

LADY'S MUSEUM

Illustrating Harriot and Sophia

The illustration, "Dolly relating her story to Sophia," from Charlotte Lennox's novel "Harriot and Sophia" is an understated yet highly effective image that, while not integral to the overall work, greatly enriches the novel; This is due to the accuracy with which the imagery reflects the novel's plot, characters, as well as the class, maturity, and education-based power dynamics that exist between the characters Dolly and Sophia, which serves to convey the overarching theme of the value of education and virtue in the novel and, by extension, Lennox's Lady's Museum periodical in which it is contained.

1 Plot Event and Characters

The illustration accurately captures the scene in the novel in which Dolly confides in Sophia under an old oak tree in a calm countryside setting, not far from the Lawsons' home. The modest beauty and serenity of this countryside scene in the image as well as the obvious propriety of the figures gives the illustration a sense of innocence and purity that is characteristic of both Sophia and Dolly throughout the story.



2 Maturity and Education

The slight difference in elevation and size between Sophia and Dolly represents the fact that Sophia has the upper-hand maturity and intellect-wise in their relationship due to her age and education. Sophia being shown smiling down at Dolly in the illustration captures the line in the novel that describes how Dolly was encouraged by, "the sweet condescension of Sophia," during the scene that the image depicts.

3 Class Distinction

The difference in social class between Sophia and Dolly is conveyed in the illustration through the contrasting dress between the figures of the two girls - Sophia is dressed more richly than Dolly, with earrings and a ruffled dress, which reflects her higher social status.



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