



The Works Of Alexander Pope Esq.

In Nine Volumes Complete. With His Last Corrections, Additions, And Improvements; As they were delivered to the Editor a little before his Death

Being The Second of his Letters

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

XXII. The answer.

Nutzungsbedingungen

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-55314](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-55314)

L E T T E R X X I I .

The Answer.

April 20, 1723.

IT is not possible to express what I think, and what I feel; only this, that I have thought and felt for nothing but you, for some time past: and shall think of nothing so long for the time to come. The greatest comfort I had was an intention (which I would have made practicable) to have attended you in your journey, to which I had brought that person to consent, who only could have hindered me, by a tye which, tho' it may be more tender, I do not think more strong, than that of friendship. But I fear there will be no way left me to tell you this great truth, that I remember you, that I love you, that I am grateful to you, that I entirely esteem and value you: no way but that one, which needs no open warrant to authorize it, or secret conveyance to secure it; which no bills can preclude, and no Kings prevent; a way that can reach to any part of the world where you may be, where the very whisper or even the wish of a friend must not be heard, or even suspected: by this way, I dare tell my esteem and affection of you, to your enemies in the gates, and you, and they, and their sons, may hear of it.

You

You prove yourself, my Lord, to know me for the friend I am; in judging that the manner of your Defence, and your Reputation by it, is a point of the highest concern to me: and assuring me, it shall be such, that none of your friends shall blush for you. Let me further prompt you to do yourself the best and most lasting justice: the instruments of your Fame to posterity will be in your own hands. May it not be, that providence has appointed you to some great and useful work, and calls you to it this severe way? You may more eminently and more effectually serve the Public even now, than in the stations you have so honourably fill'd. Think of Tully, Bacon, and Clarendon^a: is it not the latter, the disgraced part of their lives, which you most envy, and which you would choose to have liv'd?

I am tenderly sensible of the wish you express, that no part of your misfortune may pursue me. But, God knows, I am every day less and less fond of my native country (so torn as it is by Party-rage) and begin to consider a friend in exile as a friend in death; one gone before, where I am not unwilling nor unpre-

^a Clarendon indeed wrote his best works in his banishment: but the best of Bacon's were written before his

disgrace, and the best of Tully's after his return from exile.

pared to follow after; and where (however various or uncertain the roads and voyages of another world may be) I cannot but entertain a pleasing hope that we may meet again.

I faithfully assure you, that in the mean time there is no one, living or dead, of whom I shall think oftener or better than of you. I shall look upon you as in a state between both, in which you will have from me all the passions and warm wishes that can attend the living, and all the respect and tender sense of loss, that we feel for the dead. And I shall ever depend upon your constant friendship, kind memory, and good offices, tho' I were never to see or hear the effects of them: like the trust we have in benevolent spirits, who, tho' we never see or hear them, we think, are constantly serving us, and praying for us.

Whenever I am wishing to write to you, I shall conclude you are intentionally doing so to me. And every time that I think of you, I will believe you are thinking of me. I never shall suffer to be forgotten (nay to be but faintly remember'd) the honour, the pleasure, the pride I must ever have, in reflecting how frequently you have delighted me, how kindly you have distinguish'd me, how cordially you have advis'd me! In conversation, in study, I shall always want you, and wish for you: In
my

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my most lively, and in my most thoughtful hours, I shall equally bear about me, the impressions of you: And perhaps it will not be in This life only, that I shall have cause to remember and acknowledge the friendship of the Bishop of Rochester.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

To the same.

May, 1723.

ONCE more I write to you, as I promis'd, and this once, I fear, will be the last! the Curtain will soon be drawn between my friend and me, and nothing left but to wish you a long good-night. May you enjoy a state of repose in this life, not unlike that sleep of the soul which some have believ'd is to succeed it, where we lye utterly forgetful of that world from which we are gone, and ripening for that to which we are to go. If you retain any memory of the past, let it only image to you what has pleas'd you best; sometimes present a dream of an absent friend, or bring you back an agreeable conversation. But upon the whole, I hope you will think less of the time past than of the