

[Journal Entry to Nobody,
Dated 27 March 1768]

By Frances Burney

Transcription, correction, editorial commentary, and markup by Tonya Howe

This Strange Medley of Thoughts & Facts
was written at the age of 15 for my genuine &
most private Amusement
Fanny Burney

Poland Street, London, March 27 [1768]

To have some account of my thoughts, manners, acquaintance & actions, when the Hour arrives in which time is more nimble than memory, is the reason which induces me to keep a Journal: a Journal in which I must confess my every thought, must open my whole Heart! But a thing of this kind ought to be addressed to somebody — I must imagine myself to be talking — talking to the most intimate of friends — to one in whom I should take delight in confiding, & remorse in concealment: but who must this friend be? — to make choice of one to [sic] 1 whom I can but half rely, would be to frustrate entirely the intention of my plan. The only one I could wholly, totally confide in, lives in the same House with me, & not only never has, but never will, leave me one secret to tell her. To whom, then, must I dedicate my wonderful, surprising & interesting adventures? — to whom dare I reveal my private opinion of my nearest Relations? the secret thoughts of my dearest friends? my own hopes, fears, I reflections & dislikes? —Nobody!

To Nobody, then, will I write my Journal! since To Nobody can I be wholly unreserved — to Nobody can I reveal every thought, every wish of my Heart, with the most unlimited confidence, the most unremitting sincerity to the end of my Life! For what chance, what accident can end my connections with Nobody? No secret can I conceal from No-body, & to No-body can I be ever unreserved. Disagreement cannot stop our affection, Time itself has no power to end our friendship. The love, the esteem I entertain for Nobody, Nobody's self has not power to destroy. From Nobody I have nothing to fear, (the) secrets sacred to friendship, Nobody will not reveal, when the affair is doubtful, Nobody will not look towards the side least favourable —.

I will suppose you, then, to be my best friend; tho' God forbid you ever should! my dearest companion — & a romantick Girl, for mere oddity may perhaps be more sincere — more tender if you were a friend [in] *propria personae* [sic] — in as much as imagination often exceeds reality. In your Breast my errors may create pity without exciting contempt; may raise your compassion, without eradicating your love.

From this moment, then, my dear Girl — but why, permit me to ask, must a female be made Nobody? Ah! my dear, what were this world good for, were Nobody a female? And now I have done with preambulation