

guinea and I'll act; if you can't I'll go away." It was paid, and the youth acted — so well that a country manager, who happened to be present, offered his terms at once. "My name is Jockey Adams," he said, "celebrated for my inimitable jockey dance. What's yours! I'm starting a strolling company. If you join you shall play first parts."

"My name," the youth retorted with a reckless laugh, "is Brown. I'm alone in the world save for a child-sister, and I'm gaping for a crust. I've no clothes but those I wear, and no money. If that suits you, well and good—I'm yours."

And so the bargain was struck. Charlotte and her little daughter went a strolling, and in the first town where they elected to set up their tent a strange and wonderful accident befell our heroine.

One of the audience, who with a party was honoring the strollers with her presence, fell violently in love at first sight with the leading actor. His form was so elegant, his face so expressive, his demeanor so genteel, that the young lady in question almost had a fit. Nothing would suit her but that she must marry him — instantly — immediately — delay meant agony, despair, death! Would the dear youth espouse the maid who loved him? Of course he would, for he of course was a beggar, whilst she (though ugly as sin) was an orphan heiress, who in eight months would be of age, at which period she would come into sole possession of forty thousand pounds in the bank, and effects in the Indies worth twenty thousand more.

Charlotte visited the unfortunate heiress, and told her the plain truth. "I am no young man," she said, "only a poor, forlorn, deserted, neglected, starving girl. My father is the great Cibber, friend of earls and dukes. He reckes not where his daughter rots. I have to live somehow until I'm summoned hence, and to fill another mouth besides my own, and God knows that the task is hard." With that the two women, so oddly brought together, mingled their tears and sighs, and parted, never to meet again.

This adventure appears to have affected Charlotte as deeply as anything could affect so smooth a temperament. She railed by fits and starts at the injustice of her fate, vowed vengeance on her father, on all the world. She

persuaded Jockey Adams to remove to another town, to St. Albans, and here, as she brooded over accumulated wrongs, the desired vengeance answered her call and came. It reached her ears that the obdurate Colley, traveling on business, was to lie the following night at St. Albans on his way to pay a visit to some aristocratic patron. Charlotte donned boots and vizard and looming through the mist a horseback in the road bade his coach stand while he delivered; presented a pistol at his breast and while he groveled down and cried for mercy withered his conscience-stricken soul with her upbraidings. With unctuous tears he begged for life, craved pardon for the past, gave up his purse with three score guineas, his diamond buckles, sumptuous watch and snuff-box and then was permitted to depart with gibes and echoing peals of laughter for his cowardice, which cut into his vanity like knives.

It was but a poor revenge of Charlotte's after all, although she gained the guineas and the jewelry no doubt; for she fixed firmly in her parent's heart undying hatred.

Hitherto he had taken no steps himself to do the lady injury. But now it was different. She dared to show up her father to public ignominy and derision, to make a laughing stock of him. She must be crushed, then, ere time was given to work more serious harm.

Her life thenceforth was an endless round of misery. She played snap parts as a man till she had to reveal herself; served as a valet to an Irish lord and next as journeyman to a sausage maker.

Her next post was a waiter at the King's Head Tavern, Marylebone, whence she returned to the profession as manager of a wretched band of barn-stormers. An uncle provided her pitifully with a little money, with which she opened a tavern in Drury Lane, but soon went to pot. She played under her brother, Theophilus, at the Haymarket till the house was closed, when she relapsed into the old, hopeless condition of a vagabond player.

The simple story of her wretchedness reads incredible. She published it in an autobiography in 1755, which provided her with money enough to open a public house, in which she failed, as usual.

She escaped her creditors and a warrant and hidden in a hut in the fields, squatting on a