

## **AI-Generated Graded Readers**

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### **About This Edition**

This book is a simplified English adaptation created for extensive reading practice. The text was generated using ChatGPT and prepared for intermediate English learners as part of an educational project.

Target reading level: CEFR A2-B1

This edition aims to support fluency development through accessible vocabulary, expanded narration, and improved readability while preserving the original story structure.

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Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa Harlowe; Or the History of a Young Lady*  
(Simplified Edition, Adapted and Simplified by ChatGPT)

## Part 1

The story that follows was first told through many letters. Clarissa Harlowe wrote to her close friend Anna Howe, and Anna answered her in return. In those letters they spoke honestly about their lives, their fears, and the difficult events that changed Clarissa's fate. What you read here is the same story, but it is told in a simple narrative voice so that the whole life of Clarissa can be followed clearly.

Clarissa Harlowe lived with her family in the countryside of England. Her father was a rich and proud man. Her mother was gentle but weak in her husband's presence. Clarissa had a brother named James and a sister named Arabella. The family believed strongly in honor, wealth, and social power.

Clarissa was very different from them.

She was thoughtful, quiet, and deeply concerned with doing what was right. People who met her often said that her calm voice and kind behavior made others feel peaceful.

One afternoon Clarissa sat in the garden behind her family's house. The sun was warm, and the trees moved slowly in the soft wind.

Her cousin, Miss Hervey, sat beside her.

"Clarissa," said Miss Hervey, "your family speaks often about your future."

Clarissa looked up calmly.

"My future?" she asked.

"Yes," Miss Hervey answered. "They wish you to marry Mr. Solmes."

Clarissa lowered her eyes.

Mr. Roger Solmes was a rich man. He owned much land and had strong business connections with the Harlowe family. But Clarissa did not respect him. She believed he was proud, selfish, and unkind.

"I cannot love him," she said quietly.

Miss Hervey sighed.

“Your family believes love is not the most important thing.”

Clarissa replied gently, “But without respect and kindness, how can marriage be happy?”

At that moment footsteps sounded behind them.

It was Clarissa’s brother, James Harlowe.

He spoke sharply.

“Clarissa, our father wishes to see you.”

Clarissa stood at once.

“I will come.”

Inside the house the atmosphere felt heavy. Her father sat in a large chair near the fireplace. Her mother stood nearby, and her sister watched silently.

Mr. Harlowe spoke first.

“Clarissa, you know that Mr. Solmes has asked for your hand.”

Clarissa answered respectfully.

“Yes, father.”

“He is a wealthy man,” said her father. “His marriage with you will strengthen our family.”

Clarissa took a slow breath.

“Father,” she said softly, “I respect your wishes, but I cannot love Mr. Solmes.”

The room grew silent.

Her brother stepped forward angrily.

“Love!” he said. “Love is a childish idea. Marriage is about family honor.”

Clarissa answered carefully.

“I do not wish to bring shame to our family. But I cannot promise affection where none exists.”

Her father’s face darkened.

“You speak with too much independence,” he said. “You will obey us.”

Clarissa bowed her head.

“Father, I will obey in everything that does not violate my conscience.”

These words angered the family deeply.

Her brother spoke again.

“You have grown proud because everyone praises your virtue.”

Clarissa answered quietly, “I only wish to act honestly.”

Her sister Arabella then said sharply, “Perhaps your pride comes from another man.”

Clarissa looked surprised.

“Another man?”

Arabella continued.

“Yes. Mr. Robert Lovelace.”

At the name, the tension in the room increased.

Robert Lovelace was known as a charming but dangerous man. He was intelligent, confident, and skilled with words. Many admired him, but many also distrusted him.

Clarissa spoke firmly.

“Mr. Lovelace once showed interest in me, but I have not encouraged him.”

Her brother laughed bitterly.

“He has insulted our family before. I will never forgive him.”

Clarissa remained calm.

“Then you see why I must be careful.”

Her father stood.

“Enough discussion,” he said. “You will marry Mr. Solmes. This is my final command.”

Clarissa felt her heart grow heavy.

“Father,” she said quietly, “please allow me time to think.”

But her brother answered harshly.

“There is nothing to think about.”

From that day the atmosphere in the Harlowe house changed. Clarissa was watched closely. Her letters were sometimes stopped before they reached her friend Anna Howe.

Yet Clarissa continued writing whenever she could.

One evening she sat alone in her room with a candle burning beside her.

She whispered softly as she wrote.

“Anna, my dear friend, my family wishes to force me into marriage with Mr. Solmes. I cannot accept him. But every day the pressure grows stronger.”

She paused and looked toward the dark window.

“I must remain calm,” she said quietly to herself.

Far away in London, Anna Howe read these letters with concern.

In one reply she wrote:

“Clarissa, be careful. Your family may become severe. Do not trust Lovelace easily. He is clever and bold.”

Clarissa read the warning carefully.

She knew Lovelace had enemies in her family.

But she also knew that Lovelace sometimes spoke kindly to her.

She hoped she could manage the situation wisely.

Yet she did not know that these events were only the beginning of a long tragedy.

The conflict between Clarissa and her family would soon grow worse.

And the man named Lovelace would soon enter her life in a way that would change everything.

## Part 2

After the conversation with her father, Clarissa’s life in the Harlowe house changed quickly. Her family watched her more closely than before. Servants were told to report where she went and whom she spoke with. Even her letters were sometimes opened before they reached her hands.

Clarissa felt the pressure growing every day.

Yet she remained calm.

One morning her sister Arabella entered her room suddenly.

“Clarissa,” she said, “Mr. Solmes is coming today.”

Clarissa looked up from her writing desk.

“Why?” she asked quietly.

Arabella smiled coldly.

“Because he wishes to speak with his future wife.”

Clarissa closed the letter she had been writing.

“He is not my future husband,” she said.

Arabella laughed.

“You still believe you can refuse?”

Clarissa stood slowly.

“Yes,” she answered.

Arabella’s voice grew sharper.

“You think yourself better than everyone else.”

Clarissa replied calmly, “No. I only wish to marry a man I can respect.”

Arabella left the room angrily.

Later that afternoon Mr. Solmes arrived.

He was a heavy man with stiff manners and a proud expression. He spoke loudly and confidently, as if the marriage had already been decided.

Clarissa’s father received him warmly.

Soon Clarissa was called into the room.

Mr. Solmes stood when she entered.

“Miss Harlowe,” he said, bowing slightly, “I hope you are well.”

Clarissa returned the bow politely.

“Good afternoon, sir.”

Mr. Solmes looked pleased with himself.

“Your father and I have discussed our plans,” he said. “Our families will be greatly strengthened by our marriage.”

Clarissa spoke carefully.

“Sir, I respect your position. But I must speak honestly. I cannot accept this marriage.”

The room became silent.

Mr. Solmes looked shocked.

“Cannot?” he repeated.

Clarissa answered quietly.

“Marriage should be based on respect and kindness. I fear I cannot offer you what you deserve.”

Mr. Solmes turned red with anger.

Her brother James stepped forward.

“Clarissa!” he shouted. “You will obey our father!”

Clarissa did not raise her voice.

“I cannot promise affection where none exists.”

Her father struck the table with his hand.

“You shame this family!”

Clarissa bowed her head but did not change her words.

“I mean no disrespect.”

Mr. Solmes then spoke again, his voice cold.

“Miss Harlowe, you will soon discover that refusal is not an option.”

Clarissa answered gently.

“Sir, I hope you will find a wife who can truly value you.”

The meeting ended badly.

After Mr. Solmes left, Clarissa’s brother followed her into the hall.

“You are stubborn,” he said.

Clarissa replied quietly, “I am only honest.”

Her brother leaned closer.

“Then perhaps Mr. Lovelace will help you,” he said with bitter sarcasm.

Clarissa looked surprised.

“Mr. Lovelace has nothing to do with this.”

James laughed harshly.

“He would be pleased to see our family dishonored.”

Clarissa said nothing more.

That evening she returned to her room and wrote another letter to Anna Howe.

She wrote slowly, thinking carefully about every word.

“My dear Anna,” she wrote, “the situation grows worse. My family insists that I must marry Mr. Solmes. They refuse to listen to my wishes.”

She paused and looked toward the candle.

“I wish only for peace,” she whispered.

In another part of England, a man named Robert Lovelace heard news of

Clarissa's situation.

Lovelace had once admired Clarissa deeply. He believed she was the most virtuous woman he had ever known.

When he learned that the Harlowe family was forcing her into marriage, he smiled slightly.

"They treat her harshly," he said to his friend Belford.

Belford replied cautiously.

"Her family hates you. If you interfere, the conflict will grow worse."

Lovelace answered calmly.

"Perhaps. But a lady in distress deserves assistance."

Belford looked doubtful.

"And your intentions?"

Lovelace laughed softly.

"My intentions," he said, "are always misunderstood."

Meanwhile Clarissa continued living under strict watch in her father's house.

Servants followed her.

Letters were taken from her.

Her brother spoke to her harshly.

Yet she remained patient.

She often prayed quietly and tried to act with dignity.

But one evening she received a secret message.

It came from Lovelace.

The message was short.

"Miss Harlowe, if your family treats you unjustly, remember that there are friends who wish to help you."

Clarissa stared at the message for a long time.

She knew Lovelace was clever and bold.

Anna Howe had warned her many times.

Yet the pressure from her family was becoming unbearable.

Clarissa folded the note slowly.

"I must be careful," she said to herself.

But she also knew something else.

The conflict inside the Harlowe house was approaching a dangerous turning point.

And soon Clarissa would face a decision that would change her life forever.

### Part 3

The pressure inside the Harlowe house continued to grow. After Clarissa refused Mr. Solmes openly, her family's patience quickly disappeared. Her father became cold and distant. Her brother James spoke with anger whenever he saw her. Even her mother, who loved her, did not dare oppose the authority of the household.

Clarissa was soon moved to another room in the house.

It was not comfortable. The windows were watched, and servants were told not to let her leave without permission.

One evening Clarissa spoke gently to the maid who brought her supper.

"Please tell my mother that I wish to speak with her," she said.

The maid hesitated.

"Miss Clarissa," she whispered, "I am afraid your brother has forbidden it."

Clarissa sighed softly.

"I see."

She sat quietly for a long time after the maid left.

Later that night she wrote another letter to Anna Howe.

"My dear friend," she wrote, "my family now treats me almost like a prisoner. They say it is for my own good. But I cannot accept the marriage they demand."

She paused before continuing.

"If I obey them against my conscience, I will never know peace again."

Meanwhile Robert Lovelace continued to hear reports about the situation.

One evening he spoke again with his friend Belford.

"Her family grows more severe," Lovelace said thoughtfully.

Belford looked at him carefully.

“And what do you plan to do?”

Lovelace leaned back in his chair.

“Perhaps I will help her escape.”

Belford frowned.

“Escape?”

Lovelace nodded.

“If she wishes to avoid Mr. Solmes, she may need assistance.”

Belford studied him.

“And you believe that you are the right man to offer that assistance?”

Lovelace smiled slightly.

“Why not?”

Belford did not answer immediately.

At the Harlowe house the situation became worse.

One morning Clarissa was called again to speak with her father.

Her brother and sister stood nearby.

Mr. Harlowe spoke sternly.

“Clarissa, you have had enough time. Will you marry Mr. Solmes?”

Clarissa answered respectfully.

“Father, I cannot.”

Her brother stepped forward angrily.

“Then you will remain confined here until you change your mind.”

Clarissa looked at him calmly.

“I will remain patient,” she said.

Her father’s voice grew cold.

“You bring disgrace upon us.”

Clarissa bowed her head.

“I wish only to act with honesty.”

The conversation ended without agreement.

After that day Clarissa’s freedom became even more limited.

She was not allowed to walk in the garden alone.

Her letters were watched closely.

Sometimes days passed without her speaking to anyone except servants.

Yet she continued writing secretly to Anna Howe whenever she could.

In one letter she wrote:

“My dear Anna, I do not know how this conflict will end. But I feel that something serious is approaching. I must remain calm and trust that goodness will guide me.”

Anna Howe answered quickly.

“Clarissa,” she wrote, “be cautious. Lovelace may try to take advantage of your troubles. He is clever, and he enjoys challenging your brother.”

Clarissa read the warning many times.

She knew Lovelace had a reputation for bold behavior.

Yet she also believed that he admired her sincerely.

One evening, as the house grew quiet, a servant secretly delivered another message.

Clarissa opened it carefully.

It was from Lovelace again.

“Miss Harlowe,” the message said, “I hear that your family treats you unjustly. If you wish to escape their control, I can help you reach safety.”

Clarissa felt her heart beat faster.

She placed the letter on the table and walked slowly across the room.

“Escape?” she whispered.

The idea frightened her.

Leaving her family’s house without permission would cause great scandal. Yet remaining there meant being forced into marriage with Mr. Solmes.

Clarissa sat quietly for a long time.

She thought about her father’s anger.

Her brother’s harsh words.

The constant pressure.

At last she folded the letter carefully.

“I must think wisely,” she said.

But the truth was becoming clear.

The Harlowe house was no longer a place where she could live peacefully. And far away, Robert Lovelace was already preparing a plan that would soon change Clarissa's life forever.

#### Part 4

During the following days Clarissa thought constantly about the message from Lovelace. The idea of leaving her father's house frightened her. She had always respected her family and their name. Yet the pressure to marry Mr. Solmes continued without mercy.

Each morning her brother reminded her of her duty.

"You must obey," James said again and again.

Clarissa answered calmly each time.

"I cannot promise affection where none exists."

The conflict never ended.

One afternoon Clarissa finally received permission to speak with her mother. Mrs. Harlowe entered the small room where Clarissa was kept and closed the door behind her.

Clarissa rose at once.

"Mother," she said gently.

Mrs. Harlowe looked tired and anxious.

"My dear child," she whispered, "why do you resist your father so strongly?"

Clarissa took her mother's hands.

"Because marriage must be sincere," she answered. "If I marry Mr. Solmes without respect, both of us will suffer."

Her mother sighed.

"Your father believes obedience is more important."

Clarissa's voice trembled slightly.

"Does he truly wish me to live unhappily all my life?"

Mrs. Harlowe could not answer.

She only said quietly, "Please try to soften your father's anger."

Clarissa knew that meant accepting the marriage.

But she could not agree.

After her mother left, Clarissa sat alone again.

That night she wrote another long letter to Anna Howe.

“Anna,” she wrote, “my situation becomes more severe every day. My family believes that my refusal is stubborn pride. Yet my conscience will not allow this marriage.”

She paused before writing the next sentence.

“Lovelace has offered assistance. I do not know whether I should trust him.”

Anna answered quickly when she received the letter.

“Clarissa,” she wrote, “do not trust him too easily. Lovelace is bold and clever. He may wish to help you, but he may also wish to prove that he can defeat your family.”

Clarissa read the warning carefully.

She knew Anna spoke honestly.

Yet the situation inside the house continued to worsen.

One evening her brother came into her room suddenly.

“Clarissa,” he said sharply, “our father demands your final answer.”

Clarissa stood quietly.

“My answer has not changed.”

James looked furious.

“Then you will remain here until you obey.”

Clarissa spoke calmly.

“If patience is required, I will remain patient.”

Her brother laughed bitterly.

“You will regret this.”

After he left, Clarissa walked slowly to the window.

The garden outside was quiet. The trees moved gently in the evening wind.

She remembered the peaceful days of her childhood.

“How did everything change so quickly?” she whispered.

Late that night another secret message arrived.

Again it was from Lovelace.

This time the letter was longer.

“Miss Harlowe,” it said, “I cannot remain silent while you are treated unjustly. If you wish to leave the house, I can arrange a safe journey. You will be under my protection until matters calm down.”

Clarissa read the letter many times.

The offer frightened her.

But remaining in the house seemed impossible.

She thought about her father’s anger.

Her brother’s threats.

The forced marriage with Mr. Solmes.

At last she sat down at the desk.

She began writing carefully.

“Mr. Lovelace,” she wrote, “I do not trust easily. But my present situation gives me little choice. If I leave this house, it will be only to protect my conscience. I ask that you act with honor.”

After writing the letter she remained silent for a long time.

She knew the decision might change her life forever.

“I must remain cautious,” she said quietly.

Yet the plan had already begun to form.

And soon Clarissa would leave the Harlowe house.

But the freedom she hoped to gain would lead her into dangers she could not yet imagine.

## Part 5

After sending the letter to Lovelace, Clarissa spent several days in deep anxiety. She had taken a step that could not easily be undone. Though she had asked Lovelace to act honorably, she still felt uncertain.

“I must trust that he will respect my wishes,” she said quietly to herself.

But the atmosphere in the Harlowe house continued to grow more severe.

One morning her brother James entered her room again without knocking.

“Clarissa,” he said, “Mr. Solmes will visit tomorrow. Father expects you to show proper obedience.”

Clarissa answered calmly.

“My answer will not change.”

James struck the back of a chair with his hand.

“You will destroy this family with your stubborn pride!”

Clarissa looked at him quietly.

“I wish only to protect my conscience.”

Her brother stared at her angrily, then left the room without another word.

That evening Clarissa received another secret message.

It came from Lovelace.

The letter was brief but clear.

“Miss Harlowe, the situation grows dangerous for you. If you wish to leave the house safely, tomorrow night will be the best opportunity. A carriage will wait near the garden gate.”

Clarissa read the message slowly.

Her heart began to beat faster.

The moment had arrived.

She walked to the window and looked out into the dark garden.

“Am I doing the right thing?” she whispered.

She thought about her father’s anger.

She thought about the forced marriage with Mr. Solmes.

She thought about the future that awaited her if she remained.

At last she sat down and wrote a final letter to Anna Howe.

“My dear Anna,” she wrote, “by the time you read this, I may already have left my father’s house. I do not take this step lightly. But I cannot remain here and betray my conscience.”

She stopped writing for a moment.

Then she continued.

“I pray that my decision will not bring greater trouble.”

The next evening the Harlowe house became quiet after supper. One by one the lights in the corridors went dark.

Clarissa waited patiently in her room.

When the house was silent, she put on a cloak and took the small bag she had prepared.

Her hands trembled slightly.

“May heaven guide me,” she whispered.

She opened the door carefully and stepped into the dark hallway.

No one was there.

Slowly she moved toward the garden stairs.

Each step felt heavier than the last.

When she reached the garden door, she paused.

For a moment she thought about turning back.

“If I leave,” she said softly, “nothing will ever be the same.”

But she also knew that staying meant surrendering her freedom forever.

At last she opened the door.

The night air felt cool and quiet.

Clarissa walked quickly through the garden toward the gate.

There, just beyond the trees, she saw a carriage waiting.

Lovelace stood beside it.

When he saw her, he stepped forward immediately.

“Miss Harlowe,” he said in a low voice, “you are safe now.”

Clarissa looked at him seriously.

“Mr. Lovelace,” she said, “I have trusted you with my safety. I ask that you remember your promise.”

Lovelace bowed slightly.

“You have my honor.”

Clarissa hesitated only a moment before entering the carriage.

The door closed.

The horses began to move.

As the carriage rolled away from the Harlowe house, Clarissa looked back once

through the window.

The house where she had spent her entire life slowly disappeared into the darkness.

She felt both relief and fear.

“My future begins tonight,” she whispered.

But she did not yet understand the truth.

The journey she had begun in hope would soon lead her into the most tragic part of her life.

## Part 6

The carriage moved quietly through the dark country road. Clarissa sat inside, her hands folded tightly together in her lap. She had left her father’s house only a short time before, yet it already felt like another world.

Lovelace sat across from her.

For some time neither of them spoke.

At last Lovelace broke the silence.

“Miss Harlowe,” he said gently, “you need not be afraid. You are now beyond the reach of those who wished to force you.”

Clarissa looked toward the small window beside her.

The road was dark, and the trees passed slowly in the moonlight.

“I am not afraid of my family,” she answered quietly. “But I regret the pain I have caused them.”

Lovelace leaned slightly forward.

“You have only defended your liberty,” he said. “Your family should not have treated you so severely.”

Clarissa did not reply immediately.

After a moment she asked calmly, “Where are we going?”

Lovelace smiled.

“For the moment, to London,” he answered. “There we will find comfortable lodgings where you may rest and consider your future.”

Clarissa nodded slowly.

“I hope everything will be conducted with honor,” she said.

Lovelace placed his hand over his heart.

“You may depend entirely upon me.”

Clarissa wished to believe him.

Yet something in his voice made her slightly uneasy.

She turned again toward the window.

The night continued quietly around them.

After several hours the first light of morning appeared in the sky.

Soon the road became busier.

Farmers walked beside carts. Travelers moved along the road.

At last the carriage entered the outskirts of London.

Clarissa looked with curiosity at the crowded streets.

The city was larger and louder than anything she had known before.

“We will stop here for the present,” Lovelace said as the carriage turned into a narrow street.

The carriage stopped before a modest house.

A woman stood waiting at the door.

Lovelace stepped out first and helped Clarissa descend.

“This house belongs to Mrs. Sinclair,” he said. “She will see that you are well cared for.”

Mrs. Sinclair bowed respectfully.

“Welcome, madam,” she said. “Please come inside.”

Clarissa entered the house quietly.

At first everything seemed calm and orderly.

She was shown to a small room upstairs.

Lovelace remained downstairs for some time speaking with Mrs. Sinclair.

Clarissa sat by the window and tried to calm her thoughts.

“Perhaps everything will be well,” she whispered.

Later Lovelace came upstairs.

“Miss Harlowe,” he said, “I hope the room is comfortable.”

Clarissa stood.

“It is sufficient. But I must ask something important.”

Lovelace looked attentive.

“Of course.”

Clarissa spoke firmly.

“My reputation must be protected. I ask that we act with complete respect.”

Lovelace nodded.

“You have my promise.”

Clarissa felt somewhat relieved.

During the next days she remained in the house and wrote letters to Anna Howe. She explained everything that had happened and asked for advice.

Anna answered quickly.

Her letter contained a warning.

“Clarissa,” she wrote, “I fear that Lovelace may not be as honorable as he appears. Be cautious.”

Clarissa read the letter several times.

She began to observe Lovelace more carefully.

His manners remained polite.

Yet sometimes she noticed strange behavior in the house.

Certain women who lived there behaved too freely.

Their laughter in the evening sounded loud and careless.

Clarissa began to feel uneasy.

One afternoon she spoke to Lovelace directly.

“Mr. Lovelace,” she said calmly, “this house does not feel suitable for me.”

Lovelace seemed surprised.

“Not suitable?”

Clarissa answered firmly.

“I wish to move to another place where I may live quietly.”

Lovelace hesitated for a moment.

“Very well,” he said. “I will make arrangements.”

Clarissa felt some relief.

Yet as the days passed, no arrangements were made.  
Instead Lovelace visited her more frequently.  
His conversation became more persuasive.  
One evening he said quietly,  
“Clarissa, you cannot return to your family now. They will never forgive you.”  
Clarissa replied calmly.  
“Perhaps not. But I must live with honor.”  
Lovelace looked at her carefully.  
“Honor,” he repeated.  
Clarissa did not notice the strange expression that crossed his face.  
She still believed that Lovelace intended to protect her.  
But the truth was already beginning to reveal itself.  
And soon Clarissa would discover that the house where she had come for safety  
was far more dangerous than she had imagined.

## Part 7

In the days that followed, Clarissa’s uneasiness slowly increased. At first the house had appeared quiet enough, but as she observed more carefully, she began to notice many things that troubled her.

The women who lived in the house spoke loudly and laughed in ways that seemed careless and improper. Their behavior did not resemble the calm manners Clarissa had known in respectable homes.

One evening, while Clarissa was passing through the hallway, she heard two of the women speaking together.

One of them laughed and said, “The gentleman is very devoted to the new lady upstairs.”

The other replied, “Yes, but such devotion often ends differently than it begins.”

Clarissa did not stay to hear more. She returned quickly to her room.

“This place is not proper,” she said quietly.

When Lovelace visited her later that evening, she spoke firmly.

“Mr. Lovelace, I must insist again that I leave this house.”

Lovelace looked surprised.

“Leave so soon?”

Clarissa answered calmly.

“Yes. I cannot remain where the company is not respectable.”

Lovelace tried to smile.

“You misunderstand the situation. Mrs. Sinclair is a respectable woman.”

Clarissa shook her head.

“I do not believe this house suits me. Please arrange another lodging.”

Lovelace hesitated.

“It may take some time.”

Clarissa replied quietly but firmly,

“Then I will wait. But I cannot remain here long.”

Lovelace finally nodded.

“Very well. I will consider what can be done.”

Yet the next day nothing changed.

And the day after that passed in the same way.

Clarissa began to feel uneasy again.

One afternoon she tried to leave the house to take a short walk.

When she reached the door, one of the servants stopped her.

“Madam,” the servant said nervously, “Mr. Lovelace has asked that you not go out alone.”

Clarissa looked surprised.

“Why?”

The servant lowered her eyes.

“He said the streets might be unsafe.”

Clarissa returned slowly to her room.

A troubling thought entered her mind.

“Why must I remain here?”

That evening she spoke again to Lovelace.

“Mr. Lovelace,” she said calmly, “I attempted to leave the house today, but your

servant stopped me.”

Lovelace answered quickly,

“Only for your safety.”

Clarissa looked at him seriously.

“I am grateful for concern, but I cannot accept confinement.”

Lovelace tried to laugh lightly.

“Confinement? Surely you exaggerate.”

Clarissa answered quietly,

“I wish to leave this house tomorrow.”

Lovelace’s expression became thoughtful.

“Very well,” he said slowly. “I will arrange something.”

Yet again the next day passed without change.

Clarissa now felt certain that something was wrong.

She wrote urgently to Anna Howe.

“My dear Anna,” she wrote, “I begin to fear that I have made a terrible mistake.

Mr. Lovelace delays my departure from this house, and I do not feel safe here.”

Meanwhile Lovelace was speaking privately with Mrs. Sinclair downstairs.

Mrs. Sinclair said quietly,

“The lady grows suspicious.”

Lovelace answered calmly,

“She must remain here a little longer.”

“She may try to leave,” Mrs. Sinclair warned.

Lovelace smiled slightly.

“Then we must ensure she cannot.”

Upstairs Clarissa sat alone in her room.

The evening light faded slowly outside the window.

A strange feeling of danger filled her heart.

“I must leave this place,” she whispered.

She walked to the door and tried to open it.

The door would not move.

For a moment she thought the lock was stuck.

She tried again.  
Still it did not open.  
Clarissa stepped back slowly.  
A terrible realization began to form.  
She hurried to the window and looked down.  
The street below seemed far away.  
The house felt suddenly quiet and heavy.  
Clarissa spoke softly to herself.  
“Have I been deceived?”  
The answer would soon become clear.  
For the house that had seemed a refuge had now become a prison.  
And the man she had trusted had begun to reveal his true intentions.

## Part 8

Clarissa stood quietly beside the locked door for several moments. At first she hoped there had been some simple mistake. Perhaps the servant had locked it without thinking.

But the more she considered the situation, the more uneasy she felt.

She knocked gently.

No one answered.

She knocked again, a little louder.

At last footsteps sounded in the hallway.

The door opened slightly, and one of the servants looked inside.

“Yes, madam?” the woman asked.

Clarissa spoke calmly, though her heart was beating quickly.

“The door was locked. Please leave it open.”

The servant hesitated.

“Mr. Lovelace asked that it remain secured for the evening.”

Clarissa felt a sudden chill.

“Secured?” she repeated.

“For your safety, madam,” the servant said quickly.  
Clarissa said nothing more.  
The door closed again.  
She returned slowly to the chair near the window.  
“This is not protection,” she whispered. “This is imprisonment.”  
That night she slept very little.  
Every sound in the hallway made her uneasy.  
Early the next morning Lovelace came to visit her.  
He entered with his usual confident manner.  
“Good morning, Miss Harlowe,” he said. “I hope you rested well.”  
Clarissa looked at him steadily.  
“Mr. Lovelace, why was my door locked?”  
Lovelace answered smoothly.  
“Only for precaution. The house is not always quiet at night.”  
Clarissa’s voice remained calm.  
“I cannot accept such precautions. I must be free to leave whenever I wish.”  
Lovelace’s expression changed slightly.  
“You are free,” he said. “But I ask you to remain here for a short time.”  
Clarissa stood.  
“No,” she said quietly. “I must leave this house today.”  
Lovelace walked slowly across the room.  
“You cannot leave yet,” he answered.  
Clarissa felt the truth clearly at last.  
“Then I am truly a prisoner,” she said.  
Lovelace tried to laugh lightly.  
“You exaggerate.”  
Clarissa did not raise her voice.  
“The door was locked. The servants watch me. I am not allowed to walk outside.  
That is imprisonment.”  
Lovelace looked at her carefully.  
For a moment he said nothing.

Then he spoke more seriously.

“Miss Harlowe, the world outside is dangerous for you now. Your family is angry. You must rely on me.”

Clarissa replied firmly.

“I relied on your promise of honor.”

Lovelace’s smile returned, though it seemed colder.

“And I have not broken it.”

Clarissa answered quietly,

“Then allow me to leave.”

Lovelace walked toward the door.

“Not yet,” he said.

Then he left the room.

Clarissa remained standing.

The truth was now undeniable.

She had trusted the wrong man.

Throughout the day she tried again to speak with the servants, but none of them helped her.

One woman whispered nervously,

“Please do not ask us, madam. We cannot disobey Mr. Lovelace.”

Clarissa understood that she was alone.

That evening she sat at the small desk and began writing again.

“My dear Anna,” she wrote, “I fear that I am now completely under Mr. Lovelace’s power. The house where I hoped to find safety has become a prison.”

Her hand trembled slightly as she continued.

“I must rely on patience and faith.”

Downstairs Lovelace spoke quietly with Belford, who had come to visit him.

Belford listened with concern.

“You are going too far,” he said.

Lovelace replied calmly,

“I intend to win her completely.”

Belford shook his head.

“Clarissa Harlowe is not a woman who can be forced.”

Lovelace answered quietly,

“Every heart has a moment of weakness.”

Upstairs Clarissa remained alone.

She looked out the window at the fading evening light.

“I must remain strong,” she whispered.

But she could not yet imagine the terrible trial that awaited her.

For Lovelace had already begun to plan the most tragic part of Clarissa’s story.

## Part 9

The next days passed slowly for Clarissa. She remained in the same room, watched by servants and unable to leave the house. Though no one spoke harshly to her, the quiet control over her movements made her feel deeply distressed.

Yet Clarissa tried to remain calm.

Each morning she prayed quietly.

“I must not lose my courage,” she whispered.

Lovelace continued visiting her often. Sometimes he spoke gently, sometimes with persuasive charm, as if he believed he could change her mind through conversation.

One afternoon he entered the room carrying a letter.

“Miss Harlowe,” he said with a polite bow, “I have news from your family.”

Clarissa stood at once.

“From my family?”

Lovelace handed her the letter.

“Your brother has written.”

Clarissa opened it quickly.

Her brother’s words were harsh.

He wrote that she had disgraced the family by leaving the house. He accused Lovelace of stealing her away and demanded that she return immediately and agree to marry Mr. Solmes.

Clarissa read the letter slowly.

When she finished, she folded it quietly.

Lovelace watched her.

“You see,” he said, “your family shows little kindness.”

Clarissa replied softly,

“They are angry. That is natural.”

Lovelace leaned against the table.

“They will not forgive you easily.”

Clarissa answered,

“Even so, I cannot act against my conscience.”

Lovelace looked at her carefully.

“Then what do you intend to do?”

Clarissa spoke clearly.

“I wish to leave this house and live quietly somewhere respectable.”

Lovelace sighed.

“You distrust me deeply.”

Clarissa did not deny it.

“I must protect my reputation.”

Lovelace walked slowly across the room.

“Clarissa,” he said more softly, “you know I admire you greatly. Why do you resist me so strongly?”

Clarissa answered with dignity.

“Because admiration is not the same as respect.”

Lovelace’s expression darkened slightly.

“You believe I do not respect you?”

Clarissa spoke calmly.

“Your actions make me uncertain.”

Lovelace remained silent for a moment.

Then he said,

“If I offer marriage, would you trust me then?”

Clarissa looked surprised.

“Marriage?”

Lovelace nodded.

“Yes. I could end all these doubts.”

Clarissa considered his words carefully.

Yet she remembered Anna Howe’s warnings and Lovelace’s reputation.

At last she answered slowly.

“Marriage must be based on sincerity. I must see proof of your honor first.”

Lovelace smiled faintly.

“You demand much.”

Clarissa replied,

“I ask only what is right.”

Lovelace did not argue further.

But after he left the room, his expression changed.

Later that evening Belford spoke to him again.

“You should treat her honestly,” Belford said.

Lovelace laughed lightly.

“You speak as if I were a villain.”

Belford answered seriously,

“I begin to fear that you may become one.”

Lovelace did not reply.

Upstairs Clarissa continued writing letters.

She wrote again to Anna Howe.

“My dear friend,” she wrote, “I try to remain calm, but I feel surrounded by danger. Mr. Lovelace speaks sometimes of marriage, yet his behavior does not reassure me.”

She paused and added one final sentence.

“I must rely on patience and virtue.”

But Lovelace had already begun to lose patience.

The resistance of Clarissa’s character both fascinated and frustrated him.

And as his frustration grew, the situation became more dangerous.

For Lovelace was not a man accustomed to defeat.

And Clarissa's steadfast virtue now stood directly in the path of his pride.

## Part 10

Clarissa noticed that Lovelace's manner began to change. At times he remained polite and respectful. At other times he spoke with impatience, as if her refusal troubled his pride.

She continued asking to leave the house.

But each request ended with delay.

One morning she spoke firmly again.

"Mr. Lovelace, I must insist. I cannot remain here any longer."

Lovelace answered calmly,

"Only a few more days. I am arranging another lodging."

Clarissa replied quietly,

"You have said that before."

Lovelace did not answer immediately.

Then he said,

"Clarissa, you judge me too severely."

Clarissa answered,

"I judge only what I see."

Lovelace looked at her for a long moment.

"And what do you see?"

Clarissa replied honestly.

"A man who wishes to persuade me rather than protect me."

Lovelace forced a slight smile.

"You are difficult to convince."

Clarissa answered gently,

"I wish only to live with honor."

That evening Clarissa again attempted to leave the house.

She walked down the stairs quietly and reached the front door.

But one of the servants stood there.

“Madam,” the servant said nervously, “you cannot leave.”

Clarissa spoke calmly.

“I must.”

The servant shook her head.

“Mr. Lovelace gave strict instructions.”

Clarissa returned slowly upstairs.

Her fear had now become certainty.

She was truly under Lovelace’s control.

Later that night Lovelace came to her room.

Clarissa faced him calmly.

“Why am I not allowed to leave?”

Lovelace answered quickly,

“Because I wish to protect you.”

Clarissa replied firmly,

“Protection does not require imprisonment.”

Lovelace’s patience began to fade.

“You speak as if I were your enemy.”

Clarissa answered quietly,

“Your actions make it difficult to think otherwise.”

Lovelace walked across the room restlessly.

“Clarissa,” he said at last, “why do you fight me so strongly? I admire you more than any woman I have known.”

Clarissa’s voice remained steady.

“Admiration without respect is dangerous.”

Lovelace stopped.

“You believe I do not respect you?”

Clarissa replied,

“I fear that you admire virtue but do not wish to obey it.”

Lovelace said nothing more.

He left the room suddenly.

After he was gone Clarissa sat quietly at the desk.

She wrote another letter to Anna Howe.

“My dear friend,” she wrote, “I fear the situation grows worse. Mr. Lovelace speaks often of admiration, yet his behavior alarms me. I feel as if my safety depends only on my own firmness.”

Meanwhile Lovelace was speaking with Belford again downstairs.

Belford looked troubled.

“You cannot continue this way,” he said.

Lovelace answered impatiently,

“She refuses everything I offer.”

Belford replied,

“Because she values her honor above everything else.”

Lovelace smiled bitterly.

“Yes. And that is exactly why I must conquer her.”

Belford stared at him.

“Conquer?”

Lovelace answered quietly,

“Her pride must break eventually.”

Belford shook his head.

“You do not understand her. Clarissa will suffer, but she will not surrender her virtue.”

Lovelace did not answer.

But his silence revealed that his determination had only grown stronger.

Upstairs Clarissa sat alone by the candlelight.

She felt deeply troubled, yet she remained calm.

“Whatever happens,” she whispered, “I must remain true to myself.”

She did not yet know how terrible the coming events would be.

But the struggle between her virtue and Lovelace’s pride was now approaching its most tragic moment.

Part 11

The tension between Clarissa and Lovelace continued to grow. Each day Clarissa repeated her request to leave the house. Each day Lovelace answered with delay or persuasion.

Yet Clarissa's resolve did not weaken.

One morning Lovelace entered her room with an unusual seriousness.

"Clarissa," he said, "we cannot continue like this."

Clarissa looked at him calmly.

"Then allow me to leave."

Lovelace shook his head slowly.

"You still believe the world outside will welcome you?"

Clarissa answered quietly,

"I ask only the chance to live honestly."

Lovelace walked toward the window and spoke with impatience.

"Your family has already condemned you. Society will judge you harshly."

Clarissa replied,

"If I must suffer for my conscience, I will accept it."

Lovelace turned suddenly.

"You speak as if suffering were noble."

Clarissa answered softly,

"Sometimes it is the price of integrity."

Lovelace stared at her.

For a moment he seemed almost moved.

But then his pride returned.

"You think yourself stronger than me," he said.

Clarissa shook her head.

"No. I only wish to remain honest."

Lovelace laughed quietly.

"Honesty can be very inconvenient."

Clarissa did not respond.

That afternoon Clarissa tried once more to send a letter to Anna Howe. But the servant returned it later.

“Madam,” the woman whispered nervously, “Mr. Lovelace said the letter cannot be sent.”

Clarissa understood at once.

She was now completely isolated.

When Lovelace came again that evening, Clarissa faced him directly.

“Why are my letters stopped?” she asked.

Lovelace answered calmly,

“Because your friends fill your mind with unnecessary fears.”

Clarissa replied firmly,

“They help me see clearly.”

Lovelace’s patience broke.

“Clarissa, you must stop resisting me!”

Clarissa stood quietly.

“I resist only what is wrong.”

Lovelace walked across the room angrily.

“You leave me no choice,” he said.

Clarissa’s heart beat faster.

“What do you mean?”

Lovelace answered coldly,

“You will eventually accept my authority.”

Clarissa’s voice remained calm but strong.

“Never.”

Lovelace stared at her.

The calm dignity of her answer seemed to irritate him more than anger would have done.

At last he left the room without another word.

That night Clarissa could not sleep.

She sat by the window watching the moonlight over the silent street.

A terrible fear had entered her mind.

“I must remain vigilant,” she whispered.

Meanwhile downstairs Lovelace spoke again with Belford.

Belford looked deeply troubled.

“You are going too far,” he said.

Lovelace answered bitterly,

“She refuses everything.”

Belford replied,

“Because she values her virtue more than life itself.”

Lovelace remained silent.

Then he said quietly,

“We shall see how strong that virtue truly is.”

Belford stared at him.

“Do not destroy her.”

Lovelace answered with cold determination,

“Her resistance has become a challenge.”

Upstairs Clarissa knelt beside the bed and prayed.

“Give me strength,” she said softly.

She did not know how soon her strength would be tested.

For Lovelace had begun to plan the cruel act that would soon destroy Clarissa’s peace and change the course of both their lives forever.

## Part 12

The following days were filled with quiet tension. Clarissa noticed that Lovelace’s visits became less frequent, but the atmosphere in the house felt heavier than before. The servants spoke to her politely, yet they watched her carefully, as if they had been given strict instructions.

Clarissa remained mostly in her room.

She spent much of her time writing, reading, or praying quietly.

“I must remain calm,” she often whispered to herself.

Yet a feeling of danger slowly grew in her heart.

One evening Mrs. Sinclair came to speak with her.

The woman entered the room with a polite smile.

“Miss Harlowe,” she said, “Mr. Lovelace asks that you join us for supper tonight.”

Clarissa hesitated.

She had avoided eating with the others for several days.

“I prefer to remain here,” she answered.

Mrs. Sinclair insisted gently.

“It would please Mr. Lovelace very much.”

Clarissa considered the request.

At last she agreed.

“Very well,” she said quietly.

Later that evening she went downstairs.

Lovelace greeted her warmly.

“Clarissa,” he said with a smile, “it is good to see you again.”

Clarissa answered calmly,

“Good evening, Mr. Lovelace.”

The supper seemed ordinary at first.

Lovelace spoke politely, and the servants behaved respectfully.

Yet Clarissa felt strangely tired during the meal.

Her head began to feel heavy.

She tried to remain attentive, but her thoughts became confused.

Lovelace watched her carefully.

“You seem weary,” he said.

Clarissa spoke slowly.

“Perhaps I am tired.”

Lovelace stood.

“You should rest.”

Clarissa tried to stand, but the room seemed to move around her.

The last thing she clearly remembered was Lovelace speaking softly to the servants.

Then everything became dark.

When Clarissa awoke later, she was alone in her room.

The morning light entered through the window.  
For several moments she did not move.  
Slowly she remembered the previous evening.  
A terrible fear entered her heart.  
“What has happened?” she whispered.  
She tried to rise from the bed but felt weak and trembling.  
Soon Mrs. Sinclair entered the room.  
Clarissa looked at her anxiously.  
“Where is Mr. Lovelace?”  
Mrs. Sinclair avoided her eyes.  
“He is not here at the moment.”  
Clarissa’s voice shook slightly.  
“Tell him I must speak with him immediately.”  
Mrs. Sinclair nodded and left the room.  
Clarissa sat silently on the bed.  
Her mind was filled with confusion and dread.  
She felt that something terrible had occurred.  
Later that day Lovelace finally appeared.  
He entered the room slowly.  
Clarissa stood and faced him.  
Her voice trembled.  
“Mr. Lovelace... what have you done?”  
Lovelace tried to appear calm.  
“Clarissa, you must listen to me—”  
But Clarissa stepped back.  
“Answer me.”  
Lovelace hesitated.  
The silence between them felt unbearable.  
Clarissa’s voice became weaker.  
“You have destroyed my honor.”  
Lovelace spoke quickly.

“Clarissa, I will repair everything. I will marry you.”

Clarissa stared at him.

Her face had become pale and still.

“Marriage?” she said slowly.

“After such cruelty?”

Lovelace stepped toward her.

“I acted in passion, but my feelings are sincere.”

Clarissa raised her hand.

“Do not come closer.”

Her voice was quiet but firm.

“You have taken everything from me.”

Lovelace tried again.

“Clarissa, listen—”

But she interrupted him.

“No.”

Tears appeared in her eyes, yet her voice remained calm.

“You believed that force could conquer virtue. You were wrong.”

Lovelace stood silent.

Clarissa turned away.

“Leave me,” she said softly.

Lovelace hesitated for a long moment.

Then he slowly left the room.

Clarissa remained standing in silence.

Her life had changed forever.

Yet even in that terrible moment she spoke quietly to herself.

“I will not surrender my soul.”

And from that moment Clarissa’s struggle entered its final and most tragic stage.

## Part 13

After Lovelace left the room, Clarissa remained standing for a long time

without moving. The quiet of the house seemed deeper than before. Her thoughts were clear now, though her heart was heavy.

At last she sat slowly beside the table.

“My life is changed,” she whispered.

Yet even in that terrible moment she felt a strange calmness.

Lovelace’s cruelty had destroyed her happiness, but it had not destroyed her sense of right and wrong.

“He has injured my body,” she said softly, “but he cannot conquer my soul.”

During the following days Clarissa refused to see Lovelace again.

When he asked to visit her, she sent back a simple message.

“I cannot receive him.”

Lovelace tried several times to speak with her, but each time the answer was the same.

At last he sent a letter.

In the letter he again promised marriage.

“Clarissa,” he wrote, “I admit my fault. But I will repair everything. Let us marry, and the world will soon forget the past.”

Clarissa read the letter quietly.

Then she wrote a reply.

“Mr. Lovelace,” she wrote, “marriage cannot repair violence. You ask me to forget what cannot be forgotten.”

She paused before writing the final words.

“I forgive you as a Christian. But I cannot accept you as a husband.”

When Lovelace received the letter he became restless and uneasy.

He walked across the room again and again.

Belford watched him silently.

“She refuses you?” Belford asked.

Lovelace answered bitterly,

“She speaks of forgiveness but rejects marriage.”

Belford replied calmly,

“That is because she values honor more than comfort.”

Lovelace shook his head.

“No woman has ever resisted me like this.”

Belford answered quietly,

“Clarissa Harlowe is not like other women.”

Meanwhile Clarissa had made an important decision.

She would leave the house of Mrs. Sinclair.

Even if the world judged her harshly, she would live independently and honestly.

With great difficulty she arranged to leave secretly.

One morning she gathered her few belongings and prepared to depart.

Before leaving she wrote one more letter.

It was addressed to Lovelace.

“Mr. Lovelace,” she wrote, “I leave this house today. I will not accuse you before the world, though I could. My future will be quiet and humble, but it will be honest.”

She added one final sentence.

“May you one day understand the value of virtue.”

Soon afterward Clarissa left the house.

The journey was difficult.

She was weak and deeply troubled, yet she remained determined.

At last she found shelter in a modest lodging in London.

The room was small and simple.

But for the first time since leaving her father’s house, Clarissa felt truly free.

She sat quietly beside the window.

The city outside moved with its usual noise and activity.

Yet Clarissa remained peaceful.

“Whatever happens now,” she whispered, “I will live according to my conscience.”

But her health had already begun to fail.

The long sorrow and suffering had weakened her body.

And though her spirit remained strong, the end of her life was slowly approaching.

Soon a new friend would enter the story—Mr. Belford.

And through him the final days of Clarissa Harlowe would be remembered by the world.

#### Part 14

After leaving Mrs. Sinclair's house, Clarissa found a small and quiet lodging in another part of London. The house was simple, and the woman who kept it treated her with kindness. Clarissa wished only for peace and privacy.

Yet her strength was already fading.

The many weeks of fear, sorrow, and struggle had weakened her body greatly. She often felt tired, and sometimes she could not rise from her chair without difficulty.

Still, her mind remained calm.

One morning she sat beside the small table in her room and wrote a letter.

It was addressed to Mr. Belford.

Belford had once been a close companion of Lovelace, but Clarissa believed he possessed a better heart than his friend. She hoped he might act honestly if he understood her situation.

When Belford received the letter, he read it with deep emotion.

"She trusts me," he said quietly.

Soon afterward he came to visit her.

When he entered the room, he bowed respectfully.

Clarissa rose slowly.

"Mr. Belford," she said gently, "I thank you for coming."

Belford felt deeply ashamed.

"Madam," he answered, "I am not worthy of your kindness. I have long been the friend of a man who has treated you cruelly."

Clarissa spoke calmly.

"If you now wish to act justly, that is enough."

Belford was deeply moved by her dignity.

During the conversation Clarissa explained her wishes clearly.

“I do not wish revenge,” she said.

“You do not?” Belford asked in surprise.

Clarissa shook her head.

“No. Revenge would only continue the wrong.”

Belford sat quietly, listening to her.

Clarissa continued speaking.

“But I wish the truth to be known. Not for my sake, but so that others may learn from this story.”

Belford promised sincerely.

“I will help you in every way I can.”

Clarissa thanked him.

Over the next days Belford visited her often.

Each time he came, he found her weaker.

Yet her calm spirit never changed.

One afternoon Belford spoke hesitantly.

“Madam... Lovelace regrets what he has done. He still wishes to marry you.”

Clarissa listened quietly.

Then she answered slowly.

“Marriage cannot repair what was destroyed.”

Belford nodded sadly.

“I understand.”

Clarissa added gently,

“But I forgive him.”

Belford looked at her with astonishment.

“You forgive him?”

Clarissa replied softly,

“Hatred would only poison my heart. I choose peace.”

Belford later wrote that these words affected him deeply.

Clarissa soon began to prepare for the end of her life.

She arranged her letters carefully.

She wrote messages to her family.

She wrote again to her dear friend Anna Howe.

And she asked Belford to deliver these letters when the time came.

One evening Belford noticed that Clarissa seemed very tired.

“You should rest,” he said.

Clarissa smiled faintly.

“Yes,” she answered.

Then she added quietly,

“I believe my journey in this world is nearly finished.”

Belford could not answer.

The calm acceptance in her voice filled him with sorrow.

Clarissa’s final days had begun.

And though her body was growing weaker, her spirit remained strong and peaceful.

Soon the world would lose one of its most virtuous hearts.

## Part 15

As the days passed, Clarissa grew steadily weaker. The small room where she lived became very quiet. The woman who kept the house moved gently so as not to disturb her. Belford continued to visit often and watched with growing sorrow as her strength slowly left her.

Yet Clarissa’s mind remained calm and clear.

One morning Belford arrived and found her sitting near the window. The early sunlight fell softly across the room.

“Mr. Belford,” she said when she saw him, “you are very kind to visit again.”

Belford bowed his head.

“Madam, it is I who should thank you. Your courage teaches me how small my own life has been.”

Clarissa smiled gently.

“If my sufferings help anyone to live more honestly, then they have not been

useless.”

Belford sat beside her.

For a few moments neither of them spoke.

At last Clarissa said quietly,

“I have arranged my papers.”

She pointed to a small group of letters tied carefully together.

“These must be sent to my family.”

Belford nodded.

“I will deliver them exactly as you wish.”

Clarissa continued,

“There is also a letter for Anna Howe. She has always been my most faithful friend.”

Belford promised again that every letter would reach its destination.

Clarissa leaned back slightly in her chair.

“My family may still be angry with me,” she said softly, “but I hope they will one day forgive.”

Belford replied with emotion,

“If they see your letters, they must understand your goodness.”

Clarissa remained silent for a moment.

Then she said something that surprised him.

“There is also a message for Mr. Lovelace.”

Belford looked up.

“For Lovelace?”

Clarissa nodded.

“Yes.”

Belford hesitated.

“May I ask what you wish to say to him?”

Clarissa answered calmly.

“Tell him that I forgive him.”

Belford felt a deep pain in his chest.

“Madam... he does not deserve such generosity.”

Clarissa replied gently,

“Forgiveness is not given because it is deserved. It is given because hatred destroys the heart.”

Belford could not speak for a moment.

Later he wrote that her words remained with him for the rest of his life.

During the following days Clarissa spent much time resting. Sometimes she spoke quietly with Belford or with the woman who cared for her.

Her voice became softer, but her thoughts remained clear.

One evening Belford arrived and found her lying peacefully on the bed.

Clarissa opened her eyes and smiled faintly.

“Mr. Belford,” she said, “you have been a true friend.”

Belford felt tears in his eyes.

“Madam, I wish I could have helped you sooner.”

Clarissa shook her head slightly.

“Do not regret the past. Only try to live well in the future.”

The evening grew quiet.

Outside the window the city slowly darkened.

Clarissa spoke once more.

“I am not afraid.”

Belford leaned closer.

“Not afraid?”

Clarissa answered softly,

“No. My heart is at peace.”

Her breathing became slower.

The room remained silent except for the faint sound of her breath.

Belford sat beside her quietly.

After some time Clarissa spoke again, almost in a whisper.

“If my story is remembered, let it remind others that virtue is stronger than cruelty.”

Belford nodded.

“It will be remembered.”

Clarissa closed her eyes gently.  
Her face looked peaceful.  
The suffering of her life was ending.  
And soon Clarissa Harlowe would enter the final moment of her tragic but noble story.

## Part 16

The final morning of Clarissa's life arrived quietly. The small room where she lay was filled with soft daylight. The woman who cared for the house moved quietly so as not to disturb her, and Belford came early, fearing that her strength might soon fail completely.

When he entered the room, Clarissa was awake. Her face was pale, but her expression was calm.

"Mr. Belford," she said gently, "you have come again."

Belford approached the bed slowly.

"Yes, madam. I wished to see how you rested."

Clarissa answered softly,

"I have rested peacefully."

Belford sat beside her, unable to hide his sadness.

Clarissa noticed his expression.

"Do not grieve too deeply," she said. "My suffering is nearly finished."

Belford struggled to answer.

"The world will be poorer without you."

Clarissa smiled faintly.

"If the world remembers virtue, then goodness will never truly disappear."

After a few moments she spoke again.

"Have you kept the letters safely?"

Belford nodded.

"Yes. They are prepared exactly as you wished."

Clarissa seemed satisfied.

“Thank you. When my family reads them, I hope they will understand that I never wished to bring them sorrow.”

Belford replied quietly,

“They will see your heart clearly.”

Clarissa remained silent for a moment.

Then she said,

“And Mr. Lovelace?”

Belford hesitated.

“He has heard that you are very ill.”

Clarissa closed her eyes briefly.

“If he asks about me, tell him that I forgave him before my death.”

Belford felt deeply moved.

“I will tell him.”

Clarissa added gently,

“Perhaps that knowledge may change his life.”

Her breathing grew weaker as the morning passed.

The quiet room seemed almost sacred.

Clarissa spoke only a few more times.

Once she whispered,

“I feel no anger toward anyone.”

Later she said,

“My heart is calm.”

At last her voice became very faint.

Belford leaned closer so he could hear her.

Clarissa opened her eyes once more.

“Mr. Belford,” she said softly, “thank you for your kindness.”

Belford could hardly speak.

“It has been my honor to know you.”

Clarissa looked peaceful.

“Remember,” she whispered, “virtue must remain stronger than suffering.”

Those were among the last clear words she spoke.

Soon afterward her breathing became slower.

Belford remained beside her quietly.

The room was completely still.

At last Clarissa's breathing stopped.

Her face remained calm, almost serene.

Belford bowed his head.

"Clarissa Harlowe," he said softly, "your goodness will not be forgotten."

In the days that followed, Belford carried out her final wishes.

Her letters were delivered.

Her story became known to those who had once misunderstood her.

Even Lovelace, when he heard of her peaceful death and her forgiveness, was deeply shaken.

Though her life had ended in sorrow, Clarissa's courage and virtue remained stronger than the cruelty she had endured.

Her story continued to move the hearts of all who heard it.

And the memory of Clarissa Harlowe lived on as a reminder that even in the darkest suffering, the human spirit can remain noble.