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but were I to be married in a *Literal Sense*, a *Mathematician* among all the Men in the World wou'd make nothing for my purpose. I suppose you're the same Spark that Answers Questions in the *Athenian Oracle*, that look so Wicked-

ly, much after this Fashion $\frac{345}{692 \frac{1}{1}}$ Z or thus ✠

$\frac{234}{121 \frac{2}{2}}$ Notwithstanding every Man to his Cal-

ling. However to be Serious, *Your Proposal is In-
genious enough*, and tho' your'e less Ceremonious
then might be expected, yet that don't much of-
fend me. You seem only to be *Over-hasty in a Bu-
siness of so great Concernment*, and but that you ar-
gue from the Nature of the thing, I shou'd cer-
tainly have *beld out one Seven Years Siege at least*.
But I'll dilpute no more about this matter, my
Future Carriage shall Convince you of what I
wou'd, but can't perfectly here describe. I have
been a Thousand times in the mind, to put your
Platonick Love to the utmost Trial, and personally
to challenge you to shew *a Love like Mine*; nay,
did not I fear you'd draw back, I'd meet you
before the Altar, and urge the Truth of what I
say with as much Devotion, as ever *Vestal* did
her Prayers. And was it not for some Fears
that hover about my Soul, nothing that the *Holy-
Man* shou'd say. or you demand (for a *Plato-
nick Lover* will ask no sensual thing) but shou'd
be consented to, with the greatest Transportation
and Joy——— Now Heavens forbid Fruition!

Fruition!

1.

Friction ! Ab will quench the Flame
Of my Transported Soul;
Indifference aloud Proclaim,
Platonick Love turn to a Name,
And all its Charms Controul.

2.

I've heard 'tis Loves Antipodes
And what made mighty Jove
Forsake his Queen and Heavenly Rays.
Pursue our Humane vilest ways,
To Re-instate his Love.

3.

Then Dearest (Strephon) don't complain,
I can't what's Ask'd for, Give :
A Nearer Union breaks the Chain,
Dissolves the Sweet Transporting Pain
Is't then worth while to Live ?

4.

O Gods that Taught me how to Love,
Whom Swain, and Nymph adore,
Grant me but Power enough to move
In this Transparent * Sphere of Love; [*Platonick
Grant this, I'll ask no more.

I cou'd almost dye now with very Shame,
that I have driven the Nail so far home at one
Blow: But what signifies it ? Minds cannot blush
you know.

But, good Mr. *Algebras*, there are several Problems that lie yet in our way, as, Who must be *the Parson that shall Marry us?* We must send him I'm afraid, one Quarter of a Year at least to turn over the *Bodleian Library*, before he'll understand our Business with him. Again we must have a Convocation of the Upper and Lower House to draw up and Authorize a *Form of Solemnization for the Purpose*. When you can resolve such Objections as these, you'll Write perhaps, to

Your Platonical

I R E N E.

L E T T E R VIII.

Philaret— is pleas'd to find his Platonic Suit is receiv'd, and makes further Protestations of his Love to Irene.

Madam,

YOUR Question, Who shall Marry us? is easily Answer'd, but I'm so Transported that *Irene* has receiv'd my Courtship, that all I can do at present is to make further Protestations of my Spiritual Love; for that's all I shall ever pretend, being already married in the Flesh.

Well

Well (*Madam,*) I Love You Dearly——
Nay, don't be so Incredulous, I protest I do——
The longer I Live, the more I Love you, and
shou'd you cease to return it (which I hope you
will not) but if you do, my Flame is now grown
Self-sufficient, and wou'd unwasted as the *bright*
Planet of the Day, maintain it self to Eternity;
'tis so constant that, it would follow you to the
Abyss of Wretchedness; and so vertuous, that when
my Soul shall be unbodyed (and *refin'd from*
all the Dregs of Sense) she'll still retain these
Friendly Sentiments for you, and without a Blush
entertain some *Wondering Angel* with such
defecated Notions, so that (you see) *Irene*,
my Friendship is as Deathless as yours,

*Keep your Love True, I dare engage that mine
shall like my Soul Immortal prove ;
In Friendships Orb how brightly shall we shine,
Where all shall envy, none divide our Love?*

Madam part us, and you kill us; for when
Soul and Body part, 'tis Death. But when, *Irene*,
shall we tye the *Platonick Knot*? However our
Souls meet when we Sleep, and Enjoy each other;
and when we Wake, methinks, we should al-
ways employ our Thoughts about each other,
when we are not Contemplating Vertue.

I own the morose *Climene* Condemns *Platonic Love* in a Woman, but I that have the
Happines to Love *Irene*, find her *Ill Natur'd Error*
in fixing the Crime of a few on the whole Sex,
and let this Crittick shew me Two of the Philoso-
phers innocent as you, in their Affections and
Lives, except the *Divine Plato*. C. 4. Ah

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Ah Madam, How happy are we, in so Pure and undefil'd a Love, by which Souls mingle every minute in the *bighest exracy* of Union, without the impeding help (if I may use that seeming contradiction) of our Bodies ! Nor need I (*my Dear Gene*) caution you how to preserve the Empire you have obtain'd over the Flesh, since you know the Body is a true Coward ; where it has the Mastery being a Tyrant, but where 'tis over power'd easily kept in Service Awe. I might go on, but here's enough to Cure your Carnal Appetite, and to make you tell me what Spiritual Passion you have for

Your Platonick Admirer,

PHILARET.

LETTER X.

Irene thinks Philaret a little too warm for a Platonick Lover, and tells him her Flesh grows a little malicious after Marriage.

TYE the Platonick-Knot ? With all my Heart (*Dear Philaret*) on condition your Love be as Abstracted and Vertuous as mine, which is a Flame as pure and unmixt as that an Angel bears to his own bright Mind——
Nor can I but Love the dear Owner of Thoughts so
Generous

Generous and Correspondent to my own, tho' I must needs say, you are somewhat *warm* for a *Platonick Lover* (Pardon the Caution) for shou'd Poison shroud it self within the *gilded Superficies*, how sadly shall I resent the unwellcome disappointment? And Heaven knows I wou'd not inspire or indulge a *Criminal Thought* in your Breast for the World——

Would'n ye so, —— silly Innocence? Why, then e'en leave fooling with Edge Tools.

Well then, we are well met Sir, but who d'ye think's the greatest *Stray*? Why, I'm in my own road, passing thro' all the *Innocent Gallantries of Love*: 'Tis you (*Sir Algebra*) are out of the way; I wonder what People have to do with Love when they are *Married*; you must jog on in the *narrow Path of Conjugal Affection*, and not so much as look over the Hedge, nor mention Love (especially by Day-light) tho' there were not another word in the whole Dialect to express your Thoughts by——

But you are settled you'll say—— I believe you are, with a Vengeance! A rare Priviledge of *Matrimony——* and so you wou'd if the *Constable* shou'd set you by the heels—— Well, much good may your Settlement do you, *fit as easie as you can*; whilst I'm better satisfied in the pleasing pursuit of an imaginary happiness, whole Falacy I wou'd not willingly discover, nor wou'd I banter the pretty soft Raptures that play about our *Platonick Amour* (nor the *Je ne sçay quoy* that tickles thro' my Veins) for all your *Dull Fruition*—— I'm not so mightily oblig'd to you neither for wishing me a *Cute*, your *Casuistical Brethren* nickt the Business better in *Vol. 15. Numb. 25* when they told me——

You'd not be Cur'd, a Lover asks not ease.

Neither (*Dear Algebra*) shall I take your Advice, *To try another Love.*

Did you but see the Charming *Strephon*, you'd yield your Counsel lost. I tell ye, Sir, *there's nothing on Earth so Excellent to Rival him, nor Delicate enough besides to Please me* ——— No, *Hapless as I am, rather than Change* ———

I'll still Love on, and Dye.

But *Prethee (Dear Platonick)* for the sake of *all the pretty tender things in the World*, advise me whether to **Take or Refuse him**: But who e'er I Marry (as my *Flesh is a little Malicious that way*) I'll continue to be Your *Platonick Mistress*, and before I bid You Farewell, I do assure ye of my *Eternal Friendship*, unless You by passing its *regular Bounds* cease to deserve it from

Your Platonick,

Irene.

LET.

L E T T E R X.

Philaret fears a Rival, and advises Irene against all Love but what's Platonick; and concludes with a pleasant Trip to Tunbridge-Wells.

Take or Refuse Strephon! Prithee, Irene, what do you mean? I thought Philaret had ingross'd your Soul, but your *Flesh* (it seems) is *Malicious* after Sweet-Meats; sure this *en's Irene!* Or at least she forgets that Beasts and Plants move to propagate their like, our Love must step higher, and contend to make our selves Immortal: Talk no more of Delicate Faces, for ours is (or shou'd be) *A Love abstracted from all Corporeal gross Impressions, and sensual Appetites, and consists in Contemplation, and Ideas of the Mind; not in any Carnal Fruition.*

*When Essence meets with Essence, and Souls join
In mutual Knots, that's the true Nuptial Twine.*

There may be Amity between Sex, and Sex, pure and ardent as the Flames which enlighten Stars. I profess *Irene* my Soul beholds thee with the chaste Eyes of a Dove: Then think no more of Charming Strephon; for if once the *Malicious Flesh* puts in for a share, *Farewel Platonick Love,* and the innocent Pleasures that do attend it. But Two Spirits rightly refin'd look upon one another as the *Che-*
rubims.

rubims of the Ark, having continually the Propitiatory of God in the midst of them.

Not but *Beauty* pleaseth me wheresoever I meet it, yet because 'tis a *dangerous thing in Womens Faces*, I like better to behold it in the *Feathers of Birds and in the enamelling of Flowers*; Pleasures to chaste are compatible with *Went*, and offend not God.

Then say what you please of the *Malicious Flsh*) I'll still believe your *Vertue* is as clear as the *Fire* that sparkles in your *Eyes*, and your *Management* (*Strephon* excepted) as much without *Blemish* as your *Beauty*.

You see *Irene*, by my freedom in *Writing*, I believe you're in *Platonick Love* with me; perhaps I may delude my self; but if it be so, you must be a *notable Deceiver*, you *Write* and tell it me in such an *Air* as is enough to periwade the most *Incredulous*.

Madam, If you are really overcome by the esteem that I have for you, I'd have you think 'tis such a *Love* as merits to infuse another equal to it, for 'tis now become nearer than an *Alliance*; and I do assert, that the *Knot* which *Plato* hath made, *Virtue* hath ty'd; then think no more of the *Fop Fopish Strephon*, but tell me you're *CURED* of *Sensual Love*.

I need not desire you to *Write* nothing but the *Truth*, for I know you approve of *no Lie*, but those of the *Muses*; and that *Fictions* in *Poetry* you can bear withal, but banish them from your *Conversation* —

But *Woe is me!* How little *Philaret* is satisfied with himself when he really *Loves*, and when his *Sentiments* and *Ideas* are above his *Actions*: There is not a word I speak to you contents me —————

However,

However (*Irene*) to divert you and my self a little, I'll here send you my *Pleasant Trip to Tunbridge-Wells*.

I have a bad faculty at giving Descriptions, and this Task woud better become a Vertuoso's Pen, than an Head so weak as mine, whose Philosophy reaches little further than to observe that the Water I drink each Morning makes me Drousie, and before 12, as Hungry as a very Horse: To Discourse Pertinently on such an Abstruse Subject, requires a large stock of Knowledge in Minerals, those Secrets which our Mother Earth seems to envy her Children, till they (like Unnatural *Nero's*) digging up her Bowels, force her to discover them. But Madam, I will make no excuses, and shall therefore talk something of *Tunbridg*, tho' at the same time it discovers my Ignorance.

These *Tunbridg-Wells* (which we may fitly stile our *English Spaw*) bubble up in a Valley surrounded with Stony Hills, that are rendred Remarkable by divers Rocks, which standing above Ground carry some Resemblance with the Wonderfull *Stonehenge*. The Common they are Situate on, is naturally so Barren, as it 'twas designed for the Habitation of Famine; but this Sterility provident Nature hath sufficiently compensated by those *Medicinal Waters* which Yearly attracting a vast Concourse of People, affords great advantage to the Neighbouring Inhabitants. The Water of these Springs is somewhat Bitter, or rather relishing of the rust of those *Iron Mines* through which (as in a Limbick) it hath been distilled in its *Subteranean Passage*; which renders it a little ungrateful to the Coy Taste of such as
come

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come out of a meer Wantonness to tipple there ; but when it hath been familiarized by use awhile, it soon becomes less Nauleous ; and 'tis certain, one can never be able to drink half so much of any other Liquour (tho' never so pleasant) as one may of this. I Drink Three Quarts every Morning.

*'Tis Ale of Grandam Nature's Brewing ;
And seldom lets her Guess a Spewing,
To which, I'm kindly Welcome Still ;
Good Entertainment, tho' the Cheer were ill.*

Its Operations are chiefly *Diuretick* and is therefore excellent against all Diseases caused by *Obstructions, Agues, Scurvy, Green-Sickness, &c.* strengthens the Nerves and their Original the Brain ; besides, they tell me it hath some good influence on the *Alamode Disease* ; and that some *London Sparks* who have receiv'd signal Testimonies of their Mistress's Kindness, are come hither to wash them off, particularly Monsieur B—— and a *Dutch Captain*—— In short, it is an universal Remedy : But I'll not dwell at the Well, but ramble for a view of the Country round it ; where the first thing that salutes my eye is *Crowbrough-Beacon* ; here I found an unlimited Prospect—— At this very moment I see such pleasant Hills and fruitful Plains that the *Elysium* Fields cou'd never be more charming. But alas ! I do not see you there ; and then what pleasures can all these Varieties afford me ? Rather they call back my wandring Senses, while the prospect of so many places so proper for such tender conversations as ours, makes me more sensible of the
the

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the hard fate that parts us : Methinks, that in this lovely residence every thing talks of Friendship, and that a warm passion (such as ours) becomes it ; mine makes me seek out Lonely walks, and gloomy Retirements——My Afternoon walk is to muse on your Letters in a Shady-Bower, near my Lodging ; here 'tis that I shou'd run to meet you: You are one of those whose least favours are obligations ; here 'tis I remember with delight your very words —— Nay, your very reproaches themselves are dear to me, I look upon 'em as the effect of a Platonick Friendship——From hence I go to a Neighbouring Village, where I search for you every morning, but can find you nowhere but in my Heart: Nevertheless, in that same Heart you are so innocently lodged, that there is nothing I can desire from you, unless it be a mutual return of Friendship——As I return to my Lodging at Night I wander thro a *Lonely Grove*, where cou'd *Irene* be present, it wou'd not a little delight us to see the pretty Birds incessantly dancing on the Branches, making Love, upbraiding duller man with his defect, or want of Fire: Man the Lord of all, he to be stinted in the most valuable joys of Life, is it not pitty ! Here are no troublesom honours amongst the pretty Inhabitants of the Woods and Groves, fondly to give Laws to Nature ; but uncontroul'd, they play, and sing, and love——No Parent chiding their dear delights, no slavish matrimonial Tyes to restrain their nobler Flame ; no Spies to interrupt their best appointments, but every little Nest is free and open to receive the young fledged Lover ; every Bough is conscious of their passion, nor do the generous pair (like *Philares* and *Irene*) languish in the tedious ceremony

ceremony; but meeting look, and like, and love; embrace with their wingy Arms, and salute with their little opening Bills——This I daily find their Courtship, and thus 'tis with the *Flocks* and *Herd*s; while scanted Man, through a Thousand Hardships finds a Platonick Mistress; and then too perhaps his words are unregarded, and all his Sighs and Tears are vain——And now I am at Home; and so good Night.

Philaret.

LETTER XI.

Irene resigns to Philaret all the Pure and Intellectual part of her Affections, but dares not trust him with her Body.

Dear Soul,

I Know Men Boast, they Souls to Souls convey
How-e'er they meet the Body in the way.

Yet (at your Request) I've this Minute discarded *Strepson*, and I will Love nothing but *Philaret* —— *Philaret*, I know not what Magick runs through your Lines, but something there is so Charming and resistless in your MIND, that begins to be as dear to me as part of my own something

thing to which I have resign'd all the *Pure and Intellectual part of my Affections*, that I hardly love my own Happiness more intently; and were you one of my own Sex, I'd say a great deal more; but I dare not give you too much **Scope**; for I protest I'm a little afraid of thee *Philly*, nor can you blame me whilst you seem to suspect your own *Moderation*, besides this *Spiritual Love* is an *Æther* too thin for you to breathe in long. I knew the time when all Kisses but *Strephons* were nonsense to me; but you see, *Philaret*, in what Circumstance my Heart is now, and that I'm wholly *Tours*, and will so Continue as I am

Irene.

LETTER XII.

Our Modern Gallants look on the Platonick-way as a Heresy in Love; but Philaret declares that he loves nothing of Irene but her Soul.

Dear Irene,

I SHOULD be extremely concern'd that I cannot tell with what joy and respect I receiv'd your last (*which was sent me to Tunbridge, where I am drinking the waters*) did I not believe a Mind so extraordinary as yours, cou'd
guess

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guess at my thoughts. You tell me (Madam) I'm become so dear to you that you have resigned me up all the pure and intellectual part of your Affections, and that you hardly love your own Happiness more intensely than little Philly—Why thus 'tis with me, I stretch all Objects to infinite, when I think of you, and make all my comparisons beyond proportion. The Sun and the Stars are common things with me, and I can find nothing in Nature Goodly enough to serve for a Similitude of that Friendship I bear you—I feel a joy at the only sight of your Name; and the honour you do me, in saying you are mine in the greatest Sincerity, is so engaging, That tho perhaps it be Fortune that does 't, I cannot but love you for it: Were those words of yours as feign'd as they are true, yet you write 'em with so good a Grace, that it wou'd be a happiness to be so deceived: I am never weary with reading your Lines; they give me so many pleasures. Be assured, in what corner of the Earth soever the malice of my Fortune shall throw me, I will still on my Part inviolably preserve our Sacred Amity: Then in vain doth Sickness strive to divide us, by hurrying our Bodies to such remote distances, since in spite of all, I continually converse with you, and at such times as I know not where you are, my better part visits you, and the tendernefs I found in your Last, makes me yet more sensible of your remoreness from me. I confess, Irene, that possessing you but in Spirit, it requires a very strong imagination and vertue to desire nothing else. But tho our modern Gallants look on this *Platonick way* as a

Herefy

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heresy in love, and carry too much *Flesh* about 'em
to be enamour'd meerly with *intellectual Beauty*,
yet I do protest I am charmed with nothing else,
and do believe that *Spiritual Love is an Aether I*
wou'd breathe in for ever, tho' here (so tempting
is Dear *Irene*,) I might honestly enough
break the Laws of my Philosophy, and might
lose my Gravity without any lightness ——— But
you say you dare not give me too much *Scope*, and
why so *Irene*? Seeing base Actions, as well as
Objects, not only offend my imagination, but
even provoke my choler. 'Tis true, Madam, I
seek no colours of Art to paint out that sincerity
I owe to your Service; this were to corrupt
the natural purity ——— *Truth is simple and shame-*
faced, and when she cannot shew her self by real
effects she will scorn to do it by words;
but I cou'd wish there were some mark to distin-
guish protestations that are true, from those that
are feigned: For if there were, I shou'd have
great advantage over others, more officious and
more hot in protesting their sincerity than I
am ——— But if still you are suspicious of me, I
must say that in all this there is *nothing either new*
or strange; I am not the first Innocent that have
been persecuted in the World; and if I cou'd not
bear detraction and slander, I were not fit to
live in it. But, Madam, you may believe me,
there was one *gracious word* which I found in
your last, that hath won me to you in such sort
that I have no longer *any power of my self*, but
what you leave me; and in all your Empire I
can assure you, you possess nothing more than
my sincerity ——— *But I cou'd almost chide you for*
saying

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saying, that were I one of your own *Sex*, you'd discover to me more of your Friendship. *Your own Sex, Madam!* Why the more hazards you run in trusting *Philaret*, the more innocent is your Friendship——Then write without reserve; for the Dead, the Innocent, the Absent, and She that trusts me, I will never deceive. I shall only add, your speedy answer to this Letter will much oblige

Your Innocent Admirer

Philaret.

LETTER XIII.

Irene believes Philaret a true Platonick, and desires to meet him in some Pleasant Walk.

AT last (Sir) for you little think what time, and how variously I have been agitated, yet (at last) *I am fix'd*, and will believe you a true *Platonick*. *Oh the mighty power of Sincerity and Truth!* It removes all Rivals, dissolves the most obdurate Heart into generous Love and Pity, and turns Jest and Merriment into *unfeigned Love* and Passion. But oh *Philaret* forgive me, if I here so far relapse as to fear still, you are not mine by that *indissoluble Chain*; that must (if any thing) unite us together.

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I know 'tis Love

That does above

Seraph to Seraph tie.

One sacred Fire

Do's them inspire,

But how can't you and I?

Our Clod of Earth

And Humane Birds

Will our vast hopes betray,

We ne'er shall be

All Harmony

Till we're as pure as they.

The Soul (tho brave)

Is but a Slave;

Sense Governs all below.

'Tis never here

In its own Sphere,

Nor can its power show.

Think then in vain,

That Love will Reign

Triumphant in our Breast.

Since 'tis a Ray

of that Bright Day

That's with dark Clouds oppress.

But———oh I feel

The pointed Steel

And so this Thought must smother

Mortal I am

Pain proves the same;

Yet an Immortal Lover.

As then 'tis Love

That do's above

Seraph to Seraph tye,

(If yours but shine

As clear as mine)

So may it you and I.

How-

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However tho you shou'd be mine now ; I have yet great reason to fear that you'll not be always so: Love 'tis evident (from your deserting *Climene*) is *dissoluble*, as well as mortality It self, and fluctuates (like other Passions) according to the carriage and behaviour of those Objects by which it is mov'd: If you once ador'd *Climene* and now left her, why may not you use *Irene* so ? If my wondrous plainness and undaunted perseverance has ty'd the *mystick Knot*, why may not another dissolve it: Her *Artillery* may be more Numerous, and her Attacks irresistible ; her outward *Charmes* and *Beauty* may come into her Aid ; and then (considering you have no Counter Charm that way) you may easily be wrought upon to cast off me, as you have done the former ; some few (perhaps undesigned) *Flouts* has drove you from her *Armes* into mine, and rais'd your esteem of me above the reach of Words: And why not then. — But Ile urge it no farther, I can't bear the Thoughts of the consequence.

*In Love-Affairs so selfish we are grown,
That the lov'd Object must be all our own ;
Or else we wish may be Enjoy'd by none.*

I'll rather conclude, you never Lov'd *Climene* to the degree you do me. And so, tho she could not keep you, I may ; especially if 'tis true that *Love begins and engages Love*, If this (I say) be true, I defy the most Alluring Power on Earth, or *Charming She*, to make the least Impression on you. The Needle shall not tend more directly towards its Beloved Pole, then you shall to me. In spite of *Rivals* then you must and shall be mine, and if I could suspect your Power, I can't my own; and on this Consideration I can't so much as doubt your Constancy or fear a Relapse.

Then

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Then you'll be ready to meet me (will you not?) For all my *Rhyming Powers* in some of my pleasant Walks, when I have power, or can get leave of my self to give you notice of it; the mean time why may not I turn your own artillery upon you, and say all those pretty things about your *Platonick Courship*, as you have said about mine? I have been from Town, or else I shou'd have Answer'd yours long before. But sooner to your Next. *Adieu*, once more
Adieu. Remember your *Forgotten*

I R E N E.

L E T T E R XIV.

Philaret refuses to meet Irene, telling her Platonick Lovers must not trouble themselves with such material gross things as Bodies, and sends the rest of his Passion in Verse.

I Received Yours this Morning, before my Eyes were open too. — and find you have not received my Letter Dated September 9. I am afraid it lost the way no farther from hence then London, and then I'm undone — pray enquire at your own Post House, and if you can have no News of it, send me word by this Post, there was a Letter to *Saccho* inclosed in it with Poems. — Irene, Dear Irene,

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Irene why were you so unkind and suspicious to Subscribe, Your Forgotte, &c. Forget you! No by Heaven, I shall sooner in Death Forget myself and all: Forget you! Cruel Thought! Witness for me, ye soft Powers that Irene is not a Moment out of my Thoughts: Ah, do not think me Guilty of so much Injustice and Ingratitude, when I've as much Friendship for you as I can or must Harbour. I love you to Impatience, and shou'd wish to see you (in some of your pleasant Walks) but that I consider Platonick Lovers must not trouble themselves with such material gross things as Bodies are: We have Souls to be sure, and whilst they can meet and Caress, we need not repine at this distance——The rest of my Passion I've sent you in Verse.

1.

*So Angels Love, and all the rest is Dress,
Contracted, selfish, sensitive and gross;
Unlike to this, all free and unconfin'd
Is that bright Flame, I bear thy brighter Mind,*

2.

*No stragling Wish or Symptom of Desire
Comes near the limits of this holy Fire;
Yet tis intense and active tho' so fine
For all my pure Immortal Part is thine.*

3.

*Why should I then the Heavenly Spark controul
Since there's no brighter Ray in all my Soul:
Why should I blush to indulge the Noble Flame
For which even Friendship's a degrading name.*

4.

*Not is the greatness of my Love to thee
A Sacriledg unto the Deity;*

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*Can I the inviting Stream almost adore
And not prefer its lovely Fountain more?*

I have Ten times more to say to you.
— but there's a LADY waits for me,
and I can't Civilly try Her Patience' any
longer, — and so you must e'en guess
the rest, and assure Your Self I am
Your

Inviolable Friend,

PHILARET.

LETTER XV.

*Genevieve talks of deserting Philaret, bids
him recant all his Friendly Vows,
and endeavours to Tear him from
her Soul.*

PART! — and that so coldly too! — how
can you revolve the thought so pati-
ently? But part we must, I'm more
than half assur'd — Ah Cruel
Laws, more Tyrannous than Death, to what will
you compel me — Forgo all Correspondence with
Philaret? Why have I Breath to feel how much 'tis
worse than Death? — But tell me, dear Posses-
sor of my Heart, how shall I tear thee thence? Tell
me how I shall extort thee from my Soul? —
Prishee oblige me no more, recant all thy Friendly Vows,
D and

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and disengage my kinder Resolutions! Yes, let me, and give me leave no longer to indulge a gentle thought for thee—— You'll not consent I see —— but I must bid you Farewel in my next; yet assure your self twill be with Reluctance equal to that sincerity which you have hitherto met from the

Innocent but Unhappy

I R E N E.

L E T T E R X V I.

Philaret tells his Platonick Mistress that his Love has no parting in't.

Dear Madam,

YOURS I receiv'd, and after I had kiss'd it a Thousand times ('tis a tenderness I pay every Letter you send me) I fell to reading it with Eager Eyes; and finding you to Reveal your Love with such Noble Heat, I have no way left t' express my self so generous too, but to mix Flame with Flame, and to tell you my LOVE has no Parting in't. —— Part! No Irene, I'd follow you to the Abyss of Wretchedness, and there dwell with you like your shadow under the keenest Miseries; nor shou'd I think my self your Friend, unless with the same equal
Mind

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Mind. I could go half in Perils as in Friendship with you.

All the Arguments I use to sweeten our Parting are as so many daggers thrust into my Heart, and I can't bear the thoughts on't! — Part! — — — Bless me, how it sounds! Tis impossible it shou'd be so; it does not hang together: What part after so many Vows of never parting here, or scarce a Minute in the other World; methinks I feel already the Torments to which a Heart is exposed that loses what it Loves; never did Man love as I have Lov'd; my Sentiments have a certain delicacy unknown to any but my self, and my Heart loves Irene more in one Hour, than others do in all their Lives: Say, dear Possessor of my Heart, can this consist with parting? — Part! — No, It can never be.

1.

Since Love hath kindled in our Eyes
A Chaste and Holy Fire,
It were a Sin if thou or I
Should let this Flame Expire.

2.

What though our Bodies never meet?
Love's Fowel's more Divine:
The fixt Stars by their twinkling greet,
And yet they never join.

3.

False Meteors who still change their Place,
Tho' they seem Fair and Bright,
Yet when they covet to Embrace,
Fall down and lose their Light.

4.

*If thou perceive thy Flame decay,
Come light thy Eyes at mine;
And when I feel mine fade away,
I'll take fresh Fires at thine.*

5.

*Thus when we shall preserve from Waste
The Flames of our Desires,
No Vebals shall maintain more Chaste
Nor more Immortal Fires.*

*Irene, Can you doubt my Constancy (or
talk of Parting) when, if I am any thing, 'tis
yours; and so Innocently yours, that I'd Seal
these Protestations with a Dying Gasp.*

*The Poles shall move, to Teach me, ere I start;
And when I change my Friend, I'll change my Heart.*

I have no less lov'd you than my self, and
have equally shar'd my *Hours* between Love to
Vertue, and Dear Irene ———

Then how can I think of *Parting!* ——— No
Irene, I'll still Love on with all the Liberty *Plato*
allows, neither distance of Place, nor Interval
of Time, can quench this Innocent Flame ———

In a Word, *Irene*, your discarding *Strephon* has
refin'd you to a meet *Angel*, and I'm certainly
in *Platonick Love* with you. But pray send me
Strephon's name, and how far you consented to his
sensual Amour.

Thus you see, *Irene*, (but methinks I should kiss
you here, as loth to leave so perfect a Sentence with-
out a Comma) that my Flame is innocent as well

as yours, and that 'twill last as long——

'Tis true (my *Dear*) you are wholly made of Charms; there is a *Quiver* in your Looks, a Thousand Graces playing on your Lips, and so many Beauties darting from your Eyes, will be hard to a Mind which knows no holier use of such a Heavenly Form, but first to covet, and then to enjoy: But *Philaret* looks upon you with other Eyes; as you're to me a *Venus*, and strike a warm Flame in me, so you are a *Diana* too, and do infuse a chaste *Religious coldness*: You do not only stand before me safe as in a Circle made by your own Charms, but do incircle me with the same *Virtuous* Spells.

Then talk no more of parting; for you see, *Irene*, there is nothing that belongs to us both, that can be divided; in *Platonick Love*, *Two* so become *One*, as they both become *Two*; our Wills United make but one Mind, which ruling all our Actions that it seems we are in like manner but one *Body*.—Part, why, tis impossible; for *Irene* and *Philaret* are become at length, the perfect *Abstract* of all *Sympathy*, and partake of one anothers Good and Evil with so Lively a Perfection, that there needs but *One Blow* to make *Two Wounds*.

And now things are as they shou'd be; for when there's True Friendship, 'tween *Two* of a Different Sex,

—*They* so Unite,

That Two distinct, make One Hermaphrodite.

This isn't the Thousandth part of what (with a great deal of Truth) I cou'd add to this Subject; but here's enough to shew, that though your Love is the most Tender thing I possess, yet that I bear the *Lawrel* in Friendship

still, and Out-Love You, as far as you out-Love others.

And this (*Dear Platonick*) is all the Parting you must expect from, Yours

(*Innocently, and*) *Eternally,*

PHILARET.

LETTER XVII.

Irene Contends with Philaret for the *Wreath in Friendship*, she tells him her *Inclinations* are chain'd to his, and follow them so naturally, that she can scarce distinguish the motions of his *Thoughts* from her own —

Dear Phil.

I Can't say I'm upon the square with you, a *Thousand times* is a pretty considerable number; but kiss your Letter I did o'er and o'er, methought I cou'dn't help it neither, it had an unaccountable tendency to my Lips, as if that had bin the nearest way to my Soul! — but I'll not yield you the *Wreath in Friendship*, for the Conquest is mine, Love as much as you can: My Flame has already commenc'd, immortality — my Humour carries every thing to the excess, and I love not only beyond the practice, but even the Conceptions of others; you Reign *Unquestioned Monarch* in the *Nobler part* of my Soul.

'Tis

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'Tis true, my Flame for *Strephon* is more active and impatient, but withal *Fickle and Irregular*; whereas, to you 'tis a *Pleasant and Establish'd Heat*, prompted neither by interest or design: My Inclinations are chain'd to yours, and follow them so naturally that I can scarce distinguish the motions of your *Thoughts* from my own, for which reason I could not be perswaded that your *Fidelity or Constancy* will fall short of mine, and that's so firm that

*The Sun shall cease to shine
The Moon shall lose her light;
Before these constant thoughts of mine,
Chuse any new Delight.*

And Death it self will be no period to my Friendship; for shou'd that snatch me from you——

*With Care on your last Hour I will attend;
And lest Like Souls should me deceive,
I closely will embrace my New-Born Friend,
And never after my Dear Pithias leave.*

But should Fate be so unkind, to take you from hence before —— Ah me—— in what a Melancholly shade is this sad thought involv'd me? —— Heaven's! what a desert the World is, while I but fancy, my lov'd *Philaret* gone —— but shou'd the destinies be so cruel, I'd breathe out my Life in a **Song** and follow you —— but I must divert my self from these black Reflexions —— and so enter *Strephon*, whose name, I tell ye once more, you are not like to know; but thus much of the Circumstances of the intreague I'll inform you, I love, and am belov'd again; at least *Strephon* tells me so, but

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but he tells me a great many *pretty things* that I'm not one quarter Fool enough to believe. He's inconstant and false, yet I have one undissembled proof of his Affection for my Comfort——
But alas all my Art can't fix him, I could tear the *Roses from my Cheeks*, and put out the flatter'd *Lustre of my Eyes*, for *Strephon* breaks my Fetters like a Spiders Web, he Counter-Charms me, and baffes every Art I have.

*In vain are all the Charms I can devise ;
He has an Art to break them with his Eyes.*

And yet he'll not resign my Heart, but still indulges and blows up the Pernicious Sparks ; his Charming Tongue infuses a Poison, 'gainst which there's no Antidote but——

*Beware Britannian Ladies, Ah beware,
How you receive my Fruitless Wanderer !*

Thus I complain of *Strephon*, and the while *Strephon* complains to every *Stream and Grove* of me.—— Well, this little blind Deity makes some stir, especially among People that have nothing else to do in the World—— but I'm in such a Labyrinth now, that I've a good mind to forswear *Intreague*, and with one *Brave Resolve* to set my self free, and be happy in spite of them all—— what a Harmless and Peaceful thing is *Platonick Love* to these rude Passions into which 'tis impossible my Flame for you shou'd ever degenerate ; while as an Antidote against *Corporal Love*, I meet your Effigies at every Barbers Window ; or which is Ten times worse, in the Methodical *Phiz* of every little Dapper Pedant of about 3 Foot high,

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high, that I meet—— which things I say, carry this Air, You are as safe in your Circle, as I am in mine. I wou'dn't move one step beyond the limits of *Spiritual Love* for ever so much——but because you shan't hang your self for cramming this Fantastick Idea into my Brains, when you might have let it alone and Welcome—— I'll tell you, I know you much better than you do me, you are *Proper and Black*, and Careless in your Air and Feature, all which wou'd please me extreamly, if I had any thing to say to your *Body*; ——but *Srephon* from my Flame to you has abstracted all the grosser particles—— and left it too pure to deserve my Mothers Jealousy or censure; but in spite of that difficulty, I shall still be (having banisht *Srephon* for ever)

Your Constant Friend,

I R E N E.

LETTER XVIII.

Philaret fell in love with Irene in his pre-existent State, and endeavours to out-rival Her in Love and Tendernefs.

PLainly, then here's a Battle—— You say the Conquest is yours, love as much as I can; but I'll have t'other Tug for't yet before I yield the Victory: You only love beyond the
D: 5 practice

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Practice and conception of others; but I out-love this. Doctor G—— (that studies you more than his Notes) must not pretend to love like me, and for all the other Admirers of your Body they are but of *Yesterday* (a sort of *Novices* in Love) if compar'd with me, all which is prov'd at once by telling you, I fell in love with you in my *pre-existent State* (which is 5000 years ago) tho' you have forgot it (*which you cou'd not ha' done had you lov'd like me*) and that my Love is still more pure than 'twas the first minute I embrac'd you in the World of Spirits; but supposing your Love to my Soul had commenc'd Immortality as many Ages as mine did to you; yet still you own *you have nothing to say to my Soul*, whilst I admire you both in *Body* and *Soul*: So that except you can prove that Soul and Body are the same thing, or that the half is as much as the whole, 'twill be still evident I love most. 'Tis true, you affirm That *you are so much the same with me, that you can scarce distinguish the motions of your own thoughts from mine*; but this is your highest flight, and I out-strip you here too, for you can breathe into me *no other thoughts but mine*; and every thought I have is so far from being *scarcely distinguishable* from yours, that I am positive 'tis moulded in your very Breast; and cou'd you be as willing as I that we might grow together, our courteous Hearts wou'd not be nearer nor yet more entire; than sure I Love most; for I love *Irere* without reserve, or Rule. My Heart is not large enough for such a Guest as dear *Irere*—— In a word, no description can reach the height of the Friendship I bear you, since it *seems to rise out of any Parallel*, but derives its value
only

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only from its excess——Shou'd you still deny that *I love most*, (bless me! what an overwhelming joy wou'd that be!) *I shou'd fancy* it a happiness too great to last; Envy or Fate must lessen such an Endearment.

But be charitable now! For tho' I run on at this warm rate, I'm certainly one of the most *Platonick Lovers* this day living: For I can so innocently view and admire a Lady, her pretty pinking eyes, her Ivory Neck and Breasts; and can gaze so long without one irregular thought, that you'd e'en wonder to see *so much Ice in Flesh and Blood.*

*You'd stand amaz'd, and greatly wou'd admire
How so much water sprang from so much fire.*

My Visits are so civil too, that were you a meer *Precisian* you need never counsel me, nor check me with a Frown——My Flame can never degenerate into Rudeness, or move one step awry.

Madam, Methinks *our souls are Wedded already*, so that now (*if we cou'd*) we need not marry *Bodies* too, that were a needless charge—*Lie with Irene!* How vile and horridly that sounds! No, if men must be made, lest the World should cease, we both desire that Nature wou'd expect such *course and homely drudgeries* from Porters and Carmen, and not from us. Such Honey wou'd quickly cloy; but wou'd our Souls are only wedded, we shall be ever *Beauteous, Fresh and Young*, at least, in our own belief: For who can lessen or defile the opinion which our mutual Thoughts shall frequently exchange? Besides if we wed no further, we may lawfully beget *Reflections* in each others Eyes, and those *Imma-*
terial

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terial Creatures cannot sin or inherit any thing; and I cou'd shew you how (as through a *Perspective*) when we first meet, we shall unite and *thrid our Beams* until they make a mutual string on which our Souls will *dance into each others Brain*, and so begin short Journeys to the Heart, and thence descend, &c. This life the *Angels* lead; for they no *Sexes* know, but ever love (like us) in *Meditation*, not in *Act*. Surely our *first Addressis* will be a Dialogue of interjections and short Periods, the most pathetick Language of Surprize, and *high-wrought Joy*.

I might go on (for this is what *Wests* might discourse) but I suppose by this you are convinc'd of the innocence of *Platonick Courtship*, and how much you're out-lov'd by

Your constant Admirer
Philaret.

LETTER XIX.

Irene declares 'twou'd destroy her very *Woman-hood* to give the *Man* the allowance of the last word; and therefore makes their whole controversy of *Platonick-Love* turn upon this hinge; that whether of 'em at their first interview shall look most like a Fool, shou'd bear away the *Palm of loving best*.

NAY, Philaret, 'tis against my *Womanhood* to let you have the last word, and to convince you,
I

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I have reason for't too, you shall see how little my Friendship for you falls short of my passion for *Strephon* :

Joy salutes me when I set
My blest Eyes on *Philaret*.

But with wonder I am struck,
When I on bright *Strephon* look.

If ever *Philaret* complains,
I have sense of all his pains.

But for lovely *Strephon* I
Do not only grieve, but die.

All that of my self is mine
Dearest *Philaret*, is thine.

But we'll let alone this *Arguing* 'till I see you, and then conclude which looks most like a Fool loves best. I hope there will be no ceremony betwixt us after this long acquaintance; nor shall my Love to *Strephon* e'er divide or part us. 'Tis true, he's a person of *Truth* and *Honour*, scorns an ungrateful action; but his policy is unfathomable, yet I dare trust him for all that, nor have I much reason to be incredulous, having never been cheated in all the dealing I have had with the Sex from 13 till now. 'Tis true *Strephon* deceiv'd me as to his *Vertue*, but in nothing else; he's so true yet, that were I as constant, we should plunge our selves in certain ruin, both our Parents being such Enemies, tho' very near related, that a death-
bed

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bed would scarce reconcile 'em; but *Philaret* had you seen *Strephon* in his *Seventeenth Year*, which was the Age I loved him in, you'd scarce have blam'd the unhappy thing he deluded; 'twould scarce obscure an *Angel* to assume such a form, and appear with such a Face as *Strephon* then had, you'd have thought him the God of Love in *Masquerade*; and except the lovely *Damon*, 'twas the softest delicate thing that ever I beheld; not but that I loath effeminacy in any thing but an *unfledg'd Boy*, and it became him as well as Gravity, or a Frown do's *Philaret*: He was vers'd in all the *Gallantries of Love*, and *Humours of the Town*: But he had failings too, for he was a great *Jacobite*, and something else; yet nothing but a sight of him after two Years absence, cou'd have cur'd my dotage; for then he return'd from the Wars such a **Bearded** masculine thing, that I found there was no such tender charming Being in Nature as I till then cherish'd the Idea of——'Tis true, he now seem'd a little nobler than the rest of the Sex, and might have charm'd another woman; but I was so humerous, that nothing but a *Species between Man and Angel*, would serve my turn—I despised all the proposals made me, and scorning to be fetter'd by those **dull** methods that the rest of the Sex obey, I resolv'd (*since nothing within my reach cou'd please me*) to range till I found an Object excellent enough to move me: But I might have ransack'd the whole **Mass** of Mankind, and met nothing so powerful to conquer me if I had miss'd *Strephon*, whom his Habit spake mortal, but his Face some **disguis'd Deity**: *The first*
Beam

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Beam of his eyes pointed my destiny, and soon eas'd me of a Heart that lay upon my hands. I wou'd have lov'd him, tho' he had been the Sophy of Persia; my Fancy being too wild for the most formidable Obstacle to limit; yet I had never reason to repent my rashness, and now least of all; for Strephon, (I wou't say beyond my hopes, because I can teach the Queen of Love her self to manage her charms; but just as I expected) subscribes himself my Slave; and in requital, I own my Flame, and whisper out my passion to him agen, in as tender, but innocent expressions, as 'twas possible for Venus to inspire: Thus — I love, and am belov'd again, and care not who knows it. — But this love to Strephon is all dissolv'd in one thought of Philaret.

*You already have of me
All that's not Idolatry.*

But methinks (*dear Platonick*) your Courtship has a little flattery in it, which I can scarce forgive; and yet coming from you, it's pleasing too.

As to the Parson, he's an Ass to you, (*saving his Reverence*) and I wou'd prefer one moment of *Philarets* Company to whole Ages of his; and those *other Admirers of my Body* (if there is any) may go hang themselves; for I prize you more than my Life, and own you exceed me in every thing but loving most: Your very Enemies now are in love with you. There's *Filo* tells me you e'en kill him with kindness; he's so freighted with admiration of
you

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you, that now you are his perpetual Theam to my Mother, who much approves our *Platonick Amour*.

So that now a *Marriage of Souls* is the talk of the Family ; and for my self, I do nothing but speak and dream of *Philaret*.

Yet I dare hardly hope for another Letter after you have read this, for you that improve every moment of your *Life*, if that is possible (*being already I shou'd think at the height of perfection*) cannot throw away your pretious time in reading nothing ; for such is all I write or say : However, be Generous, and forgive this and all Troubles from

Your most oblig'd *Platonick*

I R E N E.

L E T T E R XX.

Philaret flourishes upon the Ideal advantages of the Platonick State of Matrimony, proposes Mr. Norris for the Parson, and sends her the Forms both of Publication and Marriage ; of which he desires her thoughts.

Dearlly Beloved Soul,

I Find by your last that we are both arriv'd to such a height in *Platonism*, that who loves most, need no longer disturb us ;

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so that we are now pretty ripe both in *No-*
tion and *Affection*, for that intellectual State of
Matrimony, where *Flesh* and *Blood* (those
dear Relatives however) have nothing at all
to do. You have digested *Plato's* Idea of the
matter very well; and I know no discouragement
in the way that shou'd hinder the consum-
mation of our Marriage: As for poverty and
want, we need not fear 'em, so long as our
Understandings can subsist and keep us from
starving; 'tis true our Children, those pretty
little tiny Ideal Subsistences, may increase upon
our hands; however, we shall be able to
maintain 'em at easy rates; for this same
Spiritual Posterity of our own dear Brains, will
be able to provide for 'emselves so soon as
they're born; and besides, when we've got a
pretty collection of 'em together, we shall
be able to put 'em off to Book-sellers at
10 per Cent I'll warrant ye, and what in-
couragement d'ye think, will this be to fol-
low the Business of Generation with all possible
application?

You mention, I confess, a very nice difficulty
in your first Letter, when you put the Question,
who shall marry us? Why truly (my Platonick
Transport being now over) I've been thinking
these three hours, and can make nothing on't: For
all the men in Orders that I can recollect, have so
much of *Flesh and Blood and Sense and Sinews and*
ranc inclination about 'em, that ther's no dealing
with 'em in a Business so *refin'd*, so *Spiritual* so *In-*
tellectual, and to say no more, so *Platonical*, as this
of ours. *But—let me see—* Now I have it, there's
Mr. *Norris* you know, Rector of *Bemerton* near *Salis-*
bury, begotten betwixt the Brains of *Plato*
and

and *Malbranche*, by the same token that his Sermons and Discourses are better comments upon these two Gentlemen, than upon the new Testament, and the Scheme of Christianity. He's certainly the fittest Fellow in the Universe for the purpose; besides, he has writ a Book entituled *the Ideal World*; which shall be our Family-Book, and into this World we must endeavour to transport ourselves, and live as little as is possible in this *sensual World*, where the very Air would spoil all our *Platonism*. Having adjusted this matter to our wish, I'll take care in the mean time to acquaint Mr. *Norris* that he, by vertue of his Orders, is oblig'd to publish the *Banns* of our *Platonick-Matrimony* thro' all his *Ideal World*, on three severall holy days, within the compass of some convenient time; and to shew that we'll dissent as little as is possible from the present Establishment: (For Mr. *Norris* don't like the Dissenters:) The publication shall be made in the following words.

'I Publish the Banns of *Platonick-Matrimony*
'between the Soul of *Philaret* and the Soul of
'*Irene*: If any of you know Cause or just Impedi-
'ment why these two Souls shou'd not be
'join'd together in *Spiritual Platonick-Matri-*
'mony, ye are to declare it: This is the *First*,
'(*Second*, or *Tbid*) time of asking.

Dear Soul! I'm now all over nothing but pure *Platonick* Transport, when I think of you; and to what heights shall I then be rais'd, when our Understandings shall join in a lasting and a living Union, when our Wills shall mingle their Desires, and embrace each other without either weariness or end! I'm

not a little inclin'd to the Opinion of those who assert the Union of Souls in another World, and that the Minds of Men are turn'd all into *one common Soul*, when they enter upon the world of Spirits; Unity being one great Attribute of Perfection, and has in it a resemblance of the Deity it self; and if so, because of our union in this State, we shall then have the satisfaction to lie nearest to each other in that universal heap of Souls. We'll take therefore all imaginable care to make our union here as sacred and as strict as the Circumstances can admit.

And that the very words of solemnizing our *Platonick* Marriage, may be as binding, and so comprehensive as words can make it. I've inclos'd by this Post the very Form for this purpose, which was adjusted and agreed upon in a full Session of our *Athenian-Society*. I desire you'd send me your Remarks upon it with the first opportunity, and tell me with all freedom and sincerity, whether you'll take me in this or some other form; for shou'd we leave this matter to Mr. *Norris* the Parson, he'd certainly marry us into the *Omni-formity* of the *Divine Ideas*, or by some such unintelligible Term. Prithce, my dear little *Angel*, write soon, and appoint a day when all our Happiness shall commence. I am very passionately yours, in all the purest Quintessence of *Platonick* Love.

The Form of solemnizing Platonick-Matrimony.

IT will be necessary to acquaint you for what very solemn and important reasons this intellectual and *Platonick* Matrimony is instituted

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stituted and ordain'd, before you enter upon the Ordinance it self: And negatively,

It is not appointed to satisfy the Wicked inclinations of the *Flesh*, and to gratify the ungovernable Appetites of Sense, &c. for you must not so much as suffer one single Thought to wander after any Physical enjoyment of each other, for that wou'd destroy the Essence of *Platonick* Matrimony, and all; your civil Rites and Liberties in the Ideal World, wou'd be taken from you, and return as a Forfeiture, into the hands of *Plato*, the great Monarch of that Ideal Kingdom:

But positively, it is ordain'd for the mutual enjoyment of your Souls, your Understandings are to make free communications of all you know, so that your Knowledge must be shar'd like a common Stock, and every little Idea you can either of you form, must not be kept as a reserve for private use, but be thrown with pleasure into the common Treasury; and this commerce must not only be maintain'd betwixt your Understandings, but your Wills, which are the seat of *Platonick* Love, must embrace each other with all the Intenseness of Spiritual Desire, and to keep some warmth in your Love, you are to look upon all the little Ideas your Understandings can create, as equivalent, and of the same nature with those charming Prettynesses which the fond Lover imagines in his Mistress. All your Happiness, and all your Sorrows, are to lie in common, and a mutual sympathy must make up as it were a third Soul of union betwixt you. If you understand

stand and Content to all this, we shall proceed to the Solemnity it self.

The Priest must say first to the Man,

‘*Philaret, Wilt thou have the Soul of Irene to be thy Platonical Wife, to live together after the Rules of Plato the Philosopher in the purely Intellectual State of Matrimony? Wilt thou have nothing at all to do with her Body, either in Act or Desire, but be always Platonically satisfied to enjoy no more of her than her Understanding and Will, and such other Spiritual Faculties as thou shalt find about her? Wilt thou Love her, and comfort her, and forsaking both the Bodies and the Souls of all other Women, keep thy Soul only to hers so long as you both shall Live?*

The Man shall Answer, I will.

Then shall the Priest say to the Woman,

‘*Irene, Wilt thou have the Soul of Philaret to be thy Platonical Husband; to Live together after the Rules of Plato the Philosopher, in the purely intellectual State of Matrimony? Wilt thou have nothing at all to do with his Body either in Act or Desire, but be always Platonically satisfied to enjoy no more of him than his Understanding and Will, and such other Faculties as thou shalt find about him? Wilt thou submit thy Understanding to his, and suffer his Will always to have the Government of thine? Wilt thou Love him and Comfort him, and forsaking both the Bodies and the Souls of all other Men, keep*

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‘ keep thy Soul only to his, so long as you
‘ both shall Live ?

The Woman shall Answer, I will.

This Platonick Marriage being something Hyperphysical in its own Nature, it can't be Rigorously Required, that any Third Person should take the Soul of the Woman, and give it in Marriage to the Man's ; and therefore by a Superiority of Votes, in a full Session of our Athenian Society, it is Enacted, That this part of the Ceremony be legally omitted, as also that of the Ring ; which in this case, would be no better than a Round Absurdity, of which Plato himself hasn't left us the least Intimation.

Mr. Norris the Parson, shall then Require the Man to say after him,

‘ I Philaret take this same Soul of Irene to
‘ be my Platonical Wife, to have and to hold
‘ her, for Wise or for Foolish, for good Hu-
‘ mour'd, or bad, for better for worse ; to keep
‘ under all Sensual inclination, tho it be never
‘ so strong ; to Love her and Cherish her in a
‘ Platonical way ; and this I promise to do with
‘ my Understanding and Will, and such other
‘ Faculties as may make us more happy, and
‘ thereto I plight thee my Troth.

Then shall the Woman say after the Parson,

‘ I Irene take this same Soul of Philaret,
‘ to be my Platonical Husband, to have and to
‘ hold him, for Wise or for Foolish, for good
‘ Humour'd or bad, for better for worse, to
‘ keep under all Sensual Inclination though it be
‘ never

never so strong ; to Love him and Cherish him in a Platonical way ; and this I promise to do with my Understanding and Will, and such other Faculties as may make us more Happy, and thereto I plight thee my Troth.

Pray, *Irene*, send in your next how you approve of this Form of *Platonick Matrimony* to
PHILARET.

LETTER XXI.

Irene's Remarks upon the Last Letter: She Consents to the Substance of it, with some Peculiar Limitations and Restraints ; and proposes, a FORM to Dissolve the Platonick Marriage, suppose the Premises be Transgressed.

Dear SOUL,

IF Your Affection may be measur'd by the Care you have taken about our *Platonick Wedding*, I have no reason to Question it ; however, seeing you have given me the Liberty to make some Remarks upon the whole, take 'em as they follow.

As for your Choice of Mr. *Norris*, the Parson, I can freely agree to it ; he has certainly the greatest insight into our Business of any Man Living ; as for calling up the Ghost of *Divine Plato*, 'tis something impracticable, and we might easily be impoted upon ; but as to that Expression, and such other Faculties as you shall find about me ; it looks so suspicious that I'm
afraid

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afraid there's some Wickedness in it, for I'm not Conscious to my self of anymore faculties that are purely Platonical, beside my Understanding and my Will; tho' if you mean no more than this, that if there be any latent Faculties in our Minds, which we may afterwards discover when more accusom'd to our Platonical way of House-keeping; I freely grant you the Enjoyment of them, as I expect the same Favour from you; however for fear of any mischief from that, or any other sentence in the Form of Solmnization, I require your promise to be Unmarried in the following Words, tho I shan't exact it of you so long as you keep your self Sober, and at a due Platonical distance.

The FORM follows :

‘ *I Philaret* having not the gift of Continnence, according to the Rules of *Plato* the Philosopher, but being overcome by the Wicked inclinations of the Flesh, and so being unsatisfied with no more than the pure Platonical Enjoyment of the Soul of *Irene*, have endeavour'd to Violate our Marriage Covenant, by some supernumerary Appetites that were not therein mentioned, I do declare that our Platonical Obligations are Void and of no Effect, and that I will have no more to do with *Irene*, either in a Physical or Platonical way: To which I Subscribe, *PHILARET.*

And as for my own part, I will have Liberty to dissolve our Platonical Marriage in Words that follow, ‘ Whereas

Whereas, I *Irene*, being contracted to the Soul of *Philaret*, in a Solemn Covenant of Platonical Matrimony, and having found by too sad and sensible experience that he has not the Gift of Contineance according to the Rules of *Plato* the Philosopher, but being overcome by the Wicked Inclinations of his Flesh, and so being unsatisfied with no more than the pure Platonical Enjoyment of my Understanding and my Will, has endeavoured to violate our Marriage Covenant, by some Supernumerary Appetites that were not therein mentioned; I do Declare, Henceforward, all our Platonical Obligations to be Void and of no Effect; and that I will have no more to do, either in a Physical or Platonical way with *Philaret*.

To which I Subscribe I R E N E.

Now my *Dear Platonist*, all this security can do no Harm, you know; and may Matters never come to this Extremity.

It looks very pleasant methinks to see how you have tyed me to Obedience, and to Resign both my Understanding and my Will to Yours, had you first given us a Demonstration that there's something like *Sex*, &c. in *Souls*, I shou'd have said nothing to it; however, this Nicety shan't part us, I hope your Platonical Government will be as Reasonable as it shou'd be Refin'd, and Spiritual; and so long, you may take my Word for it; I shall never Contend with you.

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As for the Marriage Day, I cannot possibly appoint it; you must learn that of Mr. Norris, for we are not so well acquainted with their *Kalendar* in the *Ideal World*, and so can't tell how soon Three Holy Dates may fall, that the Publication may be Dispatched.

I am YOURS,

In all the Warmth and Sincerity

of Platonick Love,

I R E N E.

Our Mathematician Succeeding so well in his Platonick Courtship, at the next meeting of the Athenian-Society we Propos'd a Platonick Wife for our Reverend Chaplain, the Lady we Recommended to him was the Charming Orinda, (a Daughter of the Church) and a true Platonick from Head to Foot.

The Correspondence Follows :

LETTER

L E T T E R · XXII.

Dr. Fido (*A Member of New Athens*) is advised to Court the Soul of Orinda — He gives her a true Idea of Platonick Love, and declares he loves nothing but her Spiritual Part.

Most Dear Orinda,

TH E Platonick Wedding lately agreed on between Philaret (*a Member of Athens*) and the Ingenious Irene, gives me hopes that I shall be as successful in my Court to Orinda: 'Tis true Madam, I carry *Flesh and Blood under my Gown*, but 'tis so refin'd by Mortification, that I now intend (being recommended to you by *New Athens*) to make love to your *Spiritual Part*. And why, (*Dear Madam*) shou'd I not have the preference to all your other Admirers, for they but Love the *Body*, but I your *Soul*, and nothing but your *Soul*; perhaps they'l tell you, they cou'd lose an Arm or Leg for a Nights Lodging; and was there no such thing as *Vertue*, I shou'd not blame them; for all that sees your *Person*, admires it; you are an *Angel* dress'd in *Flesh and Blood*.

*Saint-like you look, an Angel if you Sing,
Your Eyes are Stars, your Mind is every thing.*

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But still there's a But in this kind of Love; for Beasts and Plants (as well as these) move to propagate their like. *Children* are the poorest way of immortalizing as can be, and as natural to a Beggar as a Prince, and therefore away with this *Dull* Enjoyment.

Sense is enough, where Senses only Woo;
But reasoning Lovers, must have Reason too;
Bodies are Finite, and do quickly Cloy;
But Souls are Infinite, and like themselves enjy.

Then in spite of all the *Corporal Lovers* that haunt your Body (not your Mind) commend me to *Platonick Love*; I mean, *Commend us to one another*; for I thought for that one Week I lay by you, not with you (as grosser Lovers wou'd) that we beheld one another with the *Eyes of a Dove*, and were mutually inflam'd with a chaste Affection, but *Angels Visits are short and sweet*; and I was thus happy but Six Days, when Six Ages had bin too little; but (Dear *Angel*) if ever we meet again (for there's such a thing as the *Platonick Year*, as well as the *Platonick Lover*) we'll Live o'er our Absent Years in that Minute I first see you, and so (if you'll consent to a *Spiritual Marriage*) live on to the end of our Lives —

Perhaps here (considering my *Function*) you'll expect I shou'd describe the *Purity* of that Love which such profess who distinguish themselves from the herd of *Sensual Inamorato's* by the Title of *Platonicks*; that I may impartially do
 this

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this, it is Requisite, I enquire into the Original of *Platonick Love*.

Plato in his Dialogue, intituled *Convivium*, or the Banquet (the Argument whereof is *Honourable Love*) bringeth in *Socrates*, a Wise, Grave, and Chaste Philosopher, taking high delight in the Society of *Aleibiades*, a Beautiful Youth; and loving him passionately, though Virtuously, not for any sensual respect, but only to impregnate him with that Knowledge and those Vertues, with which his own Mind was pregnant.

*This is the Point where Circling Pleasures move,
When Happy Lovers have returns of Love;
Such Sweets can scarcely be by Death Destroyed,
Where not the Body, but the Soul's, Enjoyed*—————

This (Dear Madam) is the *Idea* of *Platonick Love*; for the sum of *Plato's* Opinion concerning this kind of Love, is this. That a Man whose Mind is full of *Wisdom* and other Vertues, is naturally inclined to seek out, and Dearly affect some Beautiful Person, of Age and Capacity to conceive, in whom he may by frequent Instructions and Familiar ways of Insinuation, beget or produce the like *Wisdom* and Vertues: And that the Delight he receives therein, is very Great, as the Motive to it is very Honourable.

Thus (Madam) have I given you a true *Idea* of *Platonick Love*, and I hope by that have convinced you how Spiritually I Love *Orinda*; and as I only Court your Soul, your Obliging Answer will be expected by

Your *Platonick* Servant,

Fido.