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- Persian Letters - Letters -

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<a href="#">Letter 147</a>
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<a href="#">Letter 149</a>
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*Roxane* [1] to Usbek in Paris

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Horror, night, and terror reign in the seraglio : a dreadful gloom surrounds it ; a tiger at every moment works all his fury. He has put to the torture two white eunuchs who have confessed nothing but their innocence ; he has sold some of our slaves, and obliged us to change among us those we could keep. Zachi and Zelis have received in their room, in the darkness of night, an unworthy treatment : the profaner did not fear to lay his abject hands upon them. [2] He keeps us locked up in each our own apartment ; and although we are alone there, he makes us live under the veil. We are no longer permitted to speak to each other ; it would be a crime to write ; nothing is free here any longer, except tears.

A band of new eunuchs has entered the seraglio, where they besiege us night and day ; our sleep is endlessly interrupted by their suspicions, feigned or real. What consoles me is that all this will not last long, and that these sufferings will end with my life : it will not be long, cruel Usbek ; I shall not give you time to put an end to all these abuses. [3]

*The Isfahan seraglio this 2nd day of the moon of Maharram 1720*

[SUPPLEMENTARY LETTER IX and X of the 1758 edition would be placed here.]

<a href="#">Supplementary Letter IX</a>
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[1] Sudden reappearance of Roxane, whose name alone had been encountered in letters 19 and 143, and who was the addressee of letter 24, but has never herself written until now.

[2] A periphrase to designate the what the Supplementary Letter 9 will describe a bit more specifically as a spanking. The eunuch acts in accordance the Qur'anic precept (Chardin, IV, 34) that women suspected of adultery should be beaten.

[3] This letter, which begs no reply, must particularly be read in conjunction with letter 150.