

PAMELA

LETTER X

DEAR MOTHER,

You and my good father may wonder you have not had a letter from me in so many weeks; but a sad, sad scene, has been the occasion of it. For to be sure, now it is too plain, that all your cautions were well grounded. O my dear mother! I am miserable, truly miserable!—But yet, don't be frightened, I am honest!—God, of his goodness, keep me so!

O this angel of a master! this fine gentleman! this gracious benefactor to your poor Pamela! who was to take care of me at the prayer of his good dying mother; who was so apprehensive for me, lest I should be drawn in by Lord Davers's nephew, that he would not let me go to Lady Davers's: This very gentleman (yes, I must call him gentleman, though he has fallen from the merit of that title) has degraded himself to offer freedoms to his poor servant! He has now shewed himself in his true colours; and, to me, nothing appear so black, and so frightful.

I have not been idle; but had writ from time to time, how he, by sly mean degrees, exposed his wicked views; but somebody stole my letter, and I know not what has become of it. It was a very long one. I fear, he that was mean enough to do bad things, in one respect, did not stick at this. But be it as it will, all the use he can make of it will be, that he may be ashamed of his part; I not of mine: for he will see I was resolved to be virtuous, and gloried in the honesty of my poor parents.

I will tell you all, the next opportunity; for I am watched very narrowly; and he says to Mrs. Jervis, This girl is always scribbling; I think she may be better employed. And yet I work all hours with my needle, upon his linen, and the fine linen of the family; and am, besides, about flowering him a waistcoat.—But, oh! my heart's broke almost; for what am I likely to have for my reward, but shame and disgrace, or else ill words, and hard treatment! I'll tell you all soon, and hope I shall find my long letter.

Your most afflicted DAUGHTER.

May-be, I he and him too much: but it is his own fault if I do. For why did he lose all his dignity with me?

LETTER XI

DEAR MOTHER,

Well, I can't find my letter, and so I'll try to recollect it all, and be as brief as I can. All went well enough in the main for some time after my letter but one. At last, I saw some reason to suspect; for he would look upon me, whenever he saw me, in such a manner, as shewed not well; and one day he came to me, as I was in the summer-house in the little garden, at work with my needle, and Mrs. Jervis was just gone from me; and I would have gone out, but he said, No don't go, Pamela; I have something to say to you; and you always fly me when I come near you, as if you were afraid of me.

I was much out of countenance, you may well think; but said, at last, It does not become your good servant to stay in your presence, sir, without your business required it; and I hope I shall always know my place.

Well, says he, my business does require it sometimes; and I have a mind you should stay to hear what I have to say to you.

I stood still confounded, and began to tremble, and the more when he took me by the hand; for now no soul was near us.

My sister Davers, said he, (and seemed, I thought, to be as much at a loss for words as I,) would have had you live with her; but she would not do for you what I am resolved to do, if you continue faithful and obliging. What say'st thou, my girl? said he, with some eagerness; had'st thou not rather stay with me, than go to my sister Davers? He looked so, as filled me with affrightment; I don't know how; wildly, I thought.

I said, when I could speak, Your honour will forgive me; but as you have no lady for me to wait upon, and my good lady has been now dead this twelvemonth, I had rather, if it would not displease you, wait upon Lady Davers, because—

I was proceeding, and he said, a little hastily—Because you are a little fool, and know not what's good for yourself. I tell you I will make a gentlewoman of you, if you be obliging, and don't stand in your own light; and so saying, he put his arm about me, and kissed me!

Now, you will say, all his wickedness appeared plainly. I struggled and trembled, and was so benumbed with terror, that I sunk down, not in a fit, and yet not myself; and I found myself in his arms, quite void of strength; and he kissed me two or three times, with frightful eagerness.—At last I burst from him, and was getting out of the summer-house; but he held me back, and shut the door.

I would have given my life for a farthing. And he said, I'll do you no harm, Pamela; don't be afraid of me. I said, I won't stay. You won't, hussy! said he: Do you know whom you speak to? I lost all fear, and all respect, and said, Yes, I do, sir, too well!—Well may I forget that I am your servant, when you forget what belongs to a master.

I sobbed and cried most sadly. What a foolish hussy you are! said he: Have I done you any harm? Yes, sir, said I, the greatest harm in the world: You have taught me to forget myself and what belongs to me, and have lessened the distance that fortune has made between us, by demeaning yourself, to be so free to a poor servant. Yet, sir, I will be bold to say, I am honest, though poor: and if you was a prince, I would not be otherwise.

He was angry, and said, Who would have you otherwise, you foolish slut! Cease your blubbering. I own I have demeaned myself; but it was only to try you. If you can keep this matter secret, you'll give me the better opinion of your prudence; and here's something, said he, putting some gold in my hand, to make you amends for the fright I put you in. Go, take a walk in the garden, and don't go in till your blubbering is over: and I charge you say nothing of what is past, and all shall be well, and I'll forgive you.

I won't take the money, indeed, sir, said I, poor as I am I won't take it. For, to say truth, I thought it looked like taking earnest, and so I put it upon the bench; and as he seemed vexed and confused at what he had done, I took the opportunity to open the door, and went out of the summer-house.

He called to me, and said, Be secret; I charge you, Pamela; and don't go in yet, as I told you.

O how poor and mean must those actions be, and how little must they make the best of gentlemen look, when they offer such things as are unworthy of themselves, and put it into the power of their inferiors to be greater than they!

I took a turn or two in the garden, but in sight of the house, for fear of the worst; and breathed upon my hand to dry my eyes, because I would not be too disobedient. My next shall tell you more.

Pray for me, my dear father and mother: and don't be angry I have not yet run away from this house, so late my comfort and delight, but now my terror and anguish. I am forced to break off hastily.

Your dutiful and honest DAUGHTER.

LETTER XII

DEAR MOTHER,

Well, I will now proceed with my sad story. And so, after I had dried my eyes, I went in, and began to ruminate with myself what I had best to do. Sometimes I thought I would leave the house and go to the next town, and wait an opportunity to get to you; but then I was at a loss to resolve whether to take away the things he had given me or no, and how to take them away: Sometimes I thought to leave them behind me, and only go with the clothes on my back, but then I had two miles and a half, and a byway, to the town; and being pretty well dressed, I might come to some harm, almost as bad as what I would run away from; and then may-be, thought I, it will be reported, I have stolen something, and so was forced to run away; and to carry a bad name back with me to my dear parents, would be a sad thing indeed!—O how I wished for my grey russet again, and my poor honest dress, with which you fitted me out, (and hard enough too it was for you to do it!) for going to this place, when I was not twelve years old, in my good lady's days! Sometimes I thought of telling Mrs. Jervis, and taking her advice, and only feared his command to be secret; for, thought I, he may be ashamed of his actions, and never attempt the like again: And as poor Mrs. Jervis depended upon him, through misfortunes, that had attended her, I thought it would be a sad thing to bring his displeasure upon her for my sake.

In this quandary, now considering, now crying, and not knowing what to do, I passed the time in my chamber till evening; when desiring to be excused going to supper, Mrs. Jervis came up to me, and said, Why must I sup without you, Pamela? Come, I see you are troubled at something; tell me what is the matter.

I begged I might be permitted to be with her on nights; for I was afraid of spirits, and they would not hurt such a good person as she. That was a silly excuse, she said; for why was not you afraid of spirits before?—(Indeed I did not think of that.) But you shall be my bed-fellow with all my heart, added she, let your reason be what it will; only come down to supper. I begged to be excused; for, said I, I have been crying so, that it will be taken notice of by my fellow-servants; and I will hide nothing from you, Mrs. Jervis, when we are alone.

She was so good to indulge me; but made haste to come up to bed; and told the servants, that I should be with her, because she could not rest well, and would get me to read her to sleep; for she knew I loved reading, she said.

When we were alone, I told her all that had passed; for I thought, though he had bid me not, yet if he should come to know I had told, it would be no worse; for to keep a secret of such a nature, would be,

as I apprehended, to deprive myself of the good advice which I never wanted more; and might encourage him to think I did not resent it as I ought, and would keep worse secrets, and so make him do worse by me. Was I right, my dear mother?

Mrs. Jervis could not help mingling tears with my tears; for I cried all the time I was telling her the story, and begged her to advise me what to do; and I shewed her my dear father's two letters, and she praised the honesty and editing of them, and said pleasing things to me of you both. But she begged I would not think of leaving my service; for, said she, in all likelihood, you behaved so virtuously, that he will be ashamed of what he has done, and never offer the like to you again: though, my dear Pamela, said she, I fear more for your prettiness than for anything else; because the best man in the land might love you: so she was pleased to say. She wished it was in her power to live independent; then she would take a little private house, and I should live with her like her daughter.

And so, as you ordered me to take her advice, I resolved to tarry to see how things went, except he was to turn me away; although, in your first letter, you ordered me to come away the moment I had any reason to be apprehensive. So, dear father and mother, it is not disobedience, I hope, that I stay; for I could not expect a blessing, or the good fruits of your prayers for me, if I was disobedient.

All the next day I was very sad, and began my long letter. He saw me writing, and said (as I mentioned) to Mrs. Jervis, That girl is always scribbling; methinks she might find something else to do, or to that purpose. And when I had finished my letter, I put it under the toilet in my late lady's dressing-room, whither nobody comes but myself and Mrs. Jervis, besides my master; but when I came up again to seal it, to my great concern, it was gone; and Mrs. Jervis knew nothing of it; and nobody knew of my master's having been near the place in the time; so I have been sadly troubled about it: But Mrs. Jervis, as well as I, thinks he has it, some how or other; and he appears cross and angry, and seems to shun me, as much as he said I did him. It had better be so than worse!

But he has ordered Mrs. Jervis to bid me not pass so much time in writing; which is a poor matter for such a gentleman as he to take notice of, as I am not idle other ways, if he did not resent what he thought I wrote upon. And this has no very good look.

But I am a good deal easier since I lie with Mrs. Jervis; though, after all, the fears I live in on one side, and his frowning and displeasure at what I do on the other, make me more miserable than enough.

O that I had never left my little bed in the loft, to be thus exposed to temptations on one hand, or disgusts on the other! How happy was I awhile ago! How contrary now!—Pity and pray for

Your afflicted
PAMELA.

LETTER XXX

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,

I write again, though, may be, I shall bring it to you in my pocket: for I shall have no writing, nor writing-time, I hope, when I come to you. This is Wednesday morning, and I shall, I hope, set out to you to-morrow morning; but I have had more trials and more vexations; but of another complexion too a little, though all from the same quarter.

Yesterday my master, after he came from hunting, sent for me. I went with great terror: for I expected he would storm, and be in a fine passion with me for my freedom of speech before: so I was resolved to begin first, with submission, to disarm his anger; and I fell upon my knees as soon as I saw him; and said, Good sir, let me beseech you, as you hope to be forgiven yourself, and for the sake of my dear good lady your mother, who recommended me to you with her last words, to forgive me all my faults; and only grant me this favour, the last I shall ask you, that you will let me depart your house with peace and quietness of mind, that I may take such a leave of my dear fellow-servants as befits me; and that my heart be not quite broken.

He took me up, in a kinder manner than ever I had known; and he said, Shut the door, Pamela, and come to me in my closet: I want to have a little serious talk with you. How can I, sir, said I, how can I! and wrung my hands. O pray, sir, let me go out of your presence, I beseech you! By the God that made me, said he, I'll do you no harm. Shut the parlour door, and come to me in my library.

He then went into his closet, which is his library, and full of rich pictures besides; a noble apartment, though called a closet, and next the private garden, into which it has a door that opens. I shut the parlour door, as he bid me; but stood at it irresolute. Place some confidence in me, said he: Surely you may, when I have spoken thus solemnly. So I crept towards him with trembling feet, and my heart throbbing through my handkerchief. Come in, said he, when I bid you. I did so. Pray, sir, said I, pity and spare me. I will, said he, as I hope to be saved. He sat down upon a rich settee; and took hold of my hand, and said, Don't doubt me, Pamela. From this moment I will no more consider you as my servant: and I desire you'll not use me with ingratitude for the kindness I am going to express towards you. This a little emboldened me; and he said, holding both my hands between his, You have too much wit and good sense not to discover, that I, in spite of my heart, and all the pride of it, cannot but love you. Yes, look up to me, my sweet-faced girl! I must say I love you; and have put on a behaviour to you, that was much against my heart, in hopes to frighten you from your reservedness. You see I own it ingenuously; and don't play your sex upon me for it.

I was unable to speak; and he, seeing me too much oppressed with confusion to go on in that strain, said, Well, Pamela, let me know in what situation of life is your father: I know he is a poor man; but is he as low and as honest as he was when my mother took you?

Then I could speak a little; and with a down look, (and I felt my face glow like fire,) I said, Yes, sir, as poor and as honest too; and that is my pride. Says he, I will do something for him, if it be not your fault, and make all your family happy. All, sir, said I, he is happier already than ever he can be, if his daughter's innocence is to be the price of your favour: and I beg you will not speak to me on the only side that can wound me. I have no design of that sort, said he. O sir, said I, tell me not so, tell me not so!—'Tis easy, said he, for me to be the making of your father, without injuring you. Well, sir, said I, if this can be done, let me know how; and all I can do with innocence shall be the study and practice of my life.—But, O! what can such a poor creature as I do, and do my duty?—Said he, I would have you stay a week or fortnight only, and behave yourself with kindness to me; I stoop to beg it of you, and you shall see all shall turn out beyond your expectation. I see, said he, you are going to answer otherwise than I would have you; and I begin to be vexed I should thus meanly sue; and so I will say, that your behaviour before honest Longman, when I used you as I did, and you could so well have vindicated yourself, has quite charmed me. And though I am not pleased with all you said yesterday, while I was in the closet, yet you have moved me more to admire you than before; and I am awakened to see more worthiness in you, than ever I saw in any lady in the world. All the servants, from the highest to the lowest, doat upon you,

instead of envying you; and look upon you in so superior a light, as speaks what you ought to be. I have seen more of your letters than you imagine, (This surprised me!) and am quite overcome with your charming manner of writing, so free, so easy, and many of your sentiments so much above your years, and your sex; and all put together, makes me, as I tell you, love you to extravagance. Now, Pamela, when I have stooped to acknowledge all this, oblige me only to stay another week or fortnight, to give me time to bring about some certain affairs, and you shall see how much you may find your account in it.

I trembled to find my poor heart giving way.—O good sir, said I, spare a poor girl that cannot look up to you, and speak. My heart is full; and why should you wish to undo me?—Only oblige me, said he, to stay a fortnight longer, and John shall carry word to your father, that I will see him in the time, either here, or at the Swan in his village. O sir, said I, my heart will burst; but, on my bended knees, I beg you to let me go to-morrow, as I designed: and don't offer to tempt a poor creature, whose whole will would be to do yours, if my virtue would permit!—I shall permit it, said he; for I intend no injury to you, God is my witness! Impossible! said I; I cannot, sir, believe you, after what has passed: How many ways are there to undo poor creatures! Good God, protect me this one time, and send me but to my dear father's cot in safety!—Strange, d—d fate! said he, that when I speak so solemnly, I can't be believed!—What should I believe, sir? said I, what can I believe? What have you said, but that I am to stay a fortnight longer? and what then is to become of me?—My pride of birth and fortune (d—n them both! said he, since they cannot obtain credit with you, but must add to your suspicions) will not let me descend all at once; and I ask you but a fortnight's stay, that, after this declaration, I may pacify those proud demands upon me.

O how my heart throbb'd! and I began (for I did not know what I did) to say the Lord's prayer. None of your beads to me Pamela! said he; thou art a perfect nun, I think.

But I said aloud, with my eyes lifted up to heaven, Lead me not into temptation: but deliver me from evil, O my good God! He hugged me in his arms, and said, Well, my dear girl, then you stay this fortnight, and you shall see what I will do for you—I'll leave you a moment, and walk into the next room, to give you time to think of it, and to shew you I have no design upon you. Well, this, I thought, did not look amiss.

He went out, and I was tortured with twenty different doubts in a minute; sometimes I thought that to stay a week or fortnight longer in this house to obey him, while Mrs. Jervis was with me, could do no great harm: But then, thought I, how do I know what I may be able to do? I have withstood his anger; but may I not relent at his kindness?—How shall I stand that.—Well, I hope, thought I, by the same protecting grace in which I will always confide!—But, then, what has he promised? Why, he will make my poor father and mother's life comfortable. O! said I to myself, that is a rich thought; but let me not dwell upon it, for fear I should indulge it to my ruin.—What can he do for me, poor girl as I am!—What can his greatness stoop to! He talks, thought I, of his pride of heart, and pride of condition; O these are in his head, and in his heart too, or he would not confess them to me at such an instant. Well then, thought I, this can be only to seduce me.—He has promised nothing.—But I am to see what he will do, if I stay a fortnight; and this fortnight, thought I again, is no such great matter; and I shall see in a few days how he carries it.—But then, when I again reflected upon this distance between him and me, and his now open declaration of love, as he called it; and that after this he would talk with me on that subject more plainly than ever, and I shall be less armed, may be, to withstand him; and then I bethought myself, why, if he meant no dishonour, he should not speak before Mrs. Jervis; and the odious frightful closet came again into my head, and my narrow escape upon it; and how easy it might be for him to send Mrs. Jervis and the maids out of the way; and so that all the mischief he designed me might be

brought about in less than that time; I resolved to go away and trust all to Providence, and nothing to myself. And how ought I to be thankful for this resolution!—as you shall hear.

But just as I have writ to this place, John sends me word, that he is going this minute your way; and so I will send you so far as I have written, and hope by to-morrow night, to ask your blessings, at your own poor, but happy abode, and tell you the rest by word of mouth; and so I rest, till then, and for ever, Your dutiful DAUGHTER.