

“The Mad Exploit She Had Undertaken”: A Critical Edition of Eliza Haywood’s *The Female Spectator* Book 14, Letter 1

Introduction

Like the characters masquerading in her early amatory fiction, Eliza Haywood’s biography is masked in obscurity. Here are some facts that scholars agree on. Haywood was born the daughter of a London shopkeeper (probably) in 1690, married (perhaps) in about 1710 and (probably) left him between 1715-1720.¹ She associated early in her career with Whigs such as Richard Steele (who with Joseph Addison co-founded *The Spectator*, from which Haywood’s *Female Spectator* derives its name) and Daniel Defoe, and was publicly criticized by Alexander Pope as a “stupid, infamous, scribbling woman” in 1731. She produced little during the 1730s and reappeared on the literary scene in 1744 as the author of *The Female Spectator*.

Haywood literary criticism saw a boom in the late 20th century after feminists unearthed her.² Only since about 2010, though, has her *Female Spectator* garnered the serious attention of scholars, despite its historically significant status as the first periodical by and for women and despite the fact that it was Haywood’s most popular work during her lifetime. Previously, scholars understood *The Female Spectator* as Haywood’s “testament to her shift away from the audacity that distinguished her earlier writings, toward a more sober didacticism allegedly characteristic of her later years as a writer” (Girten, p. 56). Kristin Girten counters that understanding, participating in the newer critical framework of viewing *The Female Spectator* as subtly subversive. Along with Kathryn King’s highly lauded *Political Biography of Eliza Haywood* and Lynn Wright and Donald Newman’s *Fair Philosopher: Eliza Haywood and The Female Spectator*, I advance the persona of Haywood, even “late” Haywood, as a political and philosophical writer, wisely navigating the circumstances afforded her as one of the most prolific (in terms of genre), 18th-century women writers. In 1786, the British Royal Society recognized a female philosopher for the very first time: Caroline Herschel, whose discovery Frances Burney termed “the first lady’s comet” (Girten, p. 60). Haywood and her periodical’s “correspondents” were dubbed the “fair philosophers” 42 years before that, in *The Gentleman’s Magazine* (*Fair*

¹ Previously, scholars understood Haywood to have married the Rev. Valentine Haywood; however, according to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and other sources, this theory has been discredited (Backscheider).

² For an example, see Helen Koon’s seminal article, “Eliza Haywood and the *Female Spectator*.” *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 1, 1978, pp. 43-55.

Philosopher 15).³ While “other texts by women from the same period are even more overt in their challenge to gender disparity” (Girten, p. 70)—including those by Haywood’s younger self—*The Female Spectator* persuades in a different, perhaps more politically savvy and subtle way.

Thomas Gardner issued *The Female Spectator* monthly for two years, from April 1744 to May 1746, then less than two years later released a 4-volume reprint of the 24 “books,” at about 15,000 words per volume, showcasing its popularity and status. Dividing the periodical into so-called “books” and “volumes,” coupled with the hefty word count, likely served to increase the prestige and perceived value of the publication. Each book contains an essay on a single topic, with illustrative anecdotes sent in by “correspondents,” which Haywood might have written herself. Detailed, championing moral behavior and ways of thinking, and adorned with editorial and philosophical flair, these books have been compared to miniature novels, despite their issuance as journalism.⁴ This is a critical edition of the 14th of those 25 miniature, novel-like books, containing also the dedicatory epistle of *The Female Spectator* for additional context.

For a woman to earn a living as a professional writer in the 18th century as Haywood did—when doing so was often equated to prostitution—required constant vigilance and diplomacy.⁵ Cheryl Turner has examined how women writers benefited from sustained relationships with publishers, and scholars have focused on Haywood’s relationship with Gardner, her frequent publisher late in her career, but there exists no sustained study of Haywood’s relationship with her patrons such as Juliana Colyear, the Duchess of Leeds. Sarah Prescott writes that “Eliza Haywood’s participation in and use of patronage has often been overlooked in favour of recent assessments of her as working almost exclusively in the world of the booksellers and printers” (p. 116), and King writes that “further research on Haywood’s dedicatory practices over the long trajectory of her writing life is needed before we can draw conclusions about the relationship between Haywood’s strategies as an author and the forms of patronage available to her” (*Fair Philosopher*, p. 117). Haywood’s *Female Spectator* dedication to Colyear offers examples of the art of persuasion through subtle flattery.

Consistent with the cultural preoccupation, especially in literature by and for women, with the marriage market, Haywood dedicated *The Female Spectator* to Colyear, citing her discretion in her marriage(s) as the reason she wished to place *The Female Spectator* under Colyear’s “protection.” To provide context for the remarkable, barely-studied book 14, in this not-studied-enough periodical, this edition contains the first dedicatory epistle of *The Female Spectator* project as a whole, which Haywood wrote at its outset and which appears at the

³ Scholars do not know whether Haywood wrote as the four correspondents herself, or if she did in fact edit other women’s writing as she purports to have done.

⁴ For further reading on the intersection between fiction and fact in the reportorial function of observation and commentary of early, 18th-century novels such as Haywood’s, see Lennard Davis’s *Factual Fictions: Origins of the English Novel*.

⁵ For additional context on how Haywood’s *Female Spectator* fit in with the (male-dominated) “public papers” and, as she put it, their accounts “every day to be found” regarding “armies marching — battles fought — towns destroyed — rivers crossed and the like,” see the “Enlightenment?” chapter of Andrew Pettegree’s 2014 book, *The Invention of News* (specifically p. 282).

beginning of the first edition of the first volume. By presenting the dedicatory epistle in conjunction with book 14, this edition encourages readers to think about the story of a woman called “Aliena” and Haywood’s editorializing of it as a cautionary tale in book 14, within the complex and interconnected contexts of 18th-century literature and culture, the politics surrounding women’s writing such as Haywood’s, and *The Female Spectator* in terms of its objective as an integrated whole, to shed light on current and past events in an entertaining and informative fashion in order to influence women’s conduct and ways of thinking.

The dedication of *The Female Spectator* to Colyear has been described as a continuation of Haywood’s “Hanoverian and pro-Marlborough sentiments”⁶ and resultant “fascination” with Sarah Churchill and her family⁷ (*Selected Fiction* xviii). Was Haywood successful in receiving payment from Colyear and her cousins, to whom other *Female Spectator* volumes are dedicated? If so, how much money did she receive? What was the extent of Haywood’s relationship with these women, if any other than the solicitation of funds for her writing? What was her rationale for targeting “patriotic” and unpatriotic patrons alike—even within the 24-month period of circulation of the same periodical?⁸ What was the effect on readers, that the periodical boasted Colyear’s name in the introductory pages? Is Haywood referring to Colyear’s second husband in the dedication, ignoring her first husband, Peregrine Osborne, the Duke of Leeds (rumored to be “something of a rake,” according to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*)? Due to the lack of sustained study on Haywood’s use of and success with patronage, these questions, like much of Haywood’s biography, are for now masked in obscurity.

In the dedication, she writes that “because the chief view in publishing these monthly essays is to rectify some [societal] errors,” she wishes them to be placed “under the protection of” Colyear, who is “not only of an unblemished conduct, but also of an exalted virtue, whose example may enforce the precepts they contain, and is herself a shining pattern for others to copy after.” This portrays *The Female Spectator*’s intended audience as other women, who might learn from the duchess’s example. After paying due deference to Colyear’s virtue and her ancestral line, Haywood shifts strategies: She praises Colyear “for those innate graces, which no ancestry can give.” While Haywood engages with the necessary, laudatory rhetoric for obtaining patronage in the 18th-century, this shift indicates potentially pro-middle class sentiments. Haywood diplomatically appeals to upper- and middle-class readerships simultaneously, by praising Colyear’s ancestry and her virtue—“which no ancestry can give, no titles can embellish, nor no beauty atone for the want of.” In *The Female Spectator* dedication, Haywood performs with political and philosophical skill, honed in her unique positionality as a prolific writer in the male-dominated publishing world, through years of hard work “which no ancestry could give” her.

Book 14, occurring in the third of four volumes of the *Female Spectator*, contains a letter by, and editorial commentary about, a correspondent referred to as Claribella regarding her acquaintance,

⁶ The adjective “Hanoverian” describes supporters of the British House of Hanover, the dynasty that ruled the United Kingdom 1714-1901. Haywood refers to Colyear’s descendants Marlborough and Godolphin as “dear patriot-names” in the *Female Spectator* dedication.

⁷ Colyear was Sarah Churchill’s granddaughter; Churchill’s other granddaughters were the dedicatees of volumes two and four of *The Female Spectator*.

⁸ For more on this political situation that Haywood was treading, see *Fair Philosopher*, p. 117.

referred to as Aliena, who disguises herself as a sailor to follow her sometime suitor, a captain in the British Royal Navy, on his mission (she never makes it beyond Gravesend, a port city off the Thames). The book unites themes common to Haywood's oeuvre, early and late—including disguise and jilted love—with themes common to the 18th century, including the military and expanding middle class, and the marriage market. This was not the first time that Haywood, in *The Female Spectator* or elsewhere, discusses the military, or disguise, or the dangers of “masquerading” or concealing one's identity, for women on the marriage market. One of her earliest works, *Fantomina*, features a heroine who disguises herself multiple times, including as a widow and as a writer, in order to seduce and maintain the interest of her lover who, similar to Aliena's, loses interest in her. *The Female Spectator*, an example of the formerly known as didactic late Haywood, offers a more explicit opinion on masquerading in its very first book, in which a young woman from the country referred to as Erminia debuts at a London masquerade, mistakes a rake for her brother, and is taken to his manor, raped, “ruined,” and consequently partakes in a self-imposed, marriageless exile back in the country.⁹ In another *Female Spectator* book on the conduct of military gentlemen—book 2—a “brave young officer” (referred to as Amaranthus), like the captain with whom Aliena falls in love and follows, becomes obsessed with “glory” and no longer cares about “love” or the woman (referred to as Aminta) whom he courted previous to his military success.¹⁰ As Haywood and/or the correspondent puts it, “love and glory are things incompatible,” a point to which “many modern great examples, as well as to numbers in antiquity” attest.¹¹ Indeed, Haywood's letter from Claribella concerning the misfortunes of Aliena, in addition to the essays on the dangers of masquerading and of the conduct of military gentlemen also shows that “love and glory are things incompatible” for young women on the marriage market, participating also in a narrative tradition of “many modern great examples” and examples in “antiquity,” of the historic and romantic trope of the woman warrior.

Haywood praises Colyear for her discretion and judgment in her marriage(s), presenting her as a “pattern” for female readers to follow. In subsequent books, Haywood presents other women, their families, and suitors, of various social ranks (below that of the duchess from whom she was seeking patronage but also below and above herself as a working writer), as “shining patterns for others” *not* to follow. Haywood uses Claribella's letter about Aliena in book 14 as an advisory tale for young women on how *not* to behave when being courted, and for families of young, “passionate” women like Aliena on how *not* to conduct inquiries if a female family member embarks on a similarly ill-advised adventure in pursuit of a lover. More broadly, this story provides a prolific woman writer's point of view on a common literary trope in 18th-century popular culture—that of the woman warrior who disguises herself as a man in military uniform to pursue her soldier-or-sailor lover.

The correspondent whom Haywood “distinguishes” by the name “Claribella,” who might actually have been Haywood herself, opens the letter stating the story of the “heroine” who she “shall distinguish by the name of Aliena” is “exactly true in every circumstance.” In the same

⁹ Erminia is referred to as “ruined,” or her experience is referred to as her “ruin,” on pages 24, 26, 26, 45, 48, and 51 in volume 1, book 1.

¹⁰ Forms of the word “glory” appear on pages 90, 92, 96, 98, and 100 of volume 1, book 2.

¹¹ See volume 1, book 1, p. 98.

sentence, she states the story also “has in it something equally surprising with any celebrated romance presented to us.” That the (fictional or nonfictional) correspondent not only devotes resources of time, energy and space to claim the story was “exactly” true, but also “in every circumstance,” anticipates (1) the value that nonfiction as opposed to fiction held, at least for this particular readership and (2) that this readership was accustomed to a blending of fact and fiction in the same work, thus necessitating the truth claim for “every circumstance.” (A similar statement would not, for instance, appear in now-traditional journalism today.) During Haywood’s lifetime, 1693-1756, however, the boundaries between fact and fiction were even more fluid than they are now. Early novelists—such as Haywood herself, as well as Defoe and Richardson—combined the “truth” that novel-readers craved as the genre withstood gendered criticism in comparison with the “feminine” genre of romance.¹² They also blended the “truth” of epistolary correspondence into their novels—see Frances Burney’s *Evelina* and Richardson’s *Clarissa*—for added legitimacy, and some, such as *Robinson Crusoe* and *Pamela*, even, at first, masqueraded as truth.¹³ Further, the referral to the “true” subject of the story, whose “fictional” name is given as “Aliena,” as a “heroine”¹⁴ contributes to the perception of this text as a historic piece of “literary journalism.”¹⁵ That Haywood, in one sentence, touts the value of the story for its blend of “truth” (as in the genre of history) and its seductive form of storytelling (as in the genre of the romance) links this, Haywood’s first (and most successful) foray into journalism, to her earlier, amatory fictions, and illustrates the importance of *The Female Spectator* in general and of this book in particular for the history of both the novel and literary journalism/nonfiction.

The story of Aliena is the (classically common) story of a woman who dresses in military garb to pass as a man to be closer to the (male) lover who jilted her. Like Haywood’s blend of fictional narrative technique with the seductive allure of the “true story,” the warrior woman trope that she presents in the form of the “heroine” Aliena also circulated in fictional and nonfictional stories during, and before, Haywood’s. Taking form in ancient and medieval mythical heroines of the West and the East, such as that of Joan of Arc and Fah Mulan, the warrior woman long inhabited popular myth, which has always enveloped truth in fiction. Lending truth to the female warrior “fiction,” in 1639-1651 during the Civil Wars of Britain, so many women disguised themselves as soldiers that Charles I issued a proclamation banning women from wearing men’s military clothing. By the second half of the 19th century, women were increasingly excluded from military service (excepting those serving as nurses). Until the mid-19th century, they served in

¹² For seminal scholarship on the blending of the history and romance genres into what we know today as the novel, see Ros Ballaster’s *Seductive Forms: Women’s Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740*. According to Ballaster, novelists such as Haywood used the seduction plot as a metaphor for (1) novelists’ seduction of the reader into reading their writing and (2) politicians’ seduction of the populace, and Haywood participated in creating a distinct “English” and “female” “form” of the amatory novel. Ballaster’s argument on Haywood’s storytelling techniques of the seduction as metaphor is useful for thinking about her foray into “female” journalistic storytelling (or “spectating”).

¹³ The court case against Defoe and the controversy surrounding *Crusoe* illustrates the populace’s increasing demand for an “honest” attestation of what is truth and what is fiction, as early copyright laws came into effect.

¹⁴ For a historical take on what the idea of a “heroine” consisted in, see Jane Austen’s famous defense of other novelists’ heroines in her take on truth and fiction in the mind of Catherine Morland, a young woman on the marriage market, in *Northanger Abbey*.

¹⁵ It also shows that this format is not new, though many people credit it with the advent of the terms “creative nonfiction” and “literary nonfiction” in the 1990s and/or with the terms “nonfiction novel” (Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood*) and “new journalism” and “Gonzo journalism,” and that Haywood was an early innovator of it.

unofficial roles of (feminized) labor: “cooks, nurses, midwives, seamstresses, laundresses, and even prostitutes” (“A Timeline of Women in the Military”). Women were welcomed into the military, then, so long as they, like Aliena and her warrior women predecessors, sought to serve caregiving-type roles, and/or the sexual needs of men. While the dwindling “true” cases of women serving in the military in the 18th century casts doubt on whether Aliena’s story was, in “fact,” a “true” one, it is also true that the trope had, like Haywood’s writing, historically inhabited the realms of both fiction and fact.

Fiction and fact blend together in political persuasion techniques within the early novel but also within other genres, such as the British broadside ballad. As I have written elsewhere,¹⁶ in a synthesis of military and companionate marriage markets and their marketing strategies—how they interweave and build on one another to accomplish similar, empire-serving goals—the warrior woman trope, densely occurring in the British broadside ballad,¹⁷ reveals a connection between two expanding markets during and leading up to the long 18th century: the expanding British Empire and its market for soldiers, and the expanding institution of the companionate marriage and its demand for and demands on women.¹⁸ Because the broadside ballad served as a vehicle for propagating and perpetuating male domination of women (as I and others such as Joy Wiltenburg,¹⁹ Angela McShane,²⁰ and Sandra Clark²¹ have argued) Haywood’s “nonfictional” account and editorial on an “actual” woman who embodies this trope provides an example of how this trope was portrayed by the most prolific woman writer of the 18th century for her predominantly female, middle-to-upper-class audience. Haywood’s book 14 then serves to contrast not only the male domineering and empire-building agenda of broadside ballads; because it occupies a higher literary status than the cheaply printed broadside ballads, *The Female Spectator* provides a mid-to-upper-class stance on the woman warrior. Rather than an ideal to be celebrated, Haywood’s editorial portrays this trope as a “mad exploit” that is “unfortunate” and ill-advised. Viewing the warrior woman trope through both kaleidoscopic lenses, of the broadside ballad and Haywood’s *Female Spectator*, provides a more complete picture of how this common trope circulated within multiple cultural facets.

In order to understand Haywood’s position on Claribella’s letter in *The Female Spectator*, it is helpful to understand the woman warrior trope as it circulated in popular culture during and leading up to the long 18th century, in the popular, low-brow genre of the broadside ballad. These ballads were printed, cheaply, on “broad sides,” set to church tunes, hawked on the streets and sung in alehouses. At least 113 of these ballads popularly depict a woman dressing in a

¹⁶ See Plante, Kelly. “Marketing Empire: Military and Companionate Marriage Recruitment in Early English, ‘Warrior Women’ Broadside Ballads,” [The Warrior Women Project](#).

¹⁷ The pervasiveness of the warrior woman trope in 18th-century culture was first documented by Dianne Dugaw in her seminal work, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry, 1650-1850*.

¹⁸ For an additional, historical context of this cultural phenomenon, see Jennine Hurl-Eamon’s chapter on “Women in the Manning of the Army: Wives’ and Sweethearts’ Roles in Recruitment and Retention” in *Marriage & the British Army in the Long Eighteenth Century*, Oxford UP, 2014.

¹⁹ Wiltenburg, Joy. “The Literature of the Streets.” *Disorderly Women and Female Power in the Street Literature of Early Modern England and Germany*. UP of Virginia, 1992, pp. 7-25.

²⁰ McShane, Angela. “Recruiting Citizens for Soldiers in Seventeenth-Century English Ballads.” *Journal of Early Modern History*, issue 1, no. 2, 2011, pp. 105-137.

²¹ Clark, Sandra. “The Economics of Marriage in the Broadside Ballad.” *The Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2003.

military uniform to pursue her military lover at sea, to varying degrees of success: sometimes she is punished for her foray into military/male culture when she and/or her lover dies; sometimes she is rewarded for her bravery, loyalty and military prowess through marriage and/or through a monetary reward (commission and/or dowry). All the time, though, the covering-up of her feminine characteristics with the “male” uniform serves not to empower the woman for her full, integrated “self” but to proclaim to women and society that women are valuable—marriageable—when they make themselves useful by embracing the colonial and military goals of the patriarchal structure at large, supporting king and country while pursuing the ultimate goal for a woman: marriage.²² Haywood’s take on *Aliena* critiques this popular glorification.

One purpose of the ballads, as I have written elsewhere,²³ was not only to recruit the “right” kind of (loyal or desperate, depending on your point of view) woman into the marriage market for the newly expanding British military and middle class: these ballads also served to intimidate and persuade men into joining the military (a goal which, given close-reading of book 14, it is doubtful that Haywood shared). By unifying the love song with military glory—through unquestioned loyalty of the woman warrior—these ballads showcased feminine and masculine virtues, first by subverting, then by reinstating them.²⁴ “By far the most common vehicle for the military recruitment ballad was the love song, a remarkable and perhaps counter-intuitive aspect of the genre,” McShane writes (132): “The final inducement for any man thinking of backing out came when his young love would offer to disguise herself and enlist with him” (133). The warrior woman ballad, then, served to promote stability in gender roles of active (male) and passive (female)—something that Haywood’s work deconstructed throughout her career, both in her early amatory fiction and in her later news periodicals such as *The Parrot*. Warrior women ballads, like broadside ballads in general, were primarily written by men and for men to serve male interests. The underlying purpose of these ballads was to promote female virtue in service of the British Empire. While the broadside ballad deployed the warrior woman to perpetuate patriarchal goals of expanding the British Empire and the companionate marriage simultaneously, marketing the warrior woman as the perfect, most loyal match for the military man, Haywood, her critical stance in book 14 shows, was not “buying” it.

The military uniform was the primary vehicle enabling the warrior woman to make her (at times, mock-) heroic journey. In the popular balladry, the military uniform assumes a magical quality; even the daintiest virginal maiden can perform heroic deeds while in it. It is so effective that the uniform performs the work of seduction for its wearer. Simultaneously, the warrior woman is so

²² In 35 out of 113 warrior women ballads (30%), marriage happens. In 19 (16%), marriage is promised. In 4 of these 19, marriage happens—meaning 80% of the time that the soldier/sailor promises marriage, it doesn’t happen, either due to death of one or both of the lovers (26%) or, as is the case for the 11 others (73%), due to unfaithfulness on the part of the soldier or sailor. Thus, the warrior woman is not not always successful in her pursuit, if that was her reasoning for following him into battle. (“WWP”).

²³ See Plante, Kelly. “Marketing Empire: Military and Companionate Marriage Recruitment in Early English, ‘Warrior Women’ Broadside Ballads,” [The Warrior Women Project](#).

²⁴ For an (obvious) example of the military/love song blend, see the ballad titled “Love and Glory,” in which the warrior woman dies for love, he for “glory”: “Love and Glory,” [The Warrior Women Project](#). Haywood also played with the binary of love and glory in the military in *The Female Spectator* in “On the Conduct of Military Gentlemen.”

naturally attractive, dainty and feminine that, it is presented as, some men cannot help but feel attracted to her in uniform. Men such as the lieutenant in *Aliena's* story fall in love on sight. Claribella writes, "The lieutenant eyed her attentively all the time she was speaking, and was seized with something which he had never felt before, and at that time was far from being able to account for; and this secret impulse it was that made him unable to refuse her request" (p. 6). Like the captain whom *Aliena* pursues, the male soldier-or-sailor lover in popular ballads does little to encourage and even discourages the warrior woman's pursuit of him. Unlike some broadside ballads, though, *Aliena's* captain does not consider her disguise as proof of her loyalty, but rather counters that "it is a proof of the violence" of her love and insists that "it is time alone can assure me of felicity with the lady in question"—rather than what Claribella/Haywood terms "the mad exploit she had undertaken" (p. 14).

Highly formulaic, the vast majority of the warrior women ballads end in marriage that rewards the warrior woman for her declared, then proven, loyalty. In stark contrast to this trope, Haywood's *Aliena* is not rewarded for what Haywood terms as her "mad exploit" with marriage, but rather receives an additional, harsher snub by her military lover, and, due to the publication of her scandalous actions by her family when they went looking for her, the "censure" and condemnation of "everyone" in "this iron-hearted age" along with it (p. 1). She writes,

I wonder any parent or relation should not tremble at publishing a fault, which, if concealed, might possibly be the last; but, if divulged, is, for the most part, but the beginning or prelude to a continued series of vice and ignominy. I am very much afraid the friends of *Aliena* have been too forgetful of this so necessary a maxim:—the surprise and indignation at her elopement, when they first discovered it, hurried them perhaps to enquiries, which, though they could not be blamed for making, should, notwithstanding, have been done with all the privacy imaginable (p. 19-20).

In the majority of the broadside ballads, the military is so glorified that it replaces the domestic patriarch in the important and male-domineering civil custom of marriage. By contrast, Haywood, in this story and in *The Female Spectator's* book 2 regarding the conduct of military gentlemen, does not participate in such glorification, but rather tempers it with a dose of reality (or realism): that families should not publicize the behavior of such women and should conceal it "as much as possible ... from the knowledge of the world" in order that her "future regularity of conduct" would atone "for the errors of the past" (p. 19). Viewing Haywood's take on this trope in *The Female Spectator* alongside and in contrast to these ballads, which were contemporaneous to her writing and with which her readers would more than likely be familiar, shows just how subversive to the status quo that Haywood's writing could be, even in her late writing such as that in the *Female Spectator* previously deemed as conservative. This book does not blindly uphold societal standards for women; consistent with the "spectating" theme, it sees through them and as a result, is able to advise women on how to realistically work through them.

One ballad, "Maudlin, The Merchant's Daughter of Bristol," printed as early as 1586 and as late as 1868—over a period of 282 years that encompassed Haywood's life span—concludes as follows: "Their wishes she denied not. / but wedded them to hearts delight. / Her gentle *master* she desired, / to be her *father* and at church to *give her* then / It was fulfill'd as she requi'd / Unto the joyes of all good *men*" (emphasis mine). After Maudlin's adventures, she becomes an object

bringing joy to “all good men.” The ballad opens with her loyalty to “a gallant youth” of whom her friends and family did not approve—“Behold the Touchstone of true Love, Maudlin the Merchants daughter of Bristow Town, Whose firm affection nothing could move . . .”—and ends rewarding her proven loyalty with marriage. She has a new “master” to give her away, the “ship’s master” who let her disguise herself as his “ship’s boy” to follow her lover abroad, where her loyalty is tested.²⁵ She rebuts the advances of the ship’s master, who falls in love with her, and saves her lover from being killed. Her father is now dead, but that is perhaps for the best: The old type of (domestic) patriarchy dies off to make room for the new, colonial, aggressive one.

Contrast this typical take on the warrior woman trope, in the, again, male-dominated form of the broadside ballad, with Haywood’s, and you can see just how subversive, and protofeminist, books in *The Female Spectator* could be. Aliena is punished for dressing as a male and attempting to join the British Navy, while Maudlin is—supposedly—rewarded. However she might be rewarded monetarily, she also is objectified, in being passed from one male patriarchal figure to the other. Aliena, operating in not a ballad but instead grounded in supposed reality of nonfiction prose, does not marry anyone, neither the captain whom she initially pursued nor his friend and first lieutenant, whom Haywood refers to as a “man of honour” who fell in love with Aliena due to her appearance and despite his better judgment. Instead, she returns home and is left to have an acquaintance such as Claribella defend her in a letter to the editor, only to have her actions censured again by the *Female Spectator* and used as a cautionary tale to warn women against. While this initially appears to be a conservative take on what could be (and has been) construed as an empowering action of the woman warrior, Haywood’s editorial critiques Aliena’s behavior due to its incompatibility with the social norms that governed women on the marriage market.

Due to constricting gender roles for women in “this iron-hearted age,” as “Claribella” puts it, Aliena would not be celebrated for her military prowess such as other warrior women, nor would she be rewarded with marriage or increased wealth. Claribella/Haywood begins her narrative by acknowledging “how ready everyone is, on the least breach of decorum, to censure and condemn, without considering either the force of that passion . . . or what particular circumstances may have concurred” (p. 1). For women like Aliena, their “fault alone engrosses the discourse and attention of the town, and few there are will take the pains to enquire if any excuses may be made for it: all the misfortunes her inadvertency brings upon her are unpitied, and looked upon as a just punishment; all her former merit is no more remembered; and people no longer allow her to be possessed of any virtues, if once detected in transgressing one” (p. 1). Taken in context with Haywood’s other writings on disguises and the risks involved—a group of young sailors comes close to raping her when “pinching her on the ribs, as boys frequently do to one another, one of them found she had breasts” (p. 7)—and with military gentlemen’s emphasis on “glory” rather than “love,” *The Female Spectator*’s book 14 realistically provides advice to women and women’s families at the intersections of the expanding military and marriage markets, and of fiction and nonfiction. In this way, this miniature, novel-like “book” sheds light on how fiction and nonfiction operate within Haywood’s writing, and by extension, within

²⁵ There is a whole category of ballads, 26 of the 113 total, depicting “parental intervention in a courtship.” In 17 of these ballads, the warrior woman’s parents disapprove of her lover and never change their opinion of him, usually due to class status. In 1 ballad they approve, and in 8 they experience a change of heart. (“WWP”).

fictional realism and literary nonfiction/journalism as they separated and converged, defining one another in the long 18th century.

About This Edition

First issued by Gardner as a monthly periodical for two years, April 1744 to May 1746, *The Female Spectator*'s popularity spurred Gardner (and his successor, H. Gardner) to reissue it in four volumes two years later, from 1748 to 1771, resulting in seven (official) editions over 27 years. Haywood's periodical was popular enough that in 1746, pirated editions began to surface out of Dublin. To compete with the piracies, Gardner began reprinting in the cheaper duodecimo format in 1748, 1750, 1755, 1776, and 1771. In 1775, the (non-numbered) edition issued in London and Glasgow with different title pages was the last edition to be printed for 226 years (*Fair Philosopher*, p. 194).

The highly acclaimed critical edition of *The Female Spectator (1744-1746)* published as part of the six-volume Pickering & Chatto *Selected Works of Eliza Haywood* in 2001-2002 marked the first release of Haywood's 960-page, 24-book periodical in its entirety since the 18th century. The editors sought to incorporate Haywood into the canon as "more than" an amatory novelist. King writes that, contrary to previous scholarly opinion, Haywood and her publisher aimed for *The Female Spectator* to earn a genteel readership during its time and in "futuraity" (King, "Editing Eliza Haywood's *The Female Spectator*"). The Pickering & Chatto *Selected Works* is also likewise available for an upscale readership (with a \$200+ price tag). This free edition aims to make part of Haywood's periodical available, glossed and edited for a wider audience that includes scholars, graduate and undergraduate students.

Because scholars agree that *The Female Spectator* was never revised, by Haywood or anyone else, and, as Newman points out, "informal sight collation suggests that bona fide later editions were merely reset and, as the century wore on, shorn of long s's, capitalized nouns, and so forth" (p. 52), this edition is based on the first edition published by Gardner, dated 1745, from the Harvard University Houghton Library that was scanned for Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (ECCO).

Textual Note

The following emendations are included to improve the text's readability: the long s (ſ) is replaced by the short s throughout; the 18th-century convention of capitalizing and italicizing non-proper nouns is not retained; line spacing and indentation is updated to reflect modern letter/dedicatory format; and inadvertent printing errors are silently corrected.

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The Female Spectator

Volume III

Book XIV
Letter 1 of 2

According to the [assurance given in our twelfth book](#),¹ we shall begin the entertainment for this month with the letter from [Claribella](#).²

¹ The last few pages of book 12 report letters from Dorinda, H.L., and Claribella as having been received, that they “will not fail to have a place in our next lubrications,” but that Claribella’s letter, “by reason of its length, must be deferred till the month following, when the lady may depend on seeing the story it contains made as public as our canal will permit, and also those observations which shall occur to us on a mature consideration of the matter” ([p. 322](#)). “If our opinion should happen (as I fear it will) in some measure to vary from that the fair author is of at present, we flatter ourselves she will excuse it, on account of that sincerity and impartiality we are determined to preserve through the whole course of these essays” ([p. 322-323](#)).

² A pseudonym for a correspondent who may be fictional or real; scholars do not know for certain. This is the only letter from “Claribella” that appears in the *Female Spectator*.

To the Authors of *The Female Spectator*

[Red Lion Square](#),³

March 29, 1745

Ladies,

You cannot be insensible how little compassion the woes, occasioned by love, find from this iron-hearted age; nor how ready everyone is, on the least breach of [decorum](#),⁴ to [censure](#)⁵ and condemn, without considering either the force of that passion, which those who are most upon their guard against, have not always the power of restraining, or what particular circumstances may have [concurred](#)⁶ to ensnare a young creature into a forgetfulness of what she owes herself:—her fault alone engrosses the discourse and attention of the town, and few there are will take the pains to [enquire](#)⁷ if any excuses may be made for it: all the misfortunes her [inadvertency](#)⁸ brings upon her are unpitied, and looked upon as a just punishment; all her former merit is no more remembered; and people no longer allow her to be possessed of any virtues, if once detected in transgressing one.

I am sure you are too just not to condemn such a proceeding⁹ as highly cruel, and also too generous, not to make some allowances for [heedless](#)¹⁰ youth, when hurried on by an excess of passion to things which cooler reason disapproves.

In this confidence I take the liberty to give you the narrative of an adventure, which, though exactly true in every circumstance, has in it something equally surprising with any that the most celebrated romance has presented to us.

The heroine of it, whom I shall distinguish by the name of *Aliena*,¹¹ is the daughter of a gentleman descended of a very ancient family, who, from father to son, had, for a long

³ A small square in Holborn, London, which was known as the potential resting place of Oliver Cromwell's body after the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, when his body was taken out of Westminster Abbey and tried for regicide, and reputedly stored at the Red Lion Inn before being hanged. The site was said to be haunted when, in 1684 speculator Nicholas Barbon laid out a housing project in/around it. By the time of this letter's writing (1745) the renovated square was popular with the professional class including lawyers, doctors, and merchants.

⁴ Requirement of polite behavior

⁵ "To pronounce an averse judgement on, express disapproval of, criticize unfavourably; to find fault with, blame, condemn" (*Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, "Censure, v." 5a).

⁶ "Of times, events, and circumstances: To fall, happen, or occur together; to coincide" (*OED*, "Concur, v." 2d).

⁷ "An alternative form of inquire v. The modern dictionaries give inquire as the standard form, but enquire is still very frequently used..." (*OED*, "Enquire, v.").

⁸ "The quality or character of being inadvertent; heedlessness; also = inadvertence" (*OED*, "Inadvertency, n." a).

⁹ Course of action; conduct or behavior (*OED*, "Proceeding, n." 2a).

¹⁰ "Without heed; paying no heed or attention; careless, inattentive, regardless" (*OED*, "Heedless, adj." 1).

¹¹ "Aliena" means "female stranger" in Latin.

succession of ages, enjoyed an estate, not inferior to some of the nobility; but by an unhappy attachment, in his immediate predecessor, to [the race of the Stuarts](#),¹² was deprived of the greatest part of it; and as he had several children besides this Aliena, none of them, excepting the eldest son, could expect any other fortunes than their education, which he indeed took care should be [very liberal](#).¹³

But though his paternal tenderness seemed equally divided among them all, and Aliena had no more opportunities of improvement than her other sisters, yet did she make a much greater progress in every thing she was instructed in than any of them; and as nature had bestowed on her a much larger share of beauty, so was also her genius more extensive than that which either one who was elder, and another a year younger than herself, had to boast of.

[In fine](#),¹⁴ dear ladies, she was at fourteen one of the most charming creatures in the world. —As her father lived in London, she went frequently to public places, and those diversions which were too expensive for the narrowness of her circumstances were, however, not denied her:—she was never without tickets, for the masquerades,¹⁵ [ridottos](#),¹⁶ operas, concerts, and plays, presented to her by her friends; none of whom but thought themselves happy in her accompanying them to those entertainments.

I was intimately acquainted with her, and have often thought her one of the happiest of our sex; because, whether it was owing to her good conduct or good fortune, she lived without making any enemies;—the sweetness of her behaviour charmed all who were witnesses of it; and though there are many equally innocent with herself, yet some have a certain sourness or [haughtiness](#)¹⁷ in their [deportment](#)¹⁸ which renders people industrious to find out something to condemn them; and those who think themselves insulted by any [airs](#)¹⁹ of that kind are apt enough to construe to themselves, or at least represent to others, the most harmless actions as highly criminal.

But Aliena was the darling of all that knew her,—wherever she came a general and unfeigned pleasure diffused itself in every face through the whole company. It is scarce possible to say whether she was more admired by the men, or loved by the women: a thinking wonderful you

¹² The Stuart dynasty, the first rulers of the United Kingdom, ruled Scotland (1371-1714) and England (1603-1714) until, and following, the English Civil War and subsequent Glorious Revolution. Aliena's grandfather was perhaps too closely associated with Charles II, through Catholic leanings and/or connections, putting the family on the wrong religious and political side after the Glorious Revolution and leading to the deprivation of their property. Catholic gentry's fortunes were sequestered due to their religious beliefs at this time.

¹³ Aliena's father spared no expense to his children's education. Another potential meaning: Grounded in Enlightenment ideals, an 18th-century "liberal education" linked learning with conduct and aimed to cultivate virtue in (typically male) students.

¹⁴ "In conclusion, in sum; finally; (also) in short" (*OED*, "Fine, n.1" P1b).

¹⁵ The masquerade was a typical theme in Haywood's fiction and nonfiction, dramatic and "non-dramatic" writing. One of the first *Female Spectator* essays was on "The Dangers of Masquerades."

¹⁶ A popular entertainment during the 18th-century "consisting of music, dancing, and sometimes gambling" (*OED*, "Ridotto, n.>").

¹⁷ "The quality of being haughty; loftiness of demeanour; pride, arrogance, disdainfulness" (*OED*, "Haughtiness, n." 1a).

¹⁸ "Manner of conducting oneself; conduct (*of* life); behaviour" (*OED*, "Deportment, n." 1).

¹⁹ "Affected manners intended to convey a person's elegance, refinement, or (later) superiority; affectations, pretensions" (see *OED*, "Air, n.1" P1a-c).

will own,²⁰ and what some people take upon them to say is incompatible, yet so in reality it was.—Dear, sweet, agreeable, entertaining Aliena, how I lament the sad reverse of thy condition!

But, ladies, I detain you too long from the promised narrative; compelled by the restless impulse of my commiseration for this unfortunate creature, I have, perhaps, too much encroached upon your patience, and that of your readers, for which I ask pardon of both, and will now come to the point.

Among the number of Aliena's admirers, there was a commander of one of his majesty's ships, a gentleman of good family, agreeable person, and handsome fortune, exclusive of his [commission](#).²¹—whether he had more the art of persuasion than any of his rivals, I will not pretend to say; but it is certain that either his merit or good fortune rendered everything he said to her more acceptable than the most courtly addresses of any other person.

To be brief, she loved him:—his manner, whatever it was, ensnared her young heart, and the [society](#)²² of her dear captain was preferable to her to any other joy the world could give.

I am very well assured his [pretensions](#)²³ were on an honourable foot, otherwise they had been rejected at the first; all her acquaintance expected every day to hear of the completion of their wishes by a happy marriage; when contrary to her, and it may be to his expectations, he was ordered to sail for [the West Indies](#),²⁴ and to be stationed there for three years.

How terrible a rebuff this was to her dearest hopes anyone may judge, and the more so as he did not press her to complete the marriage before his departure:—she thought with reason, that if his passion had been equal to his pretensions, he would have instead of that, he seemed rather less assiduous than he had been, and much more taken up with the vexation of being obliged to be so long absent from his native country, than from that person, whom he had a thousand times sworn was infinitely more valuable to him than anything beside, either in that or the whole world.

I will not pretend to be so well acquainted with his thoughts, as to say positively he had never loved her; but, I believe, you will be of opinion with me, that this behaviour was far from being the indication of a sincere and ardent passion.

She had too much wit not to perceive this slight, but too much tenderness to resent it as she ought to have done; and when he told her, as he sometimes vouchsafed to do, that he depended on her constancy, and that he should find her at his return with the same inclinations he left her possessed of in his favour, she always answered, that it was impossible for time, absence, or any other solicitations, ever to prevail on her to call back that heart she had given him; and confirmed

²⁰ Admit

²¹ “Commission” may refer to both the authority and the monetary compensation granted to a commissioned officer in the military.

²² Company

²³ His intention to marry

²⁴ In the mid-18th century, the West Indies comprised islands of Bermuda, Barbados, Jamaica, and the four Leeward Islands as among the British Empire's most valuable colonies due to the demand for coffee and sugar, which depended on slave labor.

the promise of preserving herself entirely for him with all the imprecations the most violent and faithful passion could suggest.

Had there been no possibility for him to have implored, nor she to have granted stronger assurances for his future happiness, he doubtless might, and ought to have been content with these; but as there were consent of friends, licenses, and wedding rings easy to be had, and churches, chapels, and clergymen plenty, no impediment to prevent their being joined forever, how could the dull insensible entertain one thought of going away without having first settled so material a point!

But in all the tender interviews that passed between them, after the arrival of those orders, which were to separate them for so long a time, he never once asked her to marry him; and as he made no offers that way, her modesty would not [suffer](#)²⁵ her to be the first proposer.

At length the cruel day of taking leave was come:—never parting had more the show of mournful; I say the show, because I cannot think the captain had any real grief at heart: but on the side of Aliena it was truly so; yet did not all she expressed in his presence come in any competition with what she suffered after he was gone.—No description can any way equal the [distraction](#)²⁶ she was in; I shall therefore not attempt it, but leave you to judge of the cause by the consequence.

For some days she shut herself up, [gave a loose to](#)²⁷ tears and to complaining, and scarce could be prevailed upon to take needful nourishment:—her father’s commands, however, and [remonstrance](#),²⁸ how much this conduct would [incur](#)²⁹ the ridicule of the world, at last made her assume a more cheerful countenance, and she content to see company, and [appear abroad](#)³⁰ as usual; but while we all thought her grief was abated, it preyed with greater violence by being restrained, and inspired her with a resolution to sacrifice everything she had once valued herself upon, rather than continue in the condition she was.

In fine, one day when she was thought to be gone on a visit to one of her acquaintance, she went to a sale-shop, equipped herself in the habit of a man, or rather boy, for being very short, she seemed in that dress not to exceed twelve or thirteen years of age at most.

Thinking herself not sufficiently disguised even by this, she made her fine flaxen hair be shaved, and covered her head with a little brown wig; which wrought so great a change in her, that had her own father happened to have met her, he would scarce have known her after this transformation.

²⁵ Allow

²⁶ “Violent perturbation or disturbance of mind or feelings, approaching to temporary madness” (*OED*, “Distraction, n.” 3b and 4).

²⁷ “...to give full vent to (feelings, etc.); to free from restraint” (*OED*, “Loose, n.” 3b).

²⁸ “An appeal, a request” and/or “Protest; objection; the expressing of disapproval or disagreement; warning against a particular course of action” (*OED*, “Remonstrance, n.” 1 and 3b).

²⁹ “To come in so as to meet the eye, the observation, etc.; to occur” (*OED*, “Incur, v.” I1b).

³⁰ In public

But it was not her intention to run that hazard, nor had she taken all this pains to live concealed in London:—she always knew she loved the captain, but knew not till now with how much violence she did so; or that for the sake of being near him, she could forego all that ever had or ought to have been dear to her.

I will not detain your attention with any repetition of those conflicts which must necessarily rend her bosom, while going about the execution of a design, the most daring sure that ever woman formed:—you will naturally conceive them when I acquaint you what it was.

Not able to support life without the presence of him who had her heart, she seemed with her habit to have thrown off all the fears and modesty of womanhood:—the fatal softness of our sex alone remained; and that, guided by the dictates of an ungovernable passion, made her despise all dangers, hardships, infamy, and even death itself.

She went directly to [Gravesend](#),³¹ where her lover's ship lay yet at anchor, waiting his arrival, who was gone into the country to take leave of some relations. This she knew, and resolved, if possible, to get herself entered on board before he came, being unwilling he should see her till they were under sail: not that, as she has since declared, she had any thoughts of discovering herself to him in case he knew her not, but that if he should happen to do so, she might avoid any arguments he might make use of to dissuade her from an [enterprise](#)³² she was determined to pursue at all events, and even against the inclination of him whose sake she undertook it.

She was a great admirer of an old play of [Beaumont and Fletcher's](#),³³ called [Philaster; or, Love lies a bleeding](#).³⁴—[the character of Ballario](#),³⁵ who, disguised like a page, followed and waited on her beloved prince in all his adventures, strangely charmed by her; and she thought, as her passion was equal to that of any woman in the world, it would become her to attest it by actions equally extravagant; and in the midst of all those shocks, with which reason and modesty at some times shook her heart, felt a pleasure in the thoughts of attending her dear captain, being always about him, doing little services for him, and having an opportunity of observing his behavior on all occasions.

As she had often heard the captain talk of [his first lieutenant](#)³⁶ with a great deal of friendship, she thought him the most proper person to address; accordingly she waited till he came on shore, and went to his lodgings, where being easily admitted, she told him she had a great inclination to the sea; but as her age and want³⁷ of skill in the art of navigation rendered her unfit as yet for any

³¹ Gravesend is an ancient town in northwest Kent, on the Thames River, which rendered it an important launch-point for maritime trade during the 18th century.

³² “An undertaking, task, or project; (usually) *spec.* One which is bold, difficult, or important; a venture, an endeavour” (*OED*, “Enterprise, n.” 1).

³³ Dramatist Francis Beaumont (1584-1616) was most famous for his collaborations with John Fletcher (1579-1625), who is considered one of the most influential playwrights between the Elizabethan and the Restoration periods.

³⁴ *Philaster*, generally thought to have first been performed between 1608-1610, contributed to the trend of tragicomedy popular during the Restoration.

³⁵ At the end of the play *Philaster*, the character Bellario is revealed to be a courtier's daughter, who is infatuated with Philaster, and who disguised herself as a male page to help relay messages between him and his love interest.

³⁶ Lieutenants, the military post directly below that of captain, were ranked according to seniority, with the most senior being called the first lieutenant.

³⁷ Lack

service, excepting that of attending some or other of the officers, she begged to be received in the [station of a cabin boy](#):³⁸—she added, that she had heard such extraordinary praises of the captain’s humanity and gentleness to all belonging to him, that she had an extreme ambition to attend on him, if such a favour might be granted her.

The lieutenant eyed her attentively all the time she was speaking, and was seized with a something which he had never felt before, and at that time was far from being able to account for; and this secret impulse it was that made him unable to refuse her request, though he knew very well that a sufficient number of boys had been already entered: he told her, however, that he could not give her an assurance of being employed about the captain's person, till he had spoke to him concerning it; but that since she seemed so desirous of it, he would use all his interest with him on that score; and added, what she knew as well as himself, that he was absent at that time, but was expected to arrive the same day.

Aliena was highly content with the promise he made her, and not doubted but when she was once in the ship with him, she should find out some stratagem or other to make him take notice of her, and also to [ingratiate](#)³⁹ herself so much with him, as to occasion him to take her under his own care, even though it should be her fate at first to be placed with any of the inferior officers.

She thanked the lieutenant a thousand times over, and was ready to fall at his feet in token of her gratitude; but entreated he would continue his goodness so far as to order her to be put on board, lest he should, in the hurry of his affairs, forget the promise he had made, and they should sail without her. To which he answered, that she had no need to be under any [apprehensions](#)⁴⁰ of that sort, for he would send his servant with her to a house where there were several boys of the same station, and he believed much of the same age, and that the [long-boat](#)⁴¹ would put them all on board that evening.

This entirely eased all her scruples, and she was beginning afresh to testify the sense she had of the favour he did her, when some company coming in to visit the lieutenant, he called his man, and sent him to conduct her to the house he had mentioned.

There she found several youths ready equipped for their voyage, and whose rough athletic countenances⁴² and [robust](#)⁴³ behaviour became well enough the vocation they had taken upon them, but rendered them very unfit companions for the gentle, the delicate Aliena.

The discourse they had with each other, the oaths they swore, and the tricks they played by way of diverting themselves, frightened her almost out of her intention; but she was much more so when they began to lay their hands on her to make one in their boisterous exercises: the more [abashed](#)⁴⁴

³⁸ A low-ranking position typically assigned to young recruits responsible for waiting on officers of a ship, especially the captain.

³⁹ “To get oneself into favour; to gain grace or favour with; to render oneself agreeable to” (*OED*, “Ingratiate, v.” 2).

⁴⁰ Fears

⁴¹ An open boat used on-board sailing ships.

⁴² Appearances

⁴³ “Coarse, rough, rude” (*OED*, “Robust, adj.” 2).

⁴⁴ “Feeling or caused to feel discomfited or disconcerted, esp. as a result of a sudden sense of shame or embarrassment” (*OED*, “Abashed, adj.”).

and terrified she looked, the more rude they grew, and pinching her on the ribs, as boys frequently do to one another, one of them found she had breasts, and cried with a great oath, that they had got a girl among them:—on this they were all for being satisfied, and had doubtless treated her with the most shocking indecency, had not her cries brought up the woman of the house, who, being informed of the occasion of this uproar, took Aliena from them, and was going to carry her into another room, in order to learn the truth of this adventure, when the lieutenant entered, and found his new sailor all in tears, and the rest in a loud laugh.

The cause of all this was soon explained to him, but the greatest mystery was still behind, nor did he find it very easy to come at; for though Aliena confessed to him, and to the landlady, after they had taken her into a private room, that she was a woman, yet who she was, and the motive which had induced her to disguise herself in this manner, she seemed determined to keep from their knowledge, and only begged, that as her design had miscarried, by her sex being so unfortunately discovered, they would permit her to go without making any further inquiry concerning her.

But this request the lieutenant would by no means comply with;—he now no longer wondered at those secret emotions which had worked about his heart at first sight of her, and avowed the force of nature, which is not to be deceived, though the senses may, and frequently are.

He now indulged the admiration of her beauty, much more than he would give himself the liberty of doing while he thought her what her [habit](#)⁴⁵ spoke her, and looked so long till he entirely looked away his heart:—he was really in love with her, but was either ashamed of being so for a young creature, whose virtue and discretion he had no reason to have a very high idea of, or was awed by that respect which is inseparable from a true affection, from [declaring himself](#).⁴⁶ To whichever of these motives it was, I will not take upon me to determine, but he was entirely silent [on that head](#),⁴⁷ and only told her in a gay manner, that as he had entered her on her earnest desire, he could not consent to discharge her, without knowing something more of her than that she was a woman:—“Nay,” added he, “even of that I am not quite assured:—I have only the testimony of two or three boys, who, in such a case, are not to be depended upon:—I think that I ought, at least, to satisfy myself in that point.”

In speaking these words he offered to pluck her towards him, and the vile woman of the house, who had no regard for anything but her own interest, in obliging her customers, guessing the lieutenant’s designs, and perhaps thinking them worse than they were in reality, went out of the room, and left them together.

This, indeed, quite overcame all the resolution of Aliena; she thought she saw something in the eyes of the lieutenant that, even more than his words, threatened her with all a [maid](#)⁴⁸ of honor and [condition](#)⁴⁹ had to dread; and after having struggled with all her might to get loose of the

⁴⁵ Clothing, attire

⁴⁶ “To declare one’s love for another person; to propose marriage” (*OED*, “Declare, v.” 7b).

⁴⁷ “A chief or principal point or division of a discourse, subject, etc.; each of a set or succession of such points or divisions; (more generally) a point, a category, a topic, a matter” (*OED*, “Head, n.” 31).

⁴⁸ During this timeframe, “maid” can refer to: a virgin, “a man without experience of sexual intercourse,” and/or “a girl; a young (unmarried) woman,” (*OED*, “Maid, n.” 1a-b, 2)

⁴⁹ “A person of position, rank, or ‘quality’” (*OED*, “Condition, n.” 10c).

hold he had taken of her, threw herself at his feet, and with a flood of tears, and broken trembling voice, [conjured](#)⁵⁰ him to have pity on her, and suffer her to depart.—“If ever,” said she, “you were taught to revere virtue in another, or love the practice of it yourself; if you have any kindred whose chastity is dear to you, for their sakes, and for your own, [commiserate](#)⁵¹ a wretched maid, whom chance and her own folly alone have thrown her into your power.”

These words, the emphasis with which they were delivered, and the action that accompanied them, made the lieutenant, who as it luckily proved for her, was really a man of honour, shudder as she spoke them:—he raised her from the posture she had been in, with more respect than indeed, considering all things, she could in reason have expected; desired she would not be under any apprehensions of his behaving to her in a manner she could not be brought to approve; but in return for that self-denial, he still insisted she should make him the confidante of the motive which had obliged her to expose herself to the dangers she had done.

“Alas, sir,” answered she, still weeping, “as for the dangers you mention, and which I have but too cruelly experienced, I never had once a thought of them; and as for any I might encounter from the [inclemency](#)⁵² of the winds and the waves, I despised them:—whatever hardships I should have sustained in the [prosecution](#)⁵³ of my intended enterprise, would have afforded me more pleasure than pain, had fate permitted me to have undergone them concealed:—nay, death itself had been welcome, had it seized me on board that ship my heart was bent to live or die in:—but endless grief and misery is now my doom, since denied the last, the only satisfaction this wide world could give me.”

“Yet pardon me,” continued she, “if I cannot let you into the secret of who I am, or what induced me to this strange [ramble](#):⁵⁴—let it therefore content you to know I am not of the lowest rank of people;—that my reputation is not altogether my own, since my family will be sufferers by my fault, if known; and also, that how much so ever my disguising myself in this manner may subject me to your censure, yet my very soul shrinks at dishonour; and that this action, which alone can be alleged against me, is a greater disguise to my real principles, than my habit has been to my fear.”

The lieutenant listened with all the attention she wished; every syllable she uttered sunk into his soul:—his love, his admiration, his astonishment, increased every moment; but though he began to feel more pure flames for her, than this he testified at his first information she was a woman, yet they were too ardent to permit him to let her go from him without giving him some probable hopes of ever seeing her more: he gave a turn indeed to his manner of treating her, yet still gave her to understand, he would not part from her, without being made privy to everything he wished to know.

⁵⁰ Entreated, implored

⁵¹ Sympathize with

⁵² “The quality or condition of being inclement” (as in weather) and/or “want of clemency or kindness of disposition; pitilessness, unmercifulness” (*OED*, “Inclemency, n.” 1a and 2).

⁵³ “The following up, continuation, or pursuit of any action, scheme, or purpose with a view to its accomplishment or completion,” “The action of pursuing or following a person, etc.; a pursuit or chase; (also) hunting,” (*OED*, “Prosecution, n.” 1a and 2b).

⁵⁴ Diversion

To this poor Aliena answered little but with tears; and while he continued pressing, she evading, a sailor came in to acquaint him the captain was arrived; on which he hastily took leave, but before he left the house, charged the landlady, as she valued his friendship, not to let the seeming boy stir out of the room.

This Aliena was ignorant of, till imagining herself at liberty, she was going downstairs, in order to quit a place where she had nothing but ruin to expect, she was met by the woman of the house, who obliged her to turn back, and then locked her into a room, telling her she must stay till the return of the lieutenant.

Now had this unfortunate creature full liberty to reflect on the mischiefs she had brought upon herself:—night came on, and every moment came loaded with new horrors:—the lieutenant returned not, but as she was in continued apprehensions of him, she resolved not to pluck off her clothes, nor even to venture to lie down on the bed, lest she should fall into a sleep, and by that means be rendered incapable of resisting any violence that might be offered to her.

All night long did she walk about the chamber, in an agony of mind which stands in need of no description, nor can be reached by any:—had the window looked into the street, she would certainly have jumped out, but being backwards her escape would have been no farther than the yard of the same house, which, as she was wholly ignorant of the passages, left her no room to hope she could get through without discovery.

A thousand different ideas rose in her almost-distracted brain:—she feared the lieutenant, and saw no way to avoid him, but by the protection of the captain, and how to acquaint with anything of what had passed she knew not;—at last she be thought herself of attempting to do it even by the lieutenant himself; and accordingly when he came, as he did pretty early in the morning, she said to him with all the courage she could assume, “Sir, you insist on knowing who I am, which I am determined to die rather than comply with: there is but one way, by which you have a chance of gratifying your curiosity:—the the bearer of a letter from me to your captain:—he knows me, and if he thinks fit, will inform you of everything.”

The lieutenant on this began to guess somewhat of the truth, and agreed to do as she desired, and immediately called for pen, ink, and paper for her; which being brought, she was not long writing these lines:

“To Captain ——

Unable to support your absence, I followed you in disguise, desirous of no other happiness than to enjoy concealed your sight: an unlucky accident has discovered me:—your first lieutenant, whose prisoner I now am, can tell you by what means:—for heaven’s sake deliver me from his power, that I may either return to my father, if he will receive me after this adventure, or die with shame of it in some obscure corner of this world.”

She [subscribed⁵⁵](#) no name, nor was there indeed any occasion for doing it to one so well acquainted with the characters of her handwriting; the lieutenant suffered her to seal it without

⁵⁵ Signed

once asking to see the contents, and gave his word and honour to deliver it the same hour into the captain's hands, and bring whatever answer should be returned.

He now, it is certain, began to see a good deal into this extraordinary affair:—he had no longer doubted but love of the captain had been the cause; but, it is highly probable, imagined also that more had passed between that gentleman and his fair charge, than they in reality were guilty of.

The generous concern he had for her youth and beauty, however, made him impatient to see in what manner her lover would receive this [billet](#),⁵⁶ he therefore hurried away to his lodging, where he was strangely surprised to find a great crowd of officers and other people about the door, and on his going upstairs saw the captain, and three gentlemen, whom he knew not, engaged in a very [warm](#)⁵⁷ dispute.—The cause of it was this:

The family of Aliena had no sooner missed her, than [strict](#)⁵⁸ search was made for her all over the town:—accident at last discovered where she had exchanged her habit, and the disguise she had made choice of, made them naturally conjecture on what design she was gone; but not being able to imagine that so young and [artless](#)⁵⁹ a maid should have undertaken an enterprise of this [bold](#)⁶⁰ kind, concluded she must have her advisors and [exciters](#)⁶¹ to it, and who but the captain could they suspect of being so:—they were therefore assured in their own minds, that some private correspondence had been carried on between them since his pretended taking leave.—Incensed against him, as had their thoughts been true, they would have had the highest reason, they complained of the insult, and obtained an order to search the ship, and force her from this betrayer of her honor:—to this end, they brought proper officers with them to Gravesend, and had the assistance of others belonging to that place.

Before they proceeded to [extremities](#),⁶² however, they went to the captain's lodgings, being told on their arrival he was not yet gone on board:—at first, the father, an uncle, and a cousin of Aliena's, who all came down together, remonstrated to him, in terms tolerably mild, how ungentleman-like an action it was, to delude a young [girl of family](#),⁶³ and to whom he had made an honourable courtship, to quit her friends, and accompany him in so shameful a manner; but finding he denied all they accused him of, as well he might, they began to grow extremely rough:—the uncle, who had some [interest](#)⁶⁴ at the [Board of Admiralty](#),⁶⁵ told him he would shake his commission, and many such-like menaces: which the captain, bowing his innocence, was

⁵⁶ Note

⁵⁷ Angry

⁵⁸ “Of inquiry, investigation, inspection, observation, calculation, and the like: Characterized by close and unrelaxing effort, so as to let nothing escape notice” (*OED*, “Strict, adj.” 17a).

⁵⁹ “Free from artifice; natural, simple” (*OED*, “Artless, adj.” 2a).

⁶⁰ “Showing or requiring courage; daring, brave” and/or “In a bad sense: Audacious, presumptuous, too forward; the opposite of ‘modest’” (*OED*, “Bold, adj.” 2 and 4).

⁶¹ Instigators

⁶² Extremes

⁶³ Of a higher-ranking, family of “quality”

⁶⁴ “The relation of being objectively concerned in something, by having a right or title to, a claim upon, or a share in” (*OED*, “Interest, n.” I1).

⁶⁵ Established in 1628, Charles I established the Board of Admiralty when he put into commission the office of High Lord Admiral with the purpose to manage operational requirements of the Royal Navy.

little able to endure, and their mutual rage was expressing itself in the highest terms, when the lieutenant entered.

This gentleman listened for some moments to what was said, without speaking, and easily perceiving, by the [repartees](#)⁶⁶ on both sides, the meaning of what at his first entrance seemed so astonishing,—“Hold, gentlemen,” cried he to the kindred of Aliena, “your passion has transported you too far, and I dare say you will hereafter [own](#)⁶⁷ to be guilty of an injustice you will be ashamed of, when once the truth comes to be revealed:—I believe,” continued he, “I am the only person capable of clearing up this mystery; but before I do so, beg leave to give a letter to my captain, put into my hands this morning, for the safe delivery of which I have pawned my honour.”

Not only the captain, but those who came to accuse him were surprised at what he said; but the former taking the letter hastily out of his hands, and having read it with a great deal of real amazement, which I have heard them all allow was very visible in his countenance, walked several times about the room with a confused emotion; then paused,—then walked and paused again, as if uncertain how he should behave in an [exigence](#)⁶⁸ which, it must be [owned](#),⁶⁹ demanded some deliberation; the father and the uncle of Aliena still crying out he must produce the girl, and growing [clamorous](#),⁷⁰ [spleen](#),⁷¹ [pettishness](#),⁷² or a value for his own character, more than for that of the woman he had once pretended to adore, made him throw the letter upon the table in an abrupt manner, and at the same time [bad](#)⁷³ them go in search of the person they came in quest of; adding, that what was [wanting in](#)⁷⁴ the young lady was owing to her want of proper education, rather than to any insinuations or crafts he had practiced on her.

The father, finding it his daughter's hand, read it with a shock which is not to be expressed; and having given it to his brother, cried, “Where,—who is this lieutenant, into whose power my poor unhappy girl has fallen?”

“I am the person,” said the lieutenant, “and but to clear my captain from any imputation of a base design, should not have spoke what I now find myself obliged to do.”

He then related in what manner Aliena came to him, the earnestness with which she begged to be entered on board; and in fine, neither omitted nor added to anything of the truth.

This struck the kindred of Aliena into the utmost confusion:—everything proved the innocence, and as even I, dear ladies, who am her friend must own, the folly of this unhappy girl; all blushed and hung down their heads oppressed with conscious shame:—the captain pitied the

⁶⁶ Lively retorts

⁶⁷ Admit

⁶⁸ Situation of trouble

⁶⁹ Admitted

⁷⁰ Noisy

⁷¹ “To fill with spleen; to make angry or ill-tempered” (*OED*, “Spleen, v.” 1b).

⁷² Irritated, bad-tempered

⁷³ Commanded or ordered

⁷⁴ Lacking in

[consternation](#)⁷⁵ they were in, and his heart, I cannot but think, throbbed for the condition of Aliena:—"Come," said he to his lieutenant, in as gay a manner as the circumstances would admit, "let us go visit the lady who it seems is your prisoner, and see what ransom will be demanded for her."

The lieutenant made no other answer than a low bow, and immediately conducted them where they found the unfortunate Aliena walking about the room in her boy's clothes, distracted in her mind at what reception her letter would find from the captain, but little thinking of the new guests who now entered her chamber.

Oh, dear Spectator, think and judge what this poor soul must feel, at the sight of her lover, her father, and the nearest of her kindred thus at once presented to her:—what might have excused her to the one, rendered her criminal to the other; nor could the soft impulse of love coincide with what she owed to duty, and the decorum of reputation.

At seeing them thus altogether, she fell into fainting, from which she was recovered but to relapse again, and the first words she spoke were, "I am ruined forever.—You, sir," said she to her father, "can never, I am sure, forgive the dishonour I have brought upon our family:—and you," pursued she, turning to the captain, "what can you think of the wretched Aliena! This very proof I have given you of my love, the extremest, the tenderest love that ever heart was capable of feeling, even you may censure, as not consistent with the prudence and decorum of my sex:—oh wretched!—wretched am I every way, by all deservedly abandoned."

The condition they saw her in disarmed her kindred of great part of the indignation they had before been full of, and hearing the captain testify abundance of tender concern for the hazards to which she had exposed herself for his sake, they withdrew to a window, and after a short consultation, desired the captain to go with them to another room; which request he readily complying with, the father of Aliena told him, that as he had courted his daughter, and so far engaged her affections as to be induced by them to take a step so contrary to duty and reputation, he thought it would become him to silence the reproaches of the world by marrying her before he embarked.

The captain not returning an immediate answer to this proposal, gave opportunity to the uncle and cousin of Aliena to second what the father had said; and they made use of many arguments to convince him, that in honour and conscience he ought not to depart and leave her to be exposed to [calumny](#)⁷⁶ for an action of which he had been the sole cause.

To all which, as soon as they had done speaking, the captain replied, that he desired no greater happiness in life than being the husband of Aliena, provided the duties of his post had not called him so suddenly away; but as he must not only immediately be snatched from her arms, but also be absent thence for so long a time, he thought it inconsistent, either with love or reason, to leave her a wife under such circumstances:—that if her affection was as well rooted as she said it was, she would doubtless have the patience to wait his return; and that if he heard nothing on her part,

⁷⁵ "Amazement or terror ...; dismay" (*OED*, "Consternation, n.").

⁷⁶ "False and malicious misrepresentation of the words or actions of others, calculated to injure their reputation; libellous detraction, slander" (*OED*, "Calumny, n" 1).

which should oblige him to change the sentiments he at present had, he should then himself be a petitioner for her hand.

On this they told him, he had no reason to suspect the sincerity of her love, she had given but too substantial a proof of it, by the mad exploit she had undertaken.

“Do not think me ungrateful,” answered he hastily, “if I say it is a proof of the violence of it, which I see with more grief than satisfaction; because actions of this kind are judged by those who view them with different eyes, as somewhat romantic, and occasion a good deal of idle ridicule among the laughing part of the world:—but,” continued he, “as constancy more than vehemence of affection is [requisite](#)⁷⁷ to render the [conjugal state](#)⁷⁸ a happy one, it is time alone can assure me of felicity with the lady in question:—for which reason I must not think of entering into any bonds of the nature you mention till after my return.”

This answer, [determinate](#)⁷⁹ as it was, did not make them give over; but all they urged was preaching to the wind, and the more they seemed to resent his refusal, the more obstinately he persisted in it; and they were obliged to leave Gravesend, taking with them the [disconsolate](#)⁸⁰ Aliena, no less dissatisfied in their minds than when they came into it.

How changed is now the fate of this young lady!—The idol once of her acquaintance, the pity now of some, and the contempt of other.—The search made for her in town after her elopement made the affair no secret:—everyone talks and judges of it according to their different [humours](#); ⁸¹ but few there are who put the best [construction](#).⁸²—Sensible of this, she rarely stirs abroad, and at home is treated in a manner quite the reverse of what she was accustomed to before this accident:—her father and brothers look on her as a blemish to their family, and her sisters take every opportunity to reproach her.—The captain has never wrote to her since he went, though several letters from him have been received by others.—In fine, it is impossible to paint her situation so truly miserable as it is.—All I can say gives but a faint idea of it; yet such as it is, I flatter myself, will be sufficient to induce you to make her innocence as public as possible, by inserting this faithful account of the whole affair.

I am also pretty confident that the good nature which seems to sparkle through all your writing, besides the common interest of our sex, will make you a little [expatiate on](#)⁸³ the ungenerous proceeding of the captain:—the more honour he may have in other respects, the less he is to be excused in regard to Aliena; since it was that very honour which betrayed her into a fatal confidence of his love and sincerity.

⁷⁷ Necessary

⁷⁸ Marriage

⁷⁹ “... Expressing a final decision; definitive; conclusive, final” (*OED*, “Determinate, adj. and n.” 4).

⁸⁰ “... Lacking consolation or comfort; forlorn, inconsolable; unhappy, despondent ... Also (of behaviour, a mental state, etc.): expressing or characterized by unhappiness” (*OED*, “Disconsolate, adj. and n.” A2).

⁸¹ “Usual or permanent mental disposition; constitutional or habitual tendency; temperament” (*OED*, “Humour, n.” 7a).

⁸² “Interpretation put upon conduct, action, facts, words, etc.; the way in which these are taken or viewed by onlookers; usually with qualification, as *to put a good, bad, favourable, charitable (or other) construction upon*” (*OED*, “Construction, n.” I8a).

⁸³ Expound upon

Had he been possessed of a much less share of passion for her than he had professed, or had she even been indifferent to his gratitude, methinks, should have made him marry her, since there was no other way to heal the wounds she had given her reputation for his sake.

But I will not anticipate your judgments on this head, and after begging pardon for this long letter, conclude with assuring you that

I am, Ladies,
Your sincere well-wisher,
And most humble servant,

Claribella

Of all the letters with which the *Female Spectator* has been favored none gave us a greater mixture of pain and pleasure than this:—it is difficult to say whether the unhappy story it contains, or the agreeable manner in which it is related, most engages our attention; but while we do justice to the historian, and pity the unfortunate lady, in whose cause she has employed her pen, we must be wary how we excuse her faults, so far as to hinder others from being upon their guard not to fall into the same.

[Euphrosine](#),⁸⁴ whose strict adherence to filial duty [has been taken notice of](#)⁸⁵ in one of our former [lucubrations](#),⁸⁶ cannot tell how to forgive Aliena for so palpable a breach of that, as well as of modesty, in quitting her father's house, in a manner which, indeed, one would imagine, the bare thought of would strike too much horror into a virtuous mind, to be able to carry it into execution.

It is certain that nothing can be more astonishing, than that so young a creature, bred up in the strictest principles of virtue, and [endued](#)⁸⁷ with the perfections Claribella ascribes to her, could all at once throw off every consideration of what she owed herself, her family, and her sex, to expose herself to such wild hazards, the least of which was worse than death.

To us it seems plain, that how much wit soever she may be mistress of in conversation, she is altogether incapable of making any solid reflections:—there must be a romantic turn in her mind, which may have been heightened by reading those extravagant fictions with which some books abound.—This Claribella seems to think herself, by her mentioning the fondness her fair unhappy friend testified for the character of [Ballario](#):⁸⁸—as she thought it an amiable one, it is not therefore to be wondered at that she copied after it.

If poets would consider how great an effect their writings have upon the minds of young people, they would surely never paint whatever is an error in conduct in too beautiful colors, nor endeavour to excite pity on the state for those actions, which everywhere else justly incur both punishment and contempt; but too many of them, as well ancient as modern, have seemed to employ their whole art in touching the passions, without

⁸⁴ One of the three sister goddesses of Greco-Roman mythology, Euphrosene was regarded as a bestower of beauty and charm, and was often portrayed as a woman of exquisite beauty herself. The “Female Spectator” describes Euphrosene as one of her “associates” (correspondents) and, like Aliena, as the “daughter of a wealthy merchant,” in the first book of *The Female Spectator*, “The Editor introduces herself... and her ‘Associates’”: “The third [of four correspondents for the *Female Spectator*] is the daughter of a wealthy merchant, charming as an angel, but endued with so many accomplishments that, to those who knew her truly, her beauty is the least distinguished part of her.—This fine young creature I shall call Euphrosene, since she has all the cheerfulness and sweetness ascribed to that goddess.”

⁸⁵ Euphrosine's filial duty is described in volume I, book 3, of *The Female Spectator*, which is freely available [here](#) courtesy of Google Books (see p. 107).

⁸⁶ “The action or occupation of lucubrating; nocturnal study or meditation; study in general” (*OED*, “Lucubration, n.” 1).

⁸⁷ The verb “endued” may refer to figurative or literal meanings: “to take in” and “to educate,” both reminiscent of the “liberal education” Claribella describes Aliena early on in the letter as having benefited from.

⁸⁸ At the end of the play *Philaster*, the character Bellario is revealed to be a courtier's daughter, who is infatuated with Philaster, and who disguised herself as a male page to help relay messages between him and his love interest.

any regard to the morals of an audience; as a very judicious [Italian author](#)⁸⁹ once said of them, "[Oltromontani non sono zelanti delle buone regele modestia & de prudenza.](#)"⁹⁰ That is, "those on the other side of the mountains, make no scruple of breaking the good laws of modesty and prudence."

A gentle, generous, tender soul we are ready to allow her, but must at the same time say, that such a disposition, where it happens to be joined with a weak judgment, is extremely dangerous to the person possessed of it; because it often transports such a one to excesses, by which the best virtues may become vices.

This was evidently the case in regard of Aliena:—her love for the captain, as his addresses were honourable, was natural, and nothing in it which could [arraign](#)⁹¹ her prudence, or her modesty:—the grief she was under at the necessity of parting with him for so long a time, and even her soft desires of being united to him before their separation, had something amiable in them;—had she stuck there, and preserved her heart and person till his return, and he had afterwards proved ungrateful or inconstant to such love and sweetness, no reproaches could have been equal to his crime; but I am sorry to say, that by giving too great a loose to those qualities, which, kept within due limits, had been worthy praise and imitation, she forfeited all pretensions to the esteem of the man she loved, as well as of those least interested in the affair.

The Female Spectator must not therefore be so far swayed, either by her own good nature, or the desires of Claribella, as to attempt framing any excuse for [those very errors in conduct, which these monthly essays are intended only to reform.](#)⁹²

Neither is it possible to comply with the request of this agreeable correspondent, in passing too severe a judgment on the captain's behavior:—he might before this unhappy incident have had a very sincere passion for Aliena, yet prudence might suggest to him many inconveniences attending the leaving so young a wife to herself immediately after marriage:—he imagined, perhaps, that in his absence she might be exposed to trials her extreme youth and inexperience of the world, would fail enabling her to bear, with that resolution and [intrepidity](#),⁹³ which her honour, or at least her reputation, demanded, and might possibly reason with himself in this manner, "If the tenderness she seems to regard me with has taken any deep root in her soul, and she has really found anything in me worthy of a serious affection, she will doubtless preserve herself for me till my return; but if it be light and wavering, marriage will be too

⁸⁹ Author unidentified.

⁹⁰ Source unidentified.

⁹¹ Call into question (*OED*, "Arraign, v." 3).

⁹² The [dedicatory epistle](#) of the first iteration of *The Female Spectator* to the Duchess of Leeds, Juliana Colyear, states the "chief view in publishing these monthly essays is to rectify some errors, which, small as they may seem at first, may, if indulged, grow up into greater, till they at last become vices, and make all the misfortunes of our lives." In it, Haywood focuses on the proper view of marriage, describing it as "too long the jest of fools, and prostituted to the most base and sordid of aims."

⁹³ "Firmness of mind in the presence of danger; courage, boldness" (*OED*, "Intrepidity, n.").

weak to fix it, and I could with less grief support the inconstancy of a mistress than a wife.”

Such reflections as these, I say, were very natural to a thinking man:—marriage is a thing of too serious a nature to be entered into inconsiderately or wantonly, as the very ceremony of it, as established in our church, informs us; and those who rashly take the sacred bonds upon them are in very great danger of soon growing wary of them.

The captain’s love for Aliena therefore might not be less tender for its being more solid than perhaps the [impetuosity](#)⁹⁴ of her passion made her wish it was:—for my part, I see no reason that could induce him to counterfeit an inclination, which he felt not in reality:—the lady had no fortune, he aimed at nothing dishonorable, and doubtless meant as he said, to have made her his wife, had not this unexpected separation happened.

To this Claribella may probably reply, that whatever doubts might have arisen in his mind, concerning her constancy before he took leave of her, the design she afterwards formed of accompanying him in all his dangers, and the pains she took for the accomplishment of that enterprise, was a proof that her very life was wrapped up in him, and that there was not the least likelihood she ever could be brought to regard anything in competition with him.

Nobody can, indeed, deny the greatness of her affection at that time, nor affirm that it would not have been as lasting as it was violent; yet I have known some who have run as extravagant lengths, even to their own ruin, for the accomplishment of their wishes, and no sooner were in possession of them, than they repented what they had done, and became indifferent, if no worse, to the person they but lately idolized.

Besides, as I have taken notice in a former *Spectator*, and every one may be convinced of by a very little observation, it rarely happens, that a person so young as Aliena, can be a judge of her own heart, and therefore the captain may very well deserve to be excused for not being able to place so great a dependance on her present tenderness, as I will not say but it might in reality have demanded. [The poet](#)⁹⁵ tells us,

[“There’s no such thing as constancy we call,
Faith ties not hearts, ‘tis inclination all:
Some wit deform’d, or beauty much decay’d,
First, constancy in love, a virtue made:](#)

⁹⁴ “The quality or character of being impetuous; sudden or violent energy of movement, action, etc.; vehemence” (*OED*, “Impetuosity, n.” a).

⁹⁵ John Dryden (1631-1700) was the dominant literary figure of the 17th century, so that Haywood frequently refers to him in *The Female Spectator* as simply “the poet.” Like Haywood, he was also a playwright and satirist.

From friendship they that land-mark did remove,
And falsely plac'd it on the bounds of love.”⁹⁶

Upon the whole, it is the concurrent opinion of our society, that how much soever the making her his wife, under such circumstances, might have magnified his love, it would have lessened his prudence; and had she in so long an absence behaved with more conduct than could be well expected, from a woman who had the strongest passions, and had testified she regarded nothing but the gratification of them, the reputation of his wisdom, in running so great a hazard, must however have suffered very much.

These reasons oblige us to acquit the captain of all ingratitude, so far as relates to the main point; but we cannot do so, as to his not writing to her:—he ought certainly to have taken all the opportunities which the distance between them would admit, to console her under afflictions, which he must be sensible were unavoidable in circumstances such as hers; and that he has not done so, looks as if the Gravesend affair had made an alteration in the sentiments he once had in her favour.

If it has happened thus, as there is too much probability it has, the greatest act of friendship to Aliena, is to wean her as much as possible from all remembrance of their former love; and perhaps this is the very reason that her relations treat her with so much harshness, since nothing so much contributes to give one a distaste to what has been too dear, as to be perpetually teased and reproached for it by those we live with:—I can by no other motive account for, or excuse the cruelty of her brothers and sisters, since it is certain her innate griefs are a sufficient punishment for her transgression, without any addition from another quarter.

I would have them, however, be cautious, and not try the experiment too far, lest they should drive her to such extremes, as would make them afterwards repent being the cause of.

Numbers of unhappy creatures now groan under lasting infamy, who, had their first fault been forgiven, and as much as possible concealed from the knowledge of the world, perhaps had, by a future regularity of conduct, atoned for the errors of the past, and been as great a comfort to their families, as they have since been a disgrace.

Instances of young people who, after the first wound given to their reputation, have thought themselves under no manner of restraint, and abandoned to all sense of shame, are so flagrant, that I wonder any parent or relation should not tremble at publishing a fault, which, if concealed, might possibly be the last; but, if divulged, is, for the most part, but the beginning or prelude to a continued series of vice and ignominy.⁹⁷

I am very much afraid the friends of Aliena have been too forgetful of this so necessary a maxim:—the surprise and indignation at her elopement, when they first discovered it,

⁹⁶ In Dryden's play *Almanzor and Almabide: Or, The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards. A Tragedy. The Second Part*, the character Lyndar speaks these lines to Almanz. This work is freely available by Google Books [here](#); see page 141.

⁹⁷ “Dishonour, disgrace, shame; infamy; the condition of being in disgrace, etc.” (*OED*, “Ignominy, n.” 1).

hurried them perhaps to enquiries, which, though they could not be blamed for making, should, notwithstanding, have been done with all the privacy imaginable.

If I mistake their behaviour in this point, I heartily ask pardon; but am led into it by Claribella's letter, who, by desiring me to insert the story in vindication of her friend's innocence, gives me reason to believe it has been but too publicly [aspersed](#),⁹⁸ for when any thing of that nature comes to be the talk of the town, it is always sure to appear in its worst colours. As [Hudibras](#)⁹⁹ ludicrously says,

“Honour is like that glossy bubble,
Which gives philosophers such trouble:
Whose least part flaw'd, the whole does fly,
And wits are crack'd to find out why.”¹⁰⁰

I would therefore advise, that Aliena should, for the future, be used with more gentleness; if one may judge of her dispositions by the expressions she made use of to the lieutenant after the discovery of her sex, she is sufficiently ashamed of her folly, and needs no upbraidings to convince her of it:—her condition, in my opinion, now requires [balsams](#),¹⁰¹ not [corrosives](#),¹⁰² for though ill usage may bring her to hate the remembrance of him, and that passion which has subjected her to it, may also bring her, in time, to hate everything else, even her own life, and fall into a despair, which, I presume, none of them would wish to see.

The sincerity and good nature of Claribella can never be too much applauded; and however partial we may think her in this affair, as the warmth of friendship could only sway a lady of her fine understanding to be so, the cause renders the effect rather amiable than the contrary.—[We shall always receive with pleasure whatever we shall be favoured with from so agreeable a correspondent](#),¹⁰³ and wish she may find in all those who are so happy to enjoy her conversation the same zeal and generosity, as it is easy to perceive by her manner of writing, her own soul abounds with.

⁹⁸ “To spread false and injurious charges against; to detract from, slander, calumniate, traduce, defame, vilify” (*OED*, “Asperse, v.” 5).

⁹⁹ *Hudibras*; written in the time of the late wars, a 17th-century satirical poem influenced by Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, by Samuel Butler, criticizes Puritans and other factions from the English Civil War. The titular character's name is derived from a knight in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, which likely is derived from Rud Hud Hudibras, the legendary king of Britons. Sir Hudibras is praised for his knowledge of logic but appears stupid and is attacked for his religious fervor throughout the epic. Butler claimed to have written the play during the Civil War, and it was published to a receptive audience during the Restoration of Charles II.

¹⁰⁰ These lines (starting at 385) appear in part II of *Hudibras* (on page 390 of the 1801 reprint, made available by Google Books [here](#) from the New York Public Library). Samuel Johnson quotes these lines in *The Idler*, not as being said “ludicrously,” as Haywood describes them, but frames them as “wonderful lines” that “have hitherto passed without notice” (see *The Idler* no. 60, page 243, freely available [here](#) through Google Books).

¹⁰¹ “An aromatic oily or resinous medicinal preparation, usually for external application, for healing wounds or soothing pain” and/or “A healing, soothing agent or agency” (*OED* 2a. and 3 *figurative*).

¹⁰² “A corrosive drug, remedy, etc.” and/or “A sharp or caustic remedy” (*OED* 2 *Medicine* a. and 3. *figurative* b).

¹⁰³ This was the only letter of “Claribella's” published in the *Female Spectator*.