

**LOUISA: A
POETICAL NOVEL,
IN FOUR EPISTLES**

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Louisa: A Poetical Novel, in Four Epistles by Anna Seward

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ANNA SEWARD

**LOUISA: A
POETICAL NOVEL,
IN FOUR EPISTLES**

56 a.

L O U I S A.

BY MISS SEWARD.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

[Price, 3s. 6d.]



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A

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I N

FOUR EPISTLES.

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L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND;
AND SOLD BY MR. MORGAN, BOOKSELLER, AT LITCHFIELD.

M.DCC.XCII.

P R E F A C E.

THE ensuing epistolary poems contain a description rather of passions than of incidents. They resulted from an idea of it being possible to unite the impassioned fondness of POPE'S ELOISA, with the chaster tenderness of PRIOR'S EMMA; avoiding the voluptuousness of the first, and the too conceding softness of the second. It is hoped the Reader will distinguish between the apprehended possibility of exhibiting in verse a more faultless female Character than the ELOISA of POPE, or the EMMA of PRIOR, and the rash and vain design of equalling, much less of surpassing the transcendent poetic excellence of either of those Compositions.

THE LOUISA of the following pages has all that enthusiasm which springs from an heart warmly affectionate, joined to a glowing and picturesque imagination. Her sensibilities, heightened, and refined in the bosom of Retirement, know no bounds, except those which the dignity of conscious Worth, and a strong sense of Religion, prescribe. It is feared the modern young Ladies will have little sympathy with her, since she is unfashionably enthusiastic, and unfashionably tender.

AN ingenious Friend, after reading the first epistle, remarked, that LOUISA might have described with more interesting particularity her Lover's declaration of his passion, and the manner in which she received that declaration; but the Author thought the present method of conveying that circumstance to the mind of the Reader more poetic. POPE'S ELOISA is minute in her description of the awful Scenery, formed by the rocks, the streams, and mountains of Paraclete, but by no means minute concerning the amorous éclaircissement between herself and Abelard. LOUISA discriminates her Lover's *early* attentions to her, though she leaves the manner of his declaring their source very much to the Imagination.

B

Her

P R E F A C E .

Her application of the beautiful scenic objects, by which she was at that interval surrounded, to her own, and to her Lover's situation; and the passing suddenly to their present altered appearance, contrasts the charms, and bloom of the first, with the chill dreariness of the second. There it was that the Author had in view that striking letter in the 3d Vol. of the Nouvelle Héloïse, which describes St. Preaux accompanying Mrs. Wolmar to the rocks of Meillerie, then covered with the richness of Summer-luxuriance; and painting to her the situation of that very Scene, when he had visited it alone, amidst the horrors of Winter, and found those horrors congenial to the temper of his Soul.

THIS Poem has little chance to be popular. A feeling Heart, and a fondness for Verse must *unite* to render it interesting. A feeling Heart without a glowing Imagination will be tired of the Landscape-painting, somewhat luxuriantly interspersed. An Imagination that glows, while the Heart is frozen, has a propensity to fancy every thing prosaic which is not imagery, and will probably yawn over the reasoning of these Lovers, and sicken over their tenderness.

IF, however, this little Work has the honor to interest and please the Few, in whom the kind and sweet affections are blended with poetic taste, the end for which it is published will be obtained.

EXCEPT some slight alterations, which have been made since the two first Editions, the hundred and fifty-six lines, with which the poem opens, were written when the author was only nineteen. They had been mislaid during a long interval. It is sixteen months since they were accidentally recovered. Some few Friends, to whom the Fragment was shewn, thought it worth being extended into a regular Work. The first and third of these epistles are designed to be descriptive, and sentimental; the second, and last, dramatic.



L O U I S A

T O

E M M A,

HER FRIEND IN THE EAST-INDIES.

OCTOBER 21, 1779.

THEE, EMMA, four slow-circling years have seen
 Prefs, with thy penfive foot, Savannas green ;
Seen thee, with fond Affection's moisten'd gaze,
And the low-warbled song of former days,
Wind round the shadowy Rock, and shelving Glade,
Where broad Bananas stretch their grateful shade ;
Bend o'er the West thy longing eyes, and chide
The tardy Breeze that fans th'unfreighted Tide.

Now, as with filial care thy light step roves,
Through India's palmy plains, and spicy groves,

B 2

To

To blefs thee, exil'd thus in Youth's gay prime,
 May frightly Health refift the torrid clime,
 Temper the fickly blaft, the fever'd ray,
 And Peace, and Pleafure, lead the fhining Day!
 Yet, when thou know'ft for me, that Sorrow fhrouds
 Hope's crystal mirror with impervious clouds,
 The fighs, and tears, that tendereft pity fpeak,
 Shall fwell thy breaft, and chill thy glowing cheek ;
 Since one have been our pleafures, one our cares,
 From the firft dawn of thofe delicious years,
 What time, inspir'd by joy's enlivening powers,
 We chas'd the gilded Infeft through the bowers ;
 And oh! I fondly tell my anxious heart,
 The deareft truth experience can impart,
 That yet, to quench this fympathy of foul,
 Time, and the world of waters, vainly roll.

O'er this deep Glen, departing Autumn throws,
 With kind reverted glance, a fhort repofe,
 Ere yet ſhe leaves her ENGLAND's fading fcene,
 Where fickly yellow ftains the vivid green,

And