensible of yr misfortune, but I who know tis irrevocable? can't hinder my self from giuing you this caution, you can have no other inducement to marrie this woman but for fortune, and then as ur affaires are at present I'l? alow to her a strong reason but I ___ it won't be a lasting one, when yr estate is plentiful the uneasiness and little difficulties you now lye under, will then be forgott, and nothing will reamaine but the disagreeable wife, which can't be removed, I don't say this as the least reproach or accusing you of Mutability? but when I beilieve ____, thier can be no Expec-tation of happyness after marriage without love and tenderness, and that must proceed from esteem and not pascion, from merrit and not ___ only. now what esteem or value can you have for a creature you know so litle of, what family she is of, what character her relations have, whether this great fortune is made with so much honesty as to expect a blessing within, all this you can have only from report, and that from farr, whether she comes of healthy parents or mad, that may entaile misery to yr family for ever yet all this risque must he run for

fortune, when her principles are (I don't mean onl as to Religion) but moral vertunes, as truth and honour and good nature a ___ and gratefull temper. and I believe in a wise? chastity would be thought no time, all these you must take upon base hope only, and giue me leave to tell you thier are great ingredients to happyness as well as riches then giue me leave to lead you a little further, tho you are now very young and pleasure very grateful to yr last, uet there will goe off, and let me tell you tis a ___ resource _____ only when you are from home, to have yr children disagreeable to you, for that is certainly anex'd to you when you haue a contempt for yr wife, and really from such a woman as I haue heard her des-cribed, one cou'd haue no great pride or joy in the posterity. tis a melancholly thing to reflect that one is at the very height of ones good fortune that every year one must sensible lessen, and yet this will I fear be yr fate if you doe marrie this woman, remember what you told me, that you shou'd but esteem her as a Servant, that you should ___ her at yr table, that instead of an agreeable conversation, you wou'd compound? to have her neuer talk. can you think this and propose a ___ happyness, can you be pleased to have children by such a creature, and thou you may be excused for a litle time, if you run after every woman, or if ___keep to one, yet you know the world so well that all ___ things when you are a little more advanc'd in years, will turn to your contempt and be accompted? Weakness and indeed lessen your character in the world, for when one has con-sidered all things the greatest tranquillity wee can propose in this life is romantick happiness. Which I take you to be the most incline'd to, of any man I ever knew. And when I reflect on

all these consideracions you surprize me when you make it difficult to determin, when ___ that can be said on the other side is only plenty? In present, should my poor Ld Lincoln does this, I think it were so reasonable, that t'were a sin, to not assist him in it, but for you who are heir to so vast an Estate, and can't be kept out of one long, for by the course of nature your uncle can't live many years, not half so many as you'le have to repent of your marriage when the necessity is part, nay necessity you have none, for though you have not what I cou'd wish you, yet you have ___ ___ make you envie ___ least to live single, which I wou'd doe till my fortune was increased, but if you marrie this Woman you put it out of your power to be Ever happy. I have not all this time mention'd the obstacle which to me wou'd be of greatest force an Inclination to another, and one that has all the merits that is poss-ible? to justifie ones choice, to love this Woman with that sincerity ___ I really believe you doe, to quit the seeing her for ever, and not only that but to ----- be the occasion of her being miserable so long [as] she lives, these reflections will be very anxious? And give a great ___ To all your plenty, and with this result. That what is done can never bee retrieved for all the torments all the advantages every thing that this world can give is nothing in competition with her virtue, for that ___ unmoveable to Eternity. I depend on your goodness for a pardon for in tenderness to her, and honour and friendship to mee you will act with all the strictness and caution imaginable in this affair, consider tis a thousand times better to doe a severe thing to her, then to bear a reproach from her. Dear deare? Sir forgive me whatever I have said, but realy she was so much concern'd that I cou'd not ___ to

___ tell I had ___ to you, and that which was an addition to her concern was the ___ you Expressed to her, she told me a hundred times that she belieu'd you lou'd her passionately, and that she should be unhappy in the belieue that you was soe, if you should marrie this woman, tis not to be repeated the tender things she said of you and that she tool nothing ill of you, twas nothing but her own ill fate, wish'd her self dead a hundred times, swore solely that if you married she would never see you more, she knew t'would be the greatest difficulty she cou'd undertake, -----___then consent (which she must doe) if she saw you after you were married, she wou'd much sooner be the occasion of her own death. She really said so many things of this nature and in so resolute manner that she frighted me to hear her. I ask'd her if she knew what she said, she said very well, and that she thought self murther more answerable to God almighty, then to live in what she thought as sin, for one might be an act of passion, the other a deliberate sin, which she believed damnation, but in those things the conscience was the guide, it was her opinion, and therefore t'was certainly the least fault in her. I cou'd write? Till I see you but it woud be only repetition but I really believe? Between religion and inclination, she is capable of doeing any think that is desperate, she told me that? of she ever saw you at my house after you were married, that she woud never speak to me so long as she liued, so that if I had any kindess for her I must then take as much paines to avoid as I did now to promote, these were al- Most her last words to me, soe I leaue you to judge if I have not reason to Say what I _____ if you heare any confirmation of this send an excuse and don't come

tomorrow, but if you doe not then don't disappoint if you can possibly avoid it, because she is now so uneasie and I belieue she will think that your cause, which I wou'd not haue her doe, unless it really were soe, but whether you come or not, I beg you will neuer mention to her that I haue wrote this letter to you, for I me sure she wou'd take it mortally ill Of me and lme sure I have no other intention then to ___her and be ___to you which I hope I shall always have reason to conteneue and that you Will never engage me to be with the utmost truth and inclination Deare deare mr Onslow yours.

Advice

2. Sunday night near 2 a clock

The lettre from me so soon comes I believe very unexpected, but you can't imagine that I wou'd part from LH: till I knew the occasion of her concern, and then? I cou'd not hinder my self from writing to please Mr Onlsow. She assur'd me that her un-easiness did not proceed from any fault of yrs. nothing but her own ill fortune which she feard wou'd persue her to her death. and this refelction renew'd her passion to a very great degree, she told me that she beleued yr kindness and intention _____ in case as t'was possible, but she fear'd this woman had an inclination to you, and that in obedience to yr parents and consideraction of yr interest, you wou'd bring yourself to consent to Marrie her, and then she must bee for ever miserable, t'was impossible for me to see her suffer so much, and not ___ a great deale with her however till I had more reasons to dispaire, I use'd my utmost Endeavour to divert her from this melancholy thought, I said I hoped she had no reason to fear, and that if it were so, she must bear it ? as well as she coud, then I dare say you woud be as unhappy as shee, she said no, that was imposable, for her kindness to you was so much stronger, that if she did not marie you she woud never marrie while she liued, which is more then she ever said before, tis too long to repeat all her expressions, but in fine, I find her inclination to you so much increasd, that I must entreat you to consider seriously be for you processd too farr, in what may be her inevitable ruine, I am the more particular in this both in

consideration of the tennderness I have for her and because hitherto I have bin not only instrumentall, but in truth the

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[OVERLEAF]

of whatever the Event of this will prove, it is at my house only that you have Ever Converst wtih her, so that her inclination is in a great measure oweing to me, for from the hopes of her being happy with you, I have sooth'd and indulg'd her kindness to you, which is now much greter than you believe or indeed I thought for she has said so many things to me to night that I am really under great concern, and beg for gods sake you will consider againe if their can no way be thought on for you to marrie her wither with consent or privately (which tho you may say what you please to the contrary) you know may easily be done, for when you can say that if she wou'd consent to what you desire, before she shoud suffer any scandal you wou'd Marrie her, and if you coud venture disobliging of parents then, I'm sure you run as much less risque in marring her before she has deserved so ill an oppinion as that must create, or if it is soe great an impossibility for you to marrie her now I think in Justice you ought to giue her some assurances that you will not marrie any one else, and not ler her engage her inclinations so farr as to be Eternally un happy, upon an uncertainty, but I shall insist upon this, since it is a subject that yr inclination must direct you in, much more than anything I can say all I shall troble you with is to assure you that she suffers more than you can imagin, then if this is the least grownd for you to but think you had marrie this woman it will be the most charitable

thing you can doe, to never see poor LH more, I know this sounds harsh, and will appear so, but upon my word in reality is the kindest thing you can doe, for indeed every time that you see her will be an addition to her misfortune, and for my part is what I shall never forgive my self being the occasion of. so beg thee?