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DANIEL

**THE LIFE OF MR.
RICHARD
SAVAGE**

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Содержание

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4

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The Life of Mr. Richard Savage

ERHAPS no History in the World, either ancient or modern, can produce an Instance of any one Man's Life fill'd with so many calamitous Circumstances, as *That* of the unhappy young Gentleman, who is the melancholy Subject of the following Sheets; his Misfortunes may be said to be begun, if not strictly before he had a Being, yet, before his Birth; for when his Mother,

the late Countess of *M - d*, was big with Child of him, she publicly declared, That the Infant then in her Womb, did not in the least appertain to her Husband, but to another noble Earl, upon which a Trial was commenced in the House of Lords, and my Lord *M - d*, obtained a Divorce, his Lady had her Fortune, which was very considerable, paid back to her again, with full Liberty of marrying whom she pleased, which Liberty she made use of in a very short Time, and my Lord *M - d* meeting her new Husband, Colonel *B - t*, in the Court of *Request* soon after, wish'd him Joy upon it, and said, he hoped my Lady *M - d* would make the Colonel a better Wife than she had done to him. It is very probable that this Divorce gave the Lady a great deal of Satisfaction: But her Son, being thus bastardized, could not be born, as otherwise he would have been, a Lord by Courtesy, and Heir to the Title of an *English* Earl, with one of the finest Estates in the Kingdom, which was afterwards, for want of Male-Issue, the Occasion of engaging two eminent Peers¹ in a Duel, in which they had the Misfortune to kill each other. Happy we may say it had been, as well for these Noblemen, as Mr. *Savage* himself, if he had either not been illegitimately begotten, or if that Illegitimacy had been prudently concealed: The being cut off from the certain Inheritance of that great Wealth and Honour, which, nothing, but his Mother's resentful Confession, could have hindered him of, would have given any other Person, when he came to Years of Maturity and Reflection, Sentiments

¹ D. *Hamilton* and Lord *Mohun*.

of a quite different Nature from those which he always, with a Generosity of Temper peculiar to himself, expressed when that Affair has been mentioned to him; constantly excusing his Mother for taking any Methods, how injurious soever they may have been to himself, to be disengaged from an Husband, whose ill Treatment of her could not suffer her to live much to her Content with him.

But to give the Reader his History in as exact Order of Time as possible, we shall begin with the Day of his Birth, which was *January the 10th*, 1697-8. A Day, that he might very reasonably, in the Language of the despairing *Job*, have repented his ever seeing, when he considered, as he had too frequently the bitterest Occasions to do, what an almost uninterrupted Train of Miseries it had introduced him into. The Reader may easily imagine, that an Affair of this extraordinary Kind, among Persons of that high Rank, did not a little employ the Conversation and Scandal of the Town, for which Reason, the Lady resolving to move out of her Sight, and if possible, by that, out of her Remembrance, him, who was innocently the Cause of her Reproach, committed him to the Care of a poor Woman, with Orders to breed him up as her own, and in a Manner suitable to her Condition, withal, laying a strict Injunction upon her, never to let him come to the Knowledge of his real Parents. The Nurse was faithful to the Trust reposed in her, at the same Time not neglecting to do her Duty to the Infant in a homely Manner, agreeable to the Disposition of a well-meaning ordinary Person, and her

scanty Allowance from his Mother's Relations; for she did not appear in the Affair herself, but her Mother, my Lady *Mason*, whether at her Daughter's Desire, or prompted by her own natural Compassion, I shall not pretend to determine, transacted every Thing with the *Nurse*, whose Name was the only one, for many Years, he knew he had any Claim to, and was called after it accordingly; although his real Father, the late *Earl Rivers*, was himself one of his God-fathers, and had his right Name regularly Registered in the Parish Books of *St. Andrew's Holbourn*; Mrs. *Lloyd*, his God-mother, was as kind to him as the Time she lived would admit of, but her Death, next to his own Birth, was his earliest Misfortune; for he not only lost, in all likelihood, a very good Friend, but could never recover any Part of the 300 Pounds she left him as a Legacy. When he arrived at Years capable of receiving the first Rudiments of Learning, and after an Attempt had been made in vain, to have had him spirited away to one of the *American Plantations*, he was sent to a little *Grammar School* at *St. Alban's* in *Hertfordshire*. Here I hope I shall be excused saying, That by the great *Natural Genius* he discover'd, this *School* has had ample Retribution for the little Assistance he receiv'd from it, for as he never was favour'd with any Academical Learning, so it was no Secret to those he most familiarly conversed with, that his Knowledge of the *Classics* was very slender and imperfect: Tho', with humble Submission to the Judgment of those Gentlemen who are such bigotted sticklers for the *Ancients*, he had something in the Force and Sprightliness of

his own Imagination, that more than made amends for the want of it.

It was while he was at this School, that his Father, *the Earl Rivers*, died, who had several Times made Enquiry after him, but could never get any satisfactory Account of him; and when on his Death-Bed, he more strenuously demanded to know what was become of him, in order to make him a Partaker in the Distribution of that very handsome Estate he left among his natural Children, he was positively told he was dead: Thus was he, whilst, (as he expressed it himself) *legally* the Son of one *Earl*, and *naturally* the Son of another, by the Management of his own Mother, denied the Benefit of belonging to either of them. In a Piece that was printed, but, for some weighty Reasons, never made publick, he tells us, That when he was about *Fifteen*, her Affection began to awake; and he was sollicitated to be bound Apprentice to a *Shoemaker*, which Proposal he rejected with Scorn, for he had now by the Death of his Nurse, discover'd some Letters of his Grandmother's, and by those Means the whole Contrivance that had been carried on to conceal his Birth. And being now entirely destitute of every the least Necessary of Life, to whom was it so Natural to apply to as a Mother? Can a Mother forget her sucking Child! But in this Instance Nature seem'd to be inverted, the Mother upon no Terms would endure the Sight of her Son, the Son on all Occasions expressing his Affection for his Mother, and the strong Desire he had of seeing her; "While Nature acted so weakly," *says an ingenious Gentleman, writing*

in *Mr. Savage's Behalf*, "on the Humanity of the Parent, she seems on the Son's Side to have doubled her usual Influence. Even the most shocking personal Repulses, and a Severity of Contempt and Injuries received at her Hands, through the whole Course of his Life, were not able to erase from his Heart the Impressions of his filial Duty; nor, which is much more strange, of his Affection; I have known him walk three or four Times in a dark Evening, through the Street this Mother lives in, only for the melancholy Pleasure of looking up at her Windows, in hopes to catch a Moment's Sight of her as she might cross the Room by Candle-light."

Being thus abandoned on all Sides to the Frowns of Fortune and a capricious World, without any other Friend but his own *Genius* to support him, he threw himself upon the barren and unthriving Province of *Poetry*, a Science how ornamental a Flower soever it may be among the Qualifications of Men of Ease and Fortune, when display'd only for the Amusement of a leisure Hour, yet too frequently held in Contempt, when made the whole Business of a Man's Life, and set to Sale for Bread; and more especially from the Taste of the present Age, in which the Figure and Condition of the Author takes up a greater Share of the Reader's Enquiry, than his Parts or the Matter he writes upon. Had the unfortunate Gentleman I am speaking of, been invested with either of his Father's Titles or Estates, I question not but we should have almost lost the Nobleman in the Honours paid to the *Poet*: But few modern Authors I fear, who launch into

the World, unaided by such Advantages, will, like *Virgil*, when living, have the same Respect paid to them that was due to an Emperor, or like *Homer*, have Temples rais'd to their Memories when dead.

The first *Poem* Mr. *Savage* published, was whilst he was very young, concerning the *Bangorian Controversy*; although there were some pretty Lines in it, yet as his Judgment ripened, he grew himself ashamed of this Piece, and contributed all he could to suppress the Edition, so that, it having but an indifferent Sale, very few of them are in any body's Hands at present. His next Performance was a *Comedy*, wrote at the Age of Eighteen, which he offered to the Managers of *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* House, but, they not entirely approving it, he could not get it acted immediately, but not long after, it was altered by Mr. *Christopher Bullock*, one of the Managers, and brought upon the Stage as his own, under the Title of WOMAN'S A RIDDLE, without any Manner of Benefit or Advantage to the distressed *Author*: This Play was represented with some Applause in the Year 1716, the Plot is taken from a *Spanish* Play called, *La Dama Duende*, and was Dedicated to the then Marquis of *Wharton*.

Two Years after this he got a *Comedy* upon the Stage in *Drury-Lane*, called, LOVE IN A VEIL, built likewise on a *Spanish* Plot, which he Dedicated to the Right Honourable George *Lord Lansdown*. This Play was indeed acted for his own Benefit, but it being very late in the Year, either *May* or *June*, the Profits of it hardly answer'd the Trouble he was at in writing and

getting it acted: It brought him acquainted however with some Persons who were good Friends to him afterwards, particularly a certain Knight, whose Name is not a little known by his Writings, and Mr. *Wilks*, one of the Patentees of that House; The first was so, for a short Time, but the latter, who is very remarkable, notwithstanding his Profession, for his Humanity and Generosity, has continu'd his Friendship to him to the last, and done him many very kind and charitable Offices: The other Gentleman gave him a constant Allowance, and was for a while so fond of him that, it is said, he proposed his natural Daughter to him, for a Wife, with a Thousand Pounds Portion, and his Interest, which was thought to be very good at that Time, to put him into some small Place in the Government; thinking, as their Births were alike, he could not reproach her, or use her ill, as some others might have Cruelty enough to do, upon that Account. But this was too much good Fortune to fall to the Lot of one who seems to have been born to taste but little of the Comforts of this Life; for some malicious Person, (and he must be so to a great Degree, who could think of injuring the most inoffensive Man living) had framed such a Story to the Knight of scandalous Things said by Mr. *Savage* against him and his Lady, that he withheld his Bounty from him, and was not easily prevail'd upon to see him afterwards.

Now was he again entirely to seek for every support of Life, when by the Assistance of the Gentleman, just mention'd for his Humanity, he obtain'd the Sum of fifty Pounds as a Present, from

a Lady, whose Duty it seem'd to have been to take some Care of him; this Sum he was told should be made up two Hundred, but it being in the Height of the *South-Sea Infatuation*, by which this Lady was one of the imaginary Gainers, when that *Grand Bubble broke*, the other Hundred and Fifty Pounds *evaporated* with it, and the poor Gentleman who is the Subject of our Discourse would have been reduced to as great Extremities as ever, if his Merit had not recommended him to that Ornament of *English Poesy*, *Aaron Hill*, Esq; Miserable as he was in every other Part of his Life, his Intimacy and Friendship with this Gentleman was a Happiness he has been much envy'd for, by several, whose Accomplishments could not entitle them to so great a Share of his Esteem as himself.

In the Year 1724 Mr. *Savage* wrote his Tragedy of *Sir Thomas Overbury*, which was acted at the *Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane*, and dedicated to *Herbert Tryst*, of the City of *Hereford*, Esq; In this Play he perform'd the principal Part himself, with much Applause: In an Advertisement to the Reader, printed before it, he acknowledges the Obligations he had to his best and dearest Friend, as he there calls him, Mr. *Aaron Hill*, for his many judicious Corrections in it. The *Prologue* and *Epilogue* were both wrote by that Gentleman; in the former are these Lines concerning the *Author*.

In a full World, our Author lives, alone!

Unhappy —and, of Consequence unknown;

*Yet, amidst Sorrow, he disdains Complaint;
Nor, languid, in the Race of Life, grows faint.
He swims, unyielding, against Fortune's Stream,
Nor, to his private Sufferings, stoops his Theme:
Adopts the Pains, which others undergo;
And for your Pleasure, feels not his own Woe.*

The next Year he was perswaded by his Friends to publish his *Poems* by Subscription, but not being enough in Number to make a compleat Volume, he was favoured with those of several other Gentlemen, among which, Mr. *Hill* has the largest Share. And the Author of a Paper which came out at that Time, call'd the *Plain Dealer*, recommended his Undertaking in a very handsome Manner, to the Publick: In which, speaking of him, he says, Perhaps few Things could be more surprizing than an History of his Birth and Usage! Of two Fathers, whom he might have claim'd, and *both* of them *Noble*, he lost the *Title* of the *one*, and a Provision from the *other's* Pity, by the Means alone of his *Mother*! Who, as if she had resolv'd not to leave him a single Comfort, afterwards robb'd him of *herself* too! And in direct Opposition to the Impulse of her natural Compassion, upon mistaken Notions of a false Delicacy, shut her Memory against his Wants, and cast him out to the severest Miseries; without allowing herself to contribute even such small Aid, as might at least have preserved him from Anguish, and pointed out some Path to his future Industry.

His good Qualities, which are very numerous, ought the more

to be esteem'd and cherish'd, because he owes them to himself only: Without the Advantage of Friends, Fortune or Education, he wants neither Knowledge nor Politeness, to deserve a *Mother's* Blessing, and adorn, rather than disgrace her. – I am strongly perswaded, from the Character, which upon all Occasions, he has taken Pleasure to give of the Lady's Humanity, with regard to the rest of the World, that nothing but her having, much too long, already been a Stranger to such a Son, could make her satisfy'd to continue so. – It is impossible, at least, that she should not distinguish him, by some kind Notice, some little Mark of her returning Tenderness, if, without Regard to his Merit, she knew but his Manner of thinking of her: Which is, itself, a shining Merit! and a surprising Instance of Generosity! if consider'd against those Reasons, which might excuse a different Treatment of her.

He writ the following Copy of Verses, and several others, on the same Subject, at a Time, when, I know not, which was most to be wonder'd at; That he should be serene enough for *Poetry*, under the Extremity of Ill Fortune! – Or, that his *Subject* should be the Praise of her, to whom he ow'd a Life of Misery!

*Hopeless, abandon'd, aimless, and oppress'd,
Lost to Delight, and, every way, distress'd:
Cross his cold Bed, in wild Disorder, thrown,
Thus, sigh'd Alexis, Friendless, and alone—
Why do I breathe? – What Joy can Being give,
When she, who gave me Life, forgets I live!*

*Feels not those Wintry Blasts; – nor heeds my Smart.
But shuts me from the Shelter of her Heart!
Saw me expos'd, to Want! to Shame! to Scorn!
To Ills! – which make it Misery, to be born!
Cast me, regardless on the World's bleak Wild:
And bad me, be a Wretch, while yet, a Child!
Where can he hope for Pity, Peace, or Rest,
Who moves no Softness in a Mother's Breast?
Custom, Law, Reason, All! my Cause forsake,
And Nature sleeps, to keep my Woes awake!
Crimes, which the Cruel scarce believe, can be,
The Kind are guilty of, to ruin me!
Even She, who bore me, blasts me, with her Hate,
And, meant my Fortune, makes herself my Fate!
Yet has this sweet Neglecter of my Woes,
The softest, tend'rest, Breast, that Pity knows!
Her Eyes shed Mercy, wheresoe'er they shine;
And her Soul melts, at every Woe – but mine.
Sure, then! some secret Fate, for Guilt, unwill'd,
Some Sentence, pre-ordain'd to be fulfill'd!
Plung'd me, thus deep, in Sorrow's searching Flood:
And wash'd me from the Mem'ry of her Blood.
But, Oh! whatever Cause has mov'd her Hate,
Let me but sigh, in silence, at my Fate.
The God, within, perhaps, may touch her Breast:
And, when she pities, who can be distress'd?*

These Verses, as I said before, were published in the *Plain Dealer*, to whom Mr. *Savage* afterwards wrote a Letter himself,

that was printed in that Paper, in which he says: I am, Sir, that unfortunate *Richard Savage*, the peculiar Circumstances of whose uncommon Treatment from a Mother (whose fine Qualities make it impossible to me not to forgive her, even, while I am miserable, by her Means only) induced you some Months since, in your *28th Paper*, to publish a few ineffectual Lines, which I had written, on her surprising Usage of me: To which your Humanity was pleas'd to add certain Reflections, in my Favour, which I remember, with due Gratitude; and am encouraged, by that Instance of your Goodness, to make the present Application.

When you shall have perus'd my extraordinary *Case*, and those convincing *Original Letters*, which I have entrusted with the Gentleman, who brings you this, I shall need say no more, to satisfy you, what *Right* I have to *complain*, in a more *publick Manner*, than I have, yet allowed myself to resolve on. – The Papers, in the Order you will see them, are prepared for a Hand, too *Just*, and too *Powerful*, to leave me the least Distrust of being, shortly, *less oppressed than I have been*; but I judg'd myself obliged to lay them under your Eye, that you might be sensible, you said less, of my *Wrongs*, and my *Sufferings*, than the unhappy *Truth* could have justified.

He afterwards, in the same Letter, mentions his Subscription, and begs those, who think *him*, or his *Design* worth their Notice or Encouragement, to send their Names, and the Number of Books they subscribe for, to *Button's Coffee-house*. Accordingly

when his List of Subscribers was printed before his Book, the following Names were distinguished from the rest, and which I mention here, to do them Honour, as having sent their Subscriptions without any other Sollicitation; prompted only by the Influence of Compassion, and the Greatness and Generosity of their own Tempers.

Her Grace the Dutchess of *Cleveland*.

The Right Honourable the Lady Viscountess *Cheyney*.

The Right Honourable the Lady Viscountess *Castlemain*.

Mrs. *Mary Floyer*.

The Right Honourable the Earl of *Gainsborough*.

The Right Honourable the Lady *Gower*.

The Right Honourable the Lady *Lechmere*.

The Right Honourable the Lord *Milsington*.

Mrs. *Sofuel Noel*.

His Grace the Duke of *Rutland*, for Ten Books.

Her Grace the Dutchess Dowager of *Rutland*.

Her Grace the Dutchess of *Rutland*.

The Right Honourable the Countess of *Strafford*.

Mr. *John Savage*.

The Right Honourable the Countess Dowager of
Warwick.

The Dedication of this Book, was to the Right Honourable the Lady *Mary Wortley Montague*; wherein he says thus, "Nature seems to have form'd my Mind as inconsistently, as Fortune has my Condition: She has given me a *Heart* that is as *proud* as my *Father's*; to a Rank in Life, almost as *low* as the Humanity of my

Mother!"

He had also wrote a long Preface to it, giving some Account of his *Mother's* unparallel'd ill Treatment of him; but was prevail'd on through the Imposition of some very considerable Persons to cancel it; and about that Time he had a Pension of 50 Pounds a Year settled upon him. I will not venture to say whether this Allowance came directly from *her*, or, if so, upon what Motives she was induced to grant it him; but chuse to leave the Reader to guess at it. This was the first Time that he may properly be said to have enjoyed any Certainty in Life, and this, alas! of how short a Duration is it like to be, from the unhappy Affair that has brought him under the heaviest Sentence of the Law! A Sentence, which, of all Men living, he was thought, by his whole Acquaintance, the most unlikely to have incurr'd his good Nature and Meekness of Temper, having before this fatal Accident, been remarkable, among all who convers'd with him, if I may be allow'd the Expression, even to a Fault.

The last Piece which he exhibited to the World, was, a *Poem* Sacred to the Memory of our late most gracious Sovereign, address'd to the Right Honourable Mr. *Doddington*, one of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, which Subject, tho' it employ'd several other poetic Genius's; he is allow'd, by some approv'd Judges in that way of Writing, to have manag'd with a Delicacy, superior to any of his Competitors. But to come to the dismal Cause of his present Condition; having for some Time had a Lodging at *Richmond* in *Surrey*, for the Benefit of the Air, and

the Conveniencies of his Studies; he came to Town on *Monday* the 20th Day of *November* last, in order to pay off another he had in *Queen-street, Westminster*, thinking the Expence too great to keep them both; and falling into Company with Mr. *Merchant* and Mr. *Gregory*, they all went together to a Coffee-house near his old Lodgings, where they drank till pretty late in the Evening; Mr. *Savage* would willingly have got a Bed at the Coffee-house for that Night, but there not being a Conveniency for himself, and Company both, they went away from thence with a Resolution to waste Time as well as they could till Morning, when they purpos'd to go together to *Richmond*. In their Walks, seeing a Light in *Robinson's* Coffee-house, they thought that a Place proper to entertain them, tho' Mr. *Savage* protested he was entirely ignorant of the Character of the House, and had never been there in his Life before. Let it suffice in this Place to say, that the direful Consequence of their going in there, was from an Insult offer'd by Mr. *Merchant* to the Company who were drinking there, a mortal Wound given to Mr. *Sinclair*, of which he languish'd till the next Day, and then died, and the Condemnation of Mr. *Savage* and Mr. *Gregory* for the said Fact. They were secur'd for that Night, and in the Morning carried before *Nathaniel Blackerby*, Esq; and two other of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace, and by them committed to the *Gate-house*; but Mr. *Sinclair* dying, they were from thence removed to *Newgate*, between Twelve and One o' Clock on *Tuesday* Night.

The Coroner's Inquest having sat upon the Body, did not finish

their Enquiry at their first Meeting, but adjourn'd till the *Tuesday* following, and then brought in their Verdict *Manslaughter*.

Let the Reader now behold a Man of his unspotted Character, and inoffensive Behaviour, till this fatal Action, involv'd all on a sudden in all the wretched Circumstances and Sufferings of the most inhuman Criminals and abandon'd of Profligates, and admire at the decent Fortitude and Serenity of Mind, with which, according to the Report of all who saw him, he supported so shocking and unexpected a Misfortune, as well before as at the Time of his Trial, which was on *Thursday* the 7th of this Instant *December*, at the *Old Baily*; where after eight Hours being taken up in hearing the Evidence on both Sides, he and Mr. *Gregory* were found Guilty of the *Murther*, and *Merchant* of *Manslaughter* only.

The whole Trial having already been made publick, it will be needless to give any Repetition of it here, any farther than this, that upon the Testimonies of *Nuttal*, a Friend of the Deceas'd, and another Person, who was drinking with him and Mr. *Sinclair*; together, with those of the Women of the House, it appear'd the Affront was given by *Merchant's* kicking down the Table that belong'd to the Deceased and his Company, and that in Justification of that Rudeness, Mr. *Savage* and Mr. *Gregory* drew their Swords, and Mr. *Sinclair* receiv'd his Death Wound from Mr. *Savage*.

Being thus cast out of all possible Hopes of making any farther Defence by Law for his Life, he was carry'd back to the Prison,

where the Indulgence which he had before obtained from the Keeper, of being excused from having any Irons, could no longer with Safety, be allowed him, but he and Mr. *Gregory* were fetter'd with near fifty Pounds Weight a-piece. On the *Monday* following, at the Conclusion of the Sessions, he was carry'd down to the Court to receive Sentence, as usual, previous to which he made the following Speech.

'It is now, my Lord, too late, to offer any thing by way of Defence, or Vindication; nor can we expect ought from your Lordships, in this Court, but the Sentence which the Law requires you as Judges, to pronounce against Men of our calamitous Condition. – But we are also perswaded, that as meer Men, and out of this Seat of rigorous Justice, you are susceptible of the tender Passions, and too humane, not to commiserate the unhappy Situation of those, whom the Law sometimes perhaps – exacts – from you to pronounce upon. No doubt you distinguish between Offences, which arise out of Premeditation, and a Disposition habituated to Vice or Immorality, and Transgressions, which are the unhappy and unforeseen Effects of a casual Absence of Reason, and sudden Impulse of Passion: We therefore hope you will contribute all you can to an Extension of that Mercy, which the Gentlemen of the Jury have been pleas'd to shew Mr. *Merchant*, who (allowing Facts as sworn against us by the Evidence) has led us into this our Calamity, I hope, this will not be constru'd, as if we mean to reflect upon that Gentleman, or remove any thing from us upon him, or that we repine the more at our Fate because he has

no Parcipation of it: No, my Lord! For my Part, I declare nothing could more soften my Grief, than to be without any Companion in so great a Misfortune.'

Who can read this without wishing it may have its desir'd Effect? No one, I am sure, who knows him personally but interested his Hopes warmly and zealously in it. His Friends (for his Calamities had added many to those who were to his *Merit* before) were generous Partakers of that Distress which he bore himself so manfully, and are extreamly Assiduous in recommending him to the *Mercy* to the best of Sovereigns. Among which we think nothing more to the Purpose of these Sheets than the following Letter, with which we shall conclude, supposed to be wrote by one of the Gentlemen before-mentioned for having publickly express'd his Compassion for Mr. *Savage's* Sufferings.

A LETTER to a Noble Lord in the behalf of Mr. *Savage* and Mr. *Gregory*.

My Lord,

I am persuaded, you will not refuse this Letter a reading, since the principal Subject of it is *Mercy*: I would not have took this Liberty with your Lordship, was I not thoroughly convinced that your *Virtue* is equal to your *Wisdom*, and that you are always ready to exert both in a proper Cause. I know, for I have experienced it, that you have a Heart which can commiserate the Misfortunes of Man, and that you are ever willing to lend a Hand to the sinking Wretch. What I now write is with the greatest Confusion of Spirits,

and with the tenderest Sentiments of Humanity for two unhappy Gentlemen, one of which is my Friend; my Friend, my Lord, just on the Brink of suffering an ignominious Death. Imagine the Tumult of my Soul, when the dreadful Idea is before me: But Friendship is not the chief Motive of my Concern for him; he is a Man of Virtue and of Honour, sufficient Recommendations for your Lordship to intercede for him. Blot out the unhappy Moment which was the Source of his present Calamity, and he will appear unsullied in either; nor will that appear so black, if Murder in any Case may be extenuated; when we consider the Evidences who cast him; three Women, my Lord, who have since contradicted what before they had sworn; the other Evidence, a Man, by Report of no amiable Character; but who are said to have most grosly misrepresented the Fact, and to have industriously spread that Misrepresentation: But my Intention is not to prove innocent whom the Law has found guilty; but to submit the two distressful Gentlemen, who now lie under Sentence of Death, as Objects of the Royal Mercy. When the Law has found guilty one or more Persons, whom it is consistent with Virtue and Wisdom to save, it is the blessed Privilege of the Sovereign to turn the Course of the Law, and bid the afflicted live. The Reputations of Mr. *Savage* and Mr. *Gregory* have been always clear; nor are they in any Action of their Lives to be lamented by their Friends but on this melancholly Occasion. The first I have known and conversed with several Years, and can therefore more fully speak him: I have discovered in him a Mind incapable of Evil; I have beheld him sigh for

the distressed, when more distressed himself; I have seen him give that Relief to others, which not long before he has in some degree wanted. He is so far from a litigious Man, that he was always more ready to stifle the Remembrance of an Injury than to resent it. Much more could I say of his virtuous Qualities, without swerving the least from Truth; but as his Friends, which are many, are as sensible of them as my self, I doubt not but they will be as ready to declare them as I am, who can make the most solemn Appeal to Heaven, that I have seen repeated Instances of every one of these Virtues, and more. In his Death, I am certain, the King would lose a good Subject; all good Men, a Friend; and Vice, an Enemy. To enforce what I have said, I must beg Leave to use some of Mr. *Savage's* own Expressions in his Address to the Court, when he received his Sentence: *I am perswaded that, as mere Men, and out of the Seat of Justice, the Court is susceptible of the tender Passions, and too humane not to commiserate the unhappy Situation of him and his Fellow-sufferer Mr. Gregory; and to distinguish between Offences which arise out of premeditation and a Disposition habituated to Vice or Immorality, and Transgressions which are the unhappy and unforeseen Effects of a casual Absence of Reason, and a sudden Impulse of passion. I hope the Court will contribute to an Extension of that mercy which the Jury had shewed to Mr. Merchant, who had, according to the Evidence, led them into this Calamity.* To this Effect, and in almost the same Words, spoke Mr. *Savage*. I am satisfied, your Lordship sees the Force of Reason in his Words; and nothing can add more

to this Gentleman's Character, or shew the Goodness of his Disposition, than when he declared, that *nothing could more soften his Grief than to be without any Companion in so great a misfortune*. Here I cannot help reviving the Memory of his past Misfortunes: Wretched from the Womb, robbed of two Fathers, and who never yet was blessed with the Smiles of a Parent! Who that is born of a Woman can reflect on his Fate, and refuse a Tear? I dare venture to say, that your Lordship, and all virtuous disposed Souls, would rejoice to see his past miseries recompensed with his Life, which is now in the Hands of the King: And happy for him, and his Fellow-sufferer, that Mercy sits in Person on the Throne of *Great-Britain!* Since it is plain, the Publick may be a Loser by the Death of these Gentlemen, and none but the Grave can be a Gainer, there is great Reason to hope for a Pardon, or an extensive Reprieve. Once more, my Lord, let me repeat my Intreaty for your Intercession for him; restore him once more to Life and Freedom; rejoice his Friends, and preserve the Publick a useful Member; and forgive, my Lord, the Importunity of

Your most obliged, and most obedient humble Servant.

Dec. 13. 1727.

FINIS