

"My Dear William—You will not have seen this until I am in the world of spirits, and I hope the communion of saints in heaven, through Jesus our Lord. You have ever believed that I am your parent; but I am not. I am only your aunt—your father being a much younger brother, who was the delight of his mother and myself; for from his earliest dawning of reason, his mind was of a pious turn, and we loved him as much as he was the aversion of his father. His elder brother had engrossed all his parent's love; for he was more like himself, and cared not for any thing that savoured of the fear of God. My father had been a cavalier and suffered a share of his sovereign's misfortunes, and hated the Covenanters with a perfect hatred; but he interfered not with his pious wife in her mode of worship, until your father shewed an aversion, when yet a boy, to join in the profanity and revelry which he and his elder son delighted in. It was after this that he began to storm and threaten his wife, for instilling her puritanical notions, as he called them, into his children. We were immediately taken from her. I was sent to an aunt of his own opinion; and Andrew, your father, to an University in Paris. Your father I never heard of for some years. My mother I never saw again until she was upon her deathbed, when she gave me the jewels you will find in the box with this. Make a good use of them, and may they prove a blessing in placing you above want, if I am taken away before you are claimed by your father, which he will do if he lives, and is allowed to return to Scotland; if not, you will be enabled to trace him out by their means. But I must proceed:—I was still residing with my father's aunt, when your father returned to Scotland, bringing with him from France a Scottish lady of family, whom he had married there. Being very uncomfortably situated, I went to reside with him.—The troubles about religion, which distracted the country, had been laying it waste for some time. Your father took a leading part for the Covenant, and joined the insurgents. The fatal battle of Bothwell Bridge was fought. Your father was dangerously wounded; but escaped: he was concealed by a faithful servant, and brought home, where we concealed him from the search that was made, until his recovery. Your mother who was of a delicate constitution never recovered the shock. She sickened, and died before

her husband was convalescent. Your father was obliged to fly his country in disguise, his property confiscated, and a price set upon his head; for though he had been seen to his body had not been found. I was driven from his house, and retired to this wild as a place of security, of which I informed your father. He was, when I wrote this, at the Hague, a merchant, and wealthy. You were too young to remember any of these events, and I was as familiar in your sight as your sainted mother. If you apply to the Prince of Orange, should your father be dead, he will be your friend for his sake.

Elizabeth B—."

The next paper was a letter in a female hand, which had evidently been blotted by the tears either of the writer or the reader, for it was blistered in many places, and the ink effaced.

"My loving Elizabeth—Pity me; for my heart is broken—I am weighed down by many sorrows, and have no one to whom I can relieve this bursting heart but you. Alas! the illusions of love are gone. I am now the aversion of my lord. I fear his love for me is fled for ever, in spite of all my endeavours to please him. At the birth of my beautiful babe, he left the castle in displeasure. Unfeeling Charles! when I expected rapture in his eye at the sight of his child, he turned from it as if he loathed it, because it was not a boy. For eighteen months he has been in London, at the court, and returned only a few weeks since. Alas! how his manner is changed! I am treated with harshness and scorn. The only consolation I have now when he threatens to deprive me of, and send her young as she is to a nunnery in France, and make her profess. I have been on my knees again and again to my cruel lord to allow me to be her companion. This he sternly refuses. Oh, teach me, my dear Eliza, how I may soften his obdurate heart; for cruel as he is, I love him still, and would die a thousand deaths rather than offend him. Had I never loved him so sincerely, I never had been so miserable. Holy Virgin, be my aid! and all the saints befriend me! I know it is not because I am an unworthy daughter of the universal church that he now has ceased to love me; for he knew I was so before we wed. He, alas! cares for nothing holy; and in his conversation even favours the church