

Margrave's; and this letter was written in the first transports of her fury: nor was she undeceived until some time after, when she discovered that this woman was of high birth, and not, as she supposed, *une chercheuse d'aventures à Paris*.

Mademoiselle Clairon had long been celebrated for the variety of her attachments. Her intrigues were universally known, but her affectation of virtue was truly ridiculous. Her talents were great as an actress. I remember, when I was thirteen years old, I was taken to the *Théâtre François* at Paris, to see the performance of *Semiramis*. This character so much excited my laughter, that my mother ordered me to be taken home to the *Hotel Beaufreau* before the piece was finished, because my noise offended the *parterre*. I did not know that it was Mademoiselle Clairon who performed the part of *Semiramis*; but twenty years afterwards, when I was playing the part of the Sultan in *Almenorade*, my foolish memory recalled to mind *Semiramis*, and I imitated that declamation, which I then recollected. There were only twenty-five persons who composed the audience, all friends of the Margrave, who burst out into exclamations at my performance; and after the play was over, they declared that I must have seen Mademoiselle Clairon, whom, they said, I had so closely imitated. I protested that, to the best of my recollection, I had never seen her. They insisted that it was herself, and that I must have seen her repeatedly to have followed her manner so exactly. Declamation on the French stage was quite in fashion, and I had been so particularly struck with this kind of acting, that it had lain dormant in my mind till the occasion brought it forth.