

THE
SHEPHERDESS

OF THE

ALPS,

A

VERY INTERESTING, PATHETIC

AND

MORAL TALE.

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Shepherdess of the Alps.

A MORAL TALE

IN that part of the Alps, amidst the high mountains of Savoy, very near the road that leads from Briancon to Modena, is a lonely valley, whose solitary aspect instils into the minds of all who travel through it, a sort of pleasing melancholy. Three hills in the form of an amphitheatre, on which some shepherds' huts are scattered at several distances, interspersed with chumps of lofty trees, streams tumbling down the mountains in cascades, and pastures ever green, compose the beautiful landscape of this natural scene.

Count Fonrose and his Lady were returning from France to Italy, when their Coach broke down as they were passing through the valley; and as the day was on the decline, they were obliged to look for some place of cover, where to pass the night. Whilst they advanced towards one of the huts, they perceived a flock of sheep, drove by a shepherdess, whose walk and air filled them with astonishment, and their ears with the sweet accents of her melodious voice, which the echos repeated in plaintive sounds.

How beautiful's the setting sun!
Its dailey course now almost run,
We can behold its charms,
More pleasing are its fainter rays,
Then when in full meridian blaze—
It dazzles whilst it warms.

Thus it will prove, said she, when after a painful race the wearied soul arrives at the wish'd-for goal, and calmly drops into eternity, to renew its vigour in the pure source of immortality. But, alas how distant is the prospect! how slowly it passes away. In saying these words the shepherdess moved on; her head declined; with

a supineness in her attitude which gave ease and dignity to her gait and mein. Struck with amazement at what they saw, and more with what they heard, the Count and Countess redoubled their steps to overtake her. But what was their surprize, when under her coarse straw hat and mean apparel, they met with every beauty, every grace. Pray, child, said the Countess, (finding she endeavoured to shun them) be not alarmed: we are travellers, that an accident obliges us to ask for shelter until the morning in one of yonder cabins: be so kind as to be our guide. I am very sorry madam answered the shepherdes, blushing, and casting down her eyes, that you will be but ill accomodated as these huts belong to very poor people. You live here, I suppose, said the Countess; and surely, I may put up with the inconveniences for one night when you undergo them continually. There is a wide difference (said the modest shepherdes) I am brought up to it. I cannot believe that (interrupted Count Fonrose) not able any longer to hide his emotion; no- you were not formed for such hardships. Fortune is unjust, or how is it possible that so lovely a person should be reduced to live obscurely, in so low and ordinary a dress? Fortune, replied Adelaide, (so was the shepherdes named) is not to be blamed, but when she deprives us of what she has given us before. My condition has its sweets from one that knows no other state in life. Custom and example create wants for the wealthy which the poor are ignorant of. It may be so with those that are born in this solitude, said the Count; but for you charming unknown, you are not what you seem to be; your air, voice, and language, all betray your disguise. These few words which have fallen from your lips, discover a noble soul and a cultivated education. O! tell us, lovely creature, what cruel turn of fate has lowered you to this condition? A man under misfortune replied Adelaide, has a thousand means to extricate himself, but a woman in such cases has no resource but servitude, and the choice of a master, methinks it is best to prefer the good and virtuous. You are going to see

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mine, and you will be delighted with the innocence of their lives and the candid simplicity of their manners.

As she was speaking they arrived at the hut. It was divided by a partition from the sheepfold, into which the shepherdes turned her flock, counting them over with the most serious attention, heedless of the strangers, who beheld her with admiration. The old folks, such as presented Baucis and Philemon, received their guests with the honest simple courtesy which recalled the golden age, We have nothing to offer you, said the good woman but clean straw for your bed, and a hearty welcome to such provisions as heaven affords us, milk, fruit and oaten bread. On entering the cabin they were, amazed to see the order and neatness that appeared every where in so poor an habitation. Their table was a walnut board, finely polished by frequent rubbing; their earthen dishes and dairy pans shone with the nicest cleanliness; every thing presented the image of contented poverty, proud to have for to supply the real wants of nature. 'Tis our dear daughter, said the good old woman, who manages all our little affairs. At break of day before she leads her flocks to the hills and dales, when they are nipping about our hut the sweet grass, surcharged with the morning dew, she employs that time in putting all things in the neat order and manner you see them placed—— What! said the Countess interrump'd her Is the shepherdes indeed your daughter! Would to heaven she was, replied the good creature; she is the daughter of my heart, and I have a mother's fondness for her: but I am not so happy as to have brought such perfections into the world, nor are we worthy of such honor. Who is she then? Whence came she? What misfortunes have reduced her to so low a station? All that is a secret to us. Three years ago she came here in the habit of a villager, and offered to tend our sheep. She would have been welcome to that our little without taking upon her that painful task; so much the sweetness of her person and behaviour engages our hearts. We could not believe she was bred in a cottage. Our questions made her

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uneasy. We desisted from father enquiry as they seem'd to disturb her. As our knowledge of her good qualities encreas'd so did our respect; but the more we strove to shew her that respect the more she humbled herself before us. No never had a child for its parents a more tender regard, a more constant care. She cannot obey because it is impossible for us to command; but she dives into our hearts and prevents our wishes before we can almost form them. She is an angel descended from heaven to be the comfort of our age. What is she doing now in the sheepfold? asked the Countess. She milks the ewes and the she-goats, fosters the young kids and lambs, and gives them fresh litter. The cheese she makes is called delicious; no doubt for having been pressed with her neat hands. I carry it to the market and have not near enough to furnish all those who would wish to be customers. When the dear child is tending the sheep in the pasture, she employs herself in works of plaited straw, which are universally admired. I wish you were to see with what dexterity she weaves the plain osier twigs, and mats the tender flexible rushes. There is nothing let it appear ever so perfect but what she can improve upon. You see, madam, continued the old dame, in all about you is the image of an easy, contented life: it was she who procur'd it; it was she, this angelic creature, whose sole endeavour is to make us happy. But is she happy? said the Countess. She does all she can to make us believe so, said the old Pastor: but I have made my dame observe that she oftentimes returns from the pasture with a dejected look, her eyes still moist with tears; but as soon as she see us she affects a smile. 'Tis easy to perceive there is some gnawing grief that preys upon her heart; the cause of which we dare not ask. And then, said the old Man, what concern does she not give me when in spite of all our intreaties, in the severest weather, the dear creature will lead abroad her bleating care. A thousand times have I requested her, in the most earnest manner, to let me now and then relieve her; but my requests have never been complied with. She rises with

the sun, conducts the flock and does not return till it sets, often shivering with cold. How is it possible, she would say, with all the tenderness of a loving child, how is it possible that I should consent to let you leave your fire side, to be exposed at your age to the inclemency of the season, which I young as I am can scarce support. At the same time she comes loaded with faggots, which she gathers in the wood; and when she sees I am troubled at the fatigue she must undergo, Don't be uneasy, my dear mother, says she, exercise procures me warmth, and labour is fit for my age. In short Madam she is as good as she is beautiful. My husband and I never speak of her but with tears of affection. What if you were deprived of her? said the Countess. Why answered the old shepherd we should be deprived of all that is dear to us in the world; but if she is to be the happier for it, we should die, and our misfortune would be her comfort. Oh! may kind heaven heap blessings on her head. There are none so great, but what she deserves. I was in hopes her dear hands would have closed my eyes, for I love her much more than life. Adelaide's coming put an end to the conversation. One hand held a pan of milk, the other a basket of fruit; and after curtsying with a grace peculiar to herself, she set about the little household.

She had not been long in the kitchen, as it were, before she was not the least taken notice of. My dear child, said the Countess, you give yourself a deal of trouble. Not at all, madam; I endeavour to fulfil the intention of the best of people, whose servant I am, to treat you in the best manner with what their little can produce; but I am afraid, continued she whilst she spreading a coarse table cloth as white as now, that you will make but a sorry meal. The bread is brown, but very savory; the eggs are new laid, the milk fresh drawn, and the fruit just gathered, such as the season affords.

Diligence, attention and modest deportment, in every minute duty of hospitality, were conspicuous in this wonderful shepherdess. After the frugal repast Countess and her daughter retired to rest on the bed,

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though but of straw, which Adelaide had prepared for them. Is not our adventure surprising? Let us endeavour to unraval the mystery of this pretended shepherdess, invite her to accompany us and make her happy if we can. Early in the morning one of the Count's servants came to inform his master he might proceed on his journey as soon as his honour pleased, for the coach was securely repaired. It was therefor ordered up; but before they left these honest people, the Countess desired a moment's conversation with the person who stiled herself their servant.

Adelaide came to receive her commands. Without desiring to penetrate into the secret of your birth, or into whatever is the cause of your distress, I feel sensibly interested in all that concerns your welfare. 'Tis evident that your courage rises superior to your misfortunes, and that you conform your behaviour suitable to your present circumstances. 'Tis true, the charms and virtues which you possess render your condition now as it is respectable but it is not a condition designed for you. It is in my power, amiable unknown, to alter it, as the Count's intentions are quite agreeable to mine. I want a bosom friend; and what I have seen in you, I shall consider myself possessed of an inestimable treasure; if you consent to be my friend and companion. Drive from your mind the least shadow of dependence. You were not formed for servitude; and should my fond prejudice deceive me, I would rather lift you above your birth, than leave you below it. In short, I seek a real friend, one that I can confide in. Be not under any concern about these good people: I shall compensate to them for their loss; at least so far as to enable them to pass the remainder of their lives in peace and comfort: and from your hands they shall receive my constant bounty. The poor old people, who were present, fell upon their knees and kissed the hand of the Countess; then turning to Adelaide, they conjured her in the most pressing terms to accept the generous proposal of the Countess. We cannot at our period of life be far from the grave: and as it has been

your constant study to render our lives happy, so must our deaths leave you comfortless in this solitary place.— The he shepherdes embracing them, and mixing her tears with theirs, returned a thousand thanks to their noble guests, with a sweetness that increased her charms. I cannot said she accept of your favour; heaven has marked my destined lot; but I shall always, with the most grateful heart acknowledge your goodness; and the name of Ferosse will never be absent from my memory. Now the only thing I request of you is, to bury this adventure in eternal silence, and never to reveal the fate of an unknown person, who is determined to live and die in oblivion. The Count and Countess redoubled their solicitation, but all in vain—she was immoveable. The travellers parted from their charming shepherdes in retirement.

During their journey their conversation was engrossed with this strange adventure, which appeared to them to be like a romance. They arrived at Turin, their imaginations full of it; and you may be sure their requested silence was not observed. The charms and virtues of this unknown shepherdes where an inhaustible resource of reflection and conjecture. Young Ferosse, their only son, was often present at their conversation, and never let a single circumstance escape his memory. He was of that age when imagination is most sanguine, and the heart most susceptible of receiving tender impressions; but was of the character of those who retain the feelings of their sensibility within themselves; and which are so much more violently agitated when they burst from their confinement, having never been relaxed by dissipation. All the wonders he heard related of the valley of Savoy, raised in his soul the most passionate desire of serving her. The object which his imagination had formed is ever in his mind. He compares it to all he sees, and all he sees is lost in the comparison. The more his impatience increased, the more he endeavoured to disguise it. Turin became insupportable; the Valley where the inestimable jewel was hid, was the lodestone that attracted his heart.

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It is there he placed all happiness; but how to get at it? If his designs are found out, what difficulties to surmount! His parents will never consent to the journey he intends; it will not be looked upon as the mere effects of curiosity, but be deemed a youthful folly, that may have bad consequences; and the shepherdes may be alarmed at his presence, and shun his addresses; if it is discovered he loses her for ever. After three months struggle, he determined to quit all for her alone, and under the disguise of a shepherd, find her out in the sequestered Vale, and there remain till death if he could not prevail on her to leave it. He disappeared. His father and mother missed him with great consternation, and waited his return with the utmost impatience. Their apprehensions increased more and more; and his absence continuing the whole, family was plunged into desolation. Their fruitless search and inquiries completed their distress; untill at last those unfortunate parents are reduced to lament the loss of their darling son. Whilst the afflicted family of Fonrose was in this dejection, their son arrived in the Vale which has been described; and in the habit of a peasant presented himself to some of the neighbouring cottagers, and offered his services. His ambition is satisfied. He is accepted of, and a flock is committed to care. At first he did nothing but follow the sheep wherever they chose to feed, in hopes that chance would direct him to the same pastures where the beautiful shepherdes fed her flock. The unhappy at sometimes, thought he, may listen to the voice of comfort, It is an aversion to the world, and desire of a retired quiet life that detains her here. She will experience some tedious hours, when she will not be displeas'd to meet with a friendly intercourse, nor avoid a virtuous conversation. Should I prove so fortunate as to make mine agreeable, I shall have great hopes of something more. Should I gain her friendship, friendship will follow of course, and friendship in different eyes is nearly allied to love.

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Whilst he indulged himself with these pleasing reflections his eyes wandered on the beautiful scenes of the Valley; he heard at some distance the sound of that ravishing voice whose melody he had been so often told of, which raised an emotion in his breast, as great as if it had been an accident unexpected. She sung the following words

Sweet Solitude to which I fly,
Of every bliss bereft;

There Affliction's cup enjoy,
The only boon that's left

These melancholy complaints pierced Fonrose's tender heart. Ah! whence this grief that consumes her! what pleasure to afford her comfort! He durst not raise his hopes any higher as yet. It might perhaps alarm her, if he yielded to his impatient longing to behold her: it was sufficient for the first time to have heard the sweetness of her voice. Next morning Fonrose went to the pastures, and having observed the path the fair shepherdes directed her flock, he sat himself at the foot of the rock, which the day before had echoed with her moving sounds. Fonrose, with all the grace of outward form, possessed every talent, and each endowment that the nobility study to attain. He performed upon the hautboy equal to Befuzzi of whom he had learned; and was at that time the delight of the courts of Europe.

Adelaide, absorbed in melancholy, had not yet begun her melodious strains. The echoes were silent; when on sudden that silence was interrupted by the sweet notes of Fonrose's hautboy. An harmony so uncommon, filled her with amazement, mixed with some emotion. Her ears had never there been struck before, but with the thrill squeak and buzzing hum of the rustic bagpipe. Motionless, with deep attention, she cast her eyes around to find from whence proceeded such divine music. She perceived at some distance, a young shepherd sitting in the cavity of a rock, at the foot of which his sheep were feeding. She drew somewhat nearer, that she might hear him more distinctly. Behold, said she, the effects

of instinct? the ear alone has given this shepherd all the fineness of that charming art! What purity in the notes! Variety in the modulations! What fire and neatness in the execution! Who then shall say, that taste is not the gift of nature?

Adelaide, for the first time since her retirement, felt her grief in some measure suspended. Fonrose who saw her approach nearer and sit down under a willow, to listen more conveniently, had given her no room to think he had perceived her; he took the opportunity as soon as she retired, to calculate the pace of her flock, so as to meet with her without affectation, at the bottom of the hill, where the road that led to their different huts crossed each other. He gave her a look in an apparent careless manner, as if he was wholly taken up with the guidance of the sheep; but ah! what beauties were gazed on in that view. What eyes, what a mouth, what divine features; so moving in their languour, how ravishing would they appear if animated with love. Affliction had added paleness, and faded, in some degree, the blooming carnation of her cheeks. But of all charms, none struck with such admiration, as did her elegant shape and air. Her easy motion was as that of a young cedar, whose straight and pliant stem yielded to the soft impulse of the zephyrs. The charming language which love engraves in his heart takes up his thoughts, and fills his soul with irresistible passion. How faintly, said he, was she described. The lovely beauty is unknown to the world, whose admiration she deserves. She that would grace a throne, lives under the thatch of a cottage, employed in the low occupation of feeding sheep. In what poor garments does she appear. But she embellishes every thing, and nothing can demean her. What so delicate a frame made for so laborious a life. Homely food. Straw her bed. O heavens! She has the thorns for whom do you preserve the roses? Sleep put a stop to these flattering ideas; but did not banish from him her lovely image.

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Adelaide felt herself somewhat touched with Fonrose's youth and comeliness, nor could she help reflecting on the capricious turns of fortune. For what end, thought she, has nature endowed this young shepherd with such talents, and formed him with such graces? Alas! these gifts, happily useless in his station of life, might prove the source of misery in a higher situation. What is outward form? What is beauty? Wretched as I am, is it for me to fix their value? This reflection embittered the little rising pleasure she had indulged. She reproached herself with having yielded to it and resolved never to give way to it again.

Next day, Fonrose imagined that she affected to avoid his coming near her. He was cast down at the very thought. Does she suspect my disguise? Have I discovered myself? These uncertainties perplexed his mind. His hautboy was neglected. Adelaide was not far distant, but could have heard the sounds, had he played upon it. She could not guess the meaning of its silence, and began to sing in her old melodious strains.

Ye pretty birds whose pensive notes
My lamentation join,
Ah! what avails your warbling throats,
Can they sooth woes like mine?

All seem around to share my grief,
As if to assuage my pain;
But mine admits of no relief,
And comfort speaks in vain.

Fonrose, moved to his inmost soul with her complaining, so melodiously expressed, could not refrain from taking up his hautboy. She continued, and he accompanied her sweet voice.

Never was a unison more harmonious. Is this an enchantment? said Adelaide. Can I believe my senses? This is no mean shepherd; tis some supernatural being that I being listening to. Nature may give a bent; but great masters and constant practice alone can reach to such perfection. As she was thus musing, the Vale resounded with a rural or rather a divine symphony. Adelaide imagined she saw realized these prodiges, which poetry attributes to music, her brilliant sister. Astonished and confused she could not determine whether to approach or retire. Mean while the young shepherd was collecting his flock, to lead it back to the cottage. He is not conscious, said she, of the pleasure he communicates around; he is not the least vain of his perfection, he does not expect the praises I owe, which are so justly his due. Such are the sweets of music, it is the only talent that finds enjoyment in itself, all others must have witnesses or else partakers. Music was a gift from heaven, bestowed upon man in his state of innocence, it is the purest of all pleasure and the only one that I can yield to, I look upon this shepherd as an echo that comes to repeat my grace.

Fonrose, in his turn, affected to avoid her. Adelaide was concerned at it. Alas, said she, I give myself up too easily to the little comfort I felt: I am deprived of it for my punishment. One day as they met, as if by chance, Shepherd, do you lead your flocks to a great distance? These words uttered from her sweet lips, caused in Fonrose's heart such an emotion as almost deprived him of his voice. I cannot tell, replied he, with hesitation, it is not me who lead the sheep, it is the sheep that lead me: they are better acquainted than I am with the pastures. And I let them range wherever they please to go. From whence came you? said Adelaide. I was born on the other side of the Alps. Were you brought up to a shepherd's life? No doubt; since I am one I was destined for it. That is what I can scarce believe, replied she, gazing on him with fixed attention. Your talents, language, and air all convince to the contrary.

You are very good, answered Fonrose; does it become you to tax nature of bestowing her favours with a sparing hand on those of your condition— you whom she has formed more for a queen than a shepherdes? Adelaide blushed, and waved the discourse. The other day said she your hautboy accompanied my voice with such a masterly art, as must seem a prodigy in one brought up to feed sheep. Tis to your finging, replied Fonrose, that is so admirable in a shepherdes. What were you never instructed? Like you I have no other guide than my heart and my ear—You sung; I was moved; what my heart feels, my instrument expresses. I breathe it into my very soul. That is all my secret; nothing is more natural. This is incredible said Adelaide. I thought so too, replied he, whilst listening to your voice, and now am convinced of it: though sometimes nature and love will frolicksomely bestow their choicest favours on the meanest objects: to shew there is no condition, be it ever so low, but what they can ennoble.

Whilst they thus discoursed, advancing in the Valley, Fonrose, animated with a small ray of hope, began to make resound with rapturous notes what pleasure inspires. Ah cease cried Adelaide, spare me the image of a sentiment I never more shall taste. This solitude is consecrated to grief; these echoes are unused to repeat the accents of joy; all here join with my lamentation. I am not without woes, said the young shepherd, without woes, fetching a deep sigh, which was followed by a pause of silence. What has caused your afflictions; of what do you complain; is it of mankind; is it of fate; I cannot tell. All that I know is that I am not happy; pray inquire no further into my situation. Hear me, said Adelaide, heaven has made us acquainted to be a mutual support to each other's woes, mine are a burden; under which my heart sinks down with despondency whoever you be, though unhappy, you are compassionate. I believe you are worthy of the confidence I shall repose in you; but you must promise me that the confidence shall be reciprocal. Alas, said Fonrose, my woes

are of a nature perhaps never to be relieved. Meet me to morrow, said Adelaide, at the foot of this hill, under the spreading oak where you heard me moan. I will there reveal what will excite your commiseration. They parted. Fonrose passed the night with great inquietude his fate depended on what he was to hear, he dreaded the disclosure of a tender unhappy passion. If she loves another I am undone.

He set out to the rendezvous, and the fair shepherdes arrived soon after. The morn was overcast with clouds, as if nature had presaged their sorrowful conversation, They seated themselves under the oak; when after a profound sigh, Adelaide thus began.

THE

STORY OF HER WOES.

“BENEATH those stones you see there, almost covered with the creeping grass, lie the remains of the most faithful and virtuous man, whom love and imprudence brought to the grave. I was born in France, of a wealthy family, and of high distinction; too rich, to my misfortune. Count Oreston conceived for me the most passionate, tender love to which my heart corresponded with equal warmth. My parents objected to our union, and refused their consent. Hurried on by passion, I agreed to a private marriage sacred to virtuous souls, but disapproved by laws. Italy was then the seat of war. My husband was ordered to join the corps he was to command; and I went with him as far as Briançon. There my foolish fondness prevailed on him to remain with me three days, which he passed with extreme reluctance. I sacrifice, said he, my duty for you. But what had I not sacrificed for him.

“He afterwards set out, but with a foreboding that terrified me. I accompanied him to this Valley, where we took leave of each other, and I returned to Briancon. In a few days, a report of a battle was spread about. I was sure my dear Oreston was there. Wishing it for his honour, but fearing it for my love. When I received a letter from him [which afforded me great comfort] it informed, that such a day, such an hour I should find him in the Valley, under the same oak where I had bid him farewell that he should be alone; and desired to meet me unaccompanied; adding that he only lived for me. Alas, how inconsiderate I was. I perceived nothing in his letter but his impatience to see me and that impatience was to me very flattering. I was exact to the appointment. Mr. Oreston received me in the most tender manner. Ah, my dear Adelaide, said he, you would have it so. I have failed in my duty at the most important crisis of my life. What I feared has come to pass. The battle was given; my regiment charged, performed wonders of valour, and I was not at its head. I am dishonoured for ever; lost without risk; I have but one sacrifice to make you, which I am come to consummate. At these words I pressed my dear husband in my arms. I felt my blood congeal in my shivering heart. I fainted dead away. He took that opportunity to perpetrate his design and I was recalled to life by the report of the fatal pistol which had deprived him of existence. How can I paint the cruel situation in which I was left? it cannot be described. These tears that must for ever flow; the sighs which obstruct expression, convey but a faint idea of the distress I endure. I passed the night over the lifeless form in a stupor of grief. My first thoughts were, as soon as I was able to inter his dear remains, and my shame together. These hands dug his grave. I do not mean to move your compassionate heart; but the moment that was to separate me from his beloved remains, was a thousand times more dreadful than can be that which separates the body from the soul. Depressed with grief, deprived of food, my feeble hands

were two days employed in performing this last sad duty and I then formed a determined resolution to remain in this solitude till death unite us. Gnawing hunger preyed upon my vitals, and I thought myself criminal in preventing nature from supporting a life more insupportable to me than death. I changed my dress for this of a single shepherdes, and I look upon this valley as my only asylum. Ever since I have had no other comfort but that of weeping over this grave, which I hope will soon be my own.

"You see with what sincerity I open to you my inmost soul. Henceforth I may weep in your presence without restraint; a relief my overburdened heart stands much in need of. I expect you will put the same confidence in me, as that I have reposed in you. Do not imagine that I am imposed upon. I am certain that you are no more a shepherd than I am a shepherdes. You are young, perhaps in love; If I guess aright, our misfortunes flow from the same source. The similitude of our conditions will make us feel the more for each other. I look upon you as one whom heaven, moved with my afflictions, has sent in this solitude to save me from despair. Look upon me as a sincere friend, capable of giving, if not satisfactory advice, at least a firm example of true resignation to the divine will."

Ah, Madam, said Feronse overwhelmed with what he heard, whatever tender sensibility my heart is prone to feel, you are far from imagining with what deep concern the recital of your woes has affected me; the impression will remain as long as life. Should I have a secret reserved from you; from you who have a right, after what you have entrusted me with, to scrutinize my very soul? But as I told you before, and as my forboding heart apprehended, such is the nature of my woes, that I am doomed to conceal them in eternal silence. Be not offended charming friend, at a silence which is my greatest torment. Unhappy as you are, I am still more so, I will be your constant companion, endeavour to mitigate your sorrows, and help to ease you in an employ-

ment too laborious for your delicate frame. Let me be a partaker of your grief; and when weeping over the tomb, permit me to mix my tears with yours. Never will you have cause to repent having deposited your secret in an unfortunate heart, that feels all the value of its trust. Adelaide replied, with some confusion, confessed that she repented it already, and retired without further discourse. From her abrupt departure, she saw in Fonrose's countenance all the signs of an affected mind. Alas, said she, I have renewed his sufferings. O what sufferings must they be, that can give him grounds to suppose himself more wretched than me. No more music; no more conversation. They neither seemed to seek nor shun each other. Looks that spoke their minds was all their language. it was very expressive.

When he found her weeping over her husband's grave he beheld her with mute attention, full of jealousy, grief and pity, until her groans were echoed by his. A short time past in painful conflict, when Adelaide observed how the youth wasted away, faded like a blooming flower, just blasted by some malignant planet. The grief that consumed him gave her much concern, as not being entrusted with what occasioned his trouble, it was out of her power to administer him comfort. She had

conjectured that ~~her~~ ~~was~~ the cause of his distress. There is an observation, founded on nature, that when the soul admits of two passions, they will of course weaken each other. Adelaide's regret for the love of Oreston grew less in proportion as her commiseration encreased for the shepherd. She was certain that it proceeded from no motive but what the most innocent friendship suggested; nor did it ever occur to her not to indulge it; for seeing the youth plunged in so settled a gloom, she thought it incumbent upon her, after what she had professed for him not to leave him to himself. Unhappy youth, said she the first time they met after her resolve, you perish daily, and give me the fruitless concern of beholding you consume away, and not be able to afford you the least comfort. If the recital of my imprudent conduct has not altered

your opinion of me ; if the sincerest friendship is dear unto you ; in short if it will not render me more unhappy than before our acquaintance, tell me I conjure you, the cause of your afflictions. Was the secret more important than mine, you need not apprehend the disclosure of it from me. Oreston's death is an eternal barrier between the world and me. The secret of your woe, which I desired to be acquainted with' and for your sake, not for mine, would have been deposited in Oreston's tomb, with his faithful widow' and your sincere friend.

I hope, said Fonrose, it will be my fate to die first.— Ah, madam, let me end my deplorable life, without leaving you to reproach yourself with having shortened it. O heavens, she cried, what I ? Can I have contributed to increase the woes under which you struggle.— Ease my tortured heart, and tell me what I have said. What have I done to aggravate your afflictions ? Speak I say—you have revealed too much, to hide yourself any longer : I do insist upon knowing who you are. Since you will force from me so peremptorily the fatal secret, know that I am—that I am Fonrose the son of those you lately filled with admiration and respect. All that I have heard them relate of your virtue and charms in-
 fired me with the passion of love.

Adelaide, astonished at the strength of seeing you under this disguise. I have seen you, and my fate is fixed. My family are in the deepest distress. They conclude me lost for ever. Conscious of your attachment to this spot I have no other hope but to die adoring you. Forbear to offer me any useless advice ; My resolution is as immovable as your own. If by betraying my confidence, you divulge my secret, you will but disturb the last ebullitions of declining life, and will have to impute to yourself a blame which you shall never have cause to impute to me. Adelaide, astonished at what she had heard, endeavoured to sooth his despair. I will restore him, said she, to his afflicted parents, and save their only hope from death. Heaven has procured me this opportunity to acknowledge their goodness. Wherefore, far from

affecting an ill-timed rigour, she adopted every means the most insinuating friend could suggest, to calm and comfort him. Sweet angel, cried Fonrose, I see with what reluctance you are forced to render any one miserable; your heart is devoted to him who lies in that tomb, no power on earth can draw it thence: I see with what condescension your virtue attempts to veil your unhappiness. I feel your goodness in its full extent: and sinking under it I forgive you. 'Tis your duty never to love me, and mine is to adore you for ever. Adelaide, impatient to put in execution the design she had formed, arrived at the hut. Father, said she to the old Pastor, do you think yourself able to undertake a journey to Turin I want a person that I can rely on, to carry the Count and Countess Fonrose intelligence of what concerns their whole happiness. My zeal, replied the old man, to serve them, will give me strength equal to my inclination. Go then, continued she, you will find them at present lamenting the death of their only child. Tell them that he is living, and that it is their poor Adelaide that will restore him to their arms. But at the same time inform them that there is an indispenfible necessity of their coming in person to fetch him. He set out on the instant, and arrived late at the Count's house in Turin. He now sent in word that the old man of the Valley of Savoy was come to wait on them. Ah, cried the Countess, perhaps some misfortune has befallen our lovely shepherdes. Bid the old man enter, said the Count; who knows but Adelaide consents to come and live with us. It would be the only comfort that I can taste after the death of my son. The old man is introduced. He embraced their knees; they raise him to their arms. Weep not, said he the death of your son. I am come to inform you that he is alive. Our dear child has discovered him in the Valley, and dispatched me with the pleasing intelligence to Turin; but she says that yourselves, and none but you, can bring him home. Whilst he was speaking, the Countess fainted, overcome with surprize and joy. The Count calls for assistance

She revives. They embrace the old shepherd by turns and acquaints the whole house with the subject of their transport. How shall we shew our gratitude said the Countess. How can we requite a benefaction which restores us to life. They set out immediately on their journey, and arrived with the greatest expedition. Leaving their equipage at some distance they proceed to the hut through the vale which contained all that was dear unto them. Adelaide was tending the flock as usual. The old dame conducted them to the place where she was. How great their surprize when they beheld their beloved son with the shepherdes under the habit of a simple pastor. Ah, cruel child, cried Fonrose's mother, throwing her arms about his neck, what troubles have you not given us. What could induce you to leave your affectionate parents. What is your business here. To adore what you so much admired. Madam, said Adelaide, whilst Fonrose embraced his father's knees, you would not have been so long a prey to grief, had I discovered sooner your dear son. After the first effusions of nature were over, Fonrose relapsed into his former melancholy. Come, said the Countess let us go and repose ourselves in the cabin, and forget the woes this young madman has plunged us in. 'Tis very true, said Fonrose to his father, who led him by the hand, what else but the deprivation of reason could suspend the emotions of nature, and make me forget the most sacred duties, what but madness. 'Twas you innocently gave rise to it, and I am severely punished, for I am in love with the most amiable and accomplished person in the world. The Count replied you have seen but little of her; and know but little of this incomparable lady. Honour, virtue, and sensibility. She unites all that is great and good. I doat upon her to idolatry. I cannot be happy without her, and she never can be mine. Has she trusted you said the Count with secret of her birth. I have learned enough replied the son to assure you it is not inferior to mine. She has renounced a considerable fortune in the world, to remain in this solitude

Do you know what motive has induced her to it. I do but it is a secret which she alone can reveal. Is she married. No. she is a widow; but her heart is not the less engaged, nay it is rather bound with stronger chains. Madam, said the Countess to Adelaide, as they had entered the Cabin, you see how you turn the heads, as well as captivate all that bear the name of Frouse. Nothing could have justified my son's extravagant passion, but so virtuous, so loving an object. My wife's utmost wishes were to have you for a friend; my son cannot live without you for a wife; and it would be my greatest happiness to have you for a daughter. Oh consider how many that love you must be wretched, if you refuse your consent, Ah sir, replied Adelaide, your goodness perplexes me; lend me awhile your attention, and judge my situation. She then in presence of the old folks related her sad story, adding the name of the family, which the Count was well acquainted with; and she finished her narration by taking him to be a witness of the inviolable fidelity she owed her husband. At these words a deep consternation appeared in their looks. The Count's son bursting with grief, threw himself into a corner of the hut to give a loose to his sorrows. His father laid himself down by him, and casting his eyes on Adelaide, Madam, said he, behold the effects of your resolution. The Countess pressing her to her bosom, Ah, will you then said she, give us cause to lament a second time the death of our dear child. Why did you restore him to us. The good old people, penetrated with what they saw and heard their eyes fixed on Adelaide, waited for her determination. Heaven knows, said she, I would willingly give up my life to acknowledge all this unbounded generosity. I own it would be the height of misery, if I had to upbraid myself of having been the cause of yours. I leave the decision of our fate to your son; let me have a few minutes conversation with him. Then retiring by themselves, Frouse, said she, you know what sacred tie binds me here. If I could cease to lament the loss of him who loved and doted on me even beyond discretion,

I should be deservedly despised. Friendship, gratitude, and esteem, is all I have left to give ; and is that a compensation for love. The more you have conceived for me the more you have a right to expect a suitable return, and what return can I make. The impossibility of performing that duty, is the object that prevents my making myself liable to it ; nevertheless, I behold you all in a situation that would soften the most obdurate heart. Mine, alas, is but too sensible, I cannot bear the shocking thought of being the cause of your distress. How can I hear your generous, worthy parents reproach me with their loss. I will therefore forget for awhile what I am, and leave you to be the arbitrator of my destiny 'Tis yours to decide, and choose which is most agreeable to you, either to conquer your passion, and strive to forget me, or accept the hand of one whose heart is possessed of another object ; has nothing to bestow but Friendship and esteem, and what are they to satisfy a lovers, ardent expectations. 'Tis enough, replied he, tenderly such exalted friendship equals love. I may perhaps be jealous of the tears I shall see you shed for a former husband, but the cause of my jealousy will only make you more estimable in my eyes, and dearer to my soul. She is mine ! cried Fonrose, precipitating himself into his fond parent's arms. 'Tis to the respect and gratitude she has for you that I owe my happiness and — it is owing to a second being. Adelaide could not appeal from the sentence. Did she consent merely through pity and gratitude. I believe she did—she believed it herself, and I will not cease to admire her. Before she left the valley she would revisit the tomb, which she left with regret. O my dear Oreston, she cried it from the mansions of the dead thou canst have seen my struggles, and read the bottom of my heart, thy shade will not murmur at the sacrifice I make to comfort a virtuous family. My love remains with you. I will go make others happy without any hopes of being so myself. 'Twas with difficulty they got her away. She insisted on having a monument erected to the memory of her

Shepherdes of the Alps.

husband ; and that the cabin of the good old people, who were to accompany them to Turin, should be converted into a neat little country house, as plain as it would be solitary, where she might occasionally retire to lament the errors and misfortunes of her youth.

Time, and the assiduous care that Fonrose had in each respect for Adelaide, joined to the sweet pledges fruits of her second marriage, opened her heart to receive the impression of a new inclination. And she is quoted as a model of perfection, that claims admiration and respect even to her fidelity.

“ Great blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And tho' a late, a sure Reward succeeds.”



J. Kendrew, Collier-gate, York.