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- Persian Letters - Letters -

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Letter 148

Letter 150

Solim to Usbek in Paris

I pity myself, magnificent lord, and I pity you ; never did a loyal servant descend into the terrible despair I am in. Here are your woes and mine ; I write them to you only in trembling.

I swear by all the prophets in heaven that since you entrusted your wives to me, I have watched over them day and night ; I have never suspended for a moment the flow of my worries. I have begun my ministry with punishments, and I have suspended them without losing my natural austerity.

But what am I telling you ? Why boast to you of a loyalty that has done you no good ? Forget all my past services ; look on me as a traitor, and punish me for all the crimes that I have been unable to prevent.

Roxane, the prideful Roxane, oh my God ! Who can anyone trust now ? You suspected Zachi, and had complete assurance for Roxane. But her shy virtue was a cruel imposture ; it was the veil of her perfidy : I have caught her in the arms of a young man who, when he saw he was discovered, fell on me ; he stabbed me twice with a dagger ; the eunuchs who came running at the noise surrounded him. He put up a long struggle, and wounded several of them. He even tried to go back into the bedroom to die, he said, before Roxane's eyes ; but finally he yielded to the number, and fell at our feet.

I do not know, sublime lord, whether I shall await your stern orders ; you have placed vengeance in my hands ; I must not keep it waiting.

The Isfahan seraglio this 8th day of the moon of Rebiab I, 1720

[Supplementary Letter XI of the 1758 edition would be placed here.]

Supplementary Letter XI
