

A RECEIPT FOR WRITING A NOVEL.

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WOULD you a fav'rite novel make,  
Try hard your reader's heart to break,  
For who is pleas'd, if not tormented ?  
(Novels for that were first invented).  
'Gainst nature, reason, sense, combine  
To carry on your bold design,  
And those ingredients I shall mention,  
Compounded with your own invention,  
I'm sure will answer my intention.  
Of love take first a due proportion—  
It serves to keep the heart in motion :  
Of jealousy a powerful zest,  
Of all tormenting passions best ;  
Of horror mix a copious share,  
And duels you must never spare ;

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Hysteric

Hysterical fits at least a score,  
 Or, if you find occasion, more ;  
 But fainting fits you need not measure,  
 The fair ones have them at their pleasure ;  
 Of sighs and groans take no account,  
 But throw them in to vast amount ;  
 A frantic fever you may add,  
 Most authors make their lovers mad ;  
 Rack well your hero's nerves and heart,  
 And let your heroine take her part ;  
 Her fine blue eyes were made to weep,  
 Nor should she ever taste of sleep ;  
 Ply her with terrors day or night,  
 And keep her always in a fright,  
 But in a carriage when you get her,  
 Be sure you fairly overset her ;  
 If she will break her bones—why let her :  
 Again, if e'er she walks abroad,  
 Of course you bring some wicked lord,

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Who

Who with three ruffians snaps his prey,  
 And to a castle speeds away ;  
 There close confin'd in haunted tower,  
 You leave your captive in his power,  
 Till dead with horror and dismay,  
 She scales the walls and flies away.

Now you contrive the lovers meeting,  
 To set your reader's heart a beating,  
 But ere they've had a moment's leisure,  
 Be sure to interrupt their pleasure ;  
 Provide yourself with fresh alarms  
 To tear 'em from each other's arms ;  
 No matter by what fate they're parted,  
 So that you keep them broken-hearted.

A cruel father some prepare  
 To drag her by her flaxen hair ;  
 Some raise a storm, and some a ghost,  
 Take either, which may please you most.

But

But this you must with care observe,  
 That when you've wound up every nerve  
 With expectation, hope and fear,  
 Hero and heroine must disappear.  
 Some fill one book, some two without 'em,  
 And ne'er concern their heads about 'em,  
 This greatly rests the writer's brain,  
 For any story, that gives pain,  
 You now throw in—no matter what,  
 However foreign to the plot,  
 So it but serves to swell the book,  
 You foist it in with desperate hook—  
 A masquerade, a murder'd peer,  
 His throat just cut from ear to ear—  
 A rake turn'd hermit—a fond maid  
 Run mad, by some false loon betray'd—  
 These stores supply the female pen,  
 Which writes them o'er and o'er again,  
 And readers likewise may be found  
 To circulate them round and round.

Now

Now at your fable's close devise  
 Some grand event to give surprize—  
 Suppose your hero knows no mother—  
 Suppose he proves the heroine's brother—  
 This at one stroke dissolves each tie,  
 Far as from east to west they fly :  
 At length when every woe's expended,  
 And your last volume's nearly ended,  
 Clear the mistake, and introduce  
 Some tatt'ling nurse to cut the noose,  
 The spell is broke—again they meet  
 Expiring at each other's feet ;  
 Their friends lie breathless on the floor—  
 You drop your pen ; you can no more—  
 And ere your reader can recover,  
 They're married—and your history's over.