

in changeful fruition, than any species of difficulty in the gratification of their burning desires. Yet, the humour of mankind is such, as not to endure being overcome, and to desist, after having proceeded so far, seemed to him a meanness of spirit, that he did not choose to acknowledge; besides that the decided liberty he had taken with the swelling bosom of the youthful Caroline, dwelt on his memory with such all powerful luxuriance, that his desire for the richer and still untasted fruit of all her yielded charms, became inflamed almost to madness, when he thought of that moment when he had attempted to storm the citadel of her chastity.

Her letter both astonished and vexed him. He readily perceived by it, that she had more resolution and strength of mind than he could have possibly expected to find in a person of her young years, and slender experience of the world; and how to answer it in such a manner as might effectually deceive her, and at the same time preserve his own character, with the serious as a man of honour, and with the gay, as a man of intrigue, should the affair ever become public, took him up a long consideration. Suddenly an invention came into his head, perfectly conformable to the baseness of his heart, and the looseness of his principles, and probably the only one that could have been found out to ensnare the prudent, though warm and affectionate, victim he designed to sacrifice to his lustful appetite. But, as an old poet justly observes,

———“What can not wicked will effect,  
When bound by no restriction but its own,  
And bent to act whatever it inclines?”

Thus, Lothario, having formed his scheme, returned to the plain sincerity of Caroline, this ambiguous and delusive answer.