

The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom, Part II.

Tobias Smollett

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THE ADVENTURES OF FERDINAND COUNT FATHOM

by Tobias Smollett

COMPLETE IN TWO PARTS

PART II.

With the Author's Preface, and an Introduction by G. H. Maynadier, Ph.D.
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THE ADVENTURES OF FERDINAND COUNT FATHOM

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

OUR ADVENTURER IS MADE ACQUAINTED WITH A NEW SCENE OF LIFE.

Just as he entered these mansions of misery, his ears were invaded with a hoarse and dreadful voice, exclaiming, "You, Bess Beetle, score a couple of fresh eggs, a pennyworth of butter, and half a pint of mountain to the king; and stop credit till the bill is paid:--He is now debtor for fifteen shillings and sixpence, and d--n me if I trust him one farthing more, if he was the best king in Christendom. And, d'ye hear, send Ragged-head with five pounds of potatoes for Major Macleaver's supper, and let him have what drink he wants; the fat widow gentlewoman from Pimlico has promised to quit his score. Sir Mungo Barebones may have some hasty pudding and small beer, though I don't expect to see his coin, no more than to receive the eighteen pence I laid out for a pair of breeches to his backside--what then? he's a quiet sort of a body, and a great scholar, and it was a scandal to the place to see him going about in that naked condition. As for the mad Frenchman with the beard, if you give him so much as a cheese-paring, you b--ch, I'll send you back to the hole, among your old companions; an impudent dog! I'll teach him to draw his sword upon the governor of an English county jail. What! I suppose he thought he had to do with a French hang-tang-dang, rabbit him! he shall eat his white feather, before I give him credit for a morsel of bread."

Although our adventurer was very little disposed, at this juncture, to make observations foreign to his own affairs, he could not help taking notice of these extraordinary injunctions; especially those concerning the person who was entitled king, whom, however, he supposed to be some prisoner elected as the magistrate by the joint suffrage of his fellows. Having taken possession of his chamber, which he rented at five shillings a week, and being ill at ease in his own thoughts, he forthwith secured his door, undressed, and went to bed, in which, though it was none of the most elegant or inviting couches, he enjoyed profound repose after the accumulated fatigues and mortifications of the day. Next morning, after

breakfast, the keeper entered his apartment, and gave him to understand, that the gentlemen under his care, having heard of the Count's arrival, had deputed one of their number to wait upon him with the compliments of condolence suitable to the occasion, and invite him to become a member of their society. Our hero could not politely dispense with this instance of civility, and their ambassador being instantly introduced by the name of Captain Minikin, saluted him with great solemnity.

This was a person equally remarkable for his extraordinary figure and address; his age seemed to border upon forty, his stature amounted to five feet, his visage was long, meagre, and weather-beaten, and his aspect, though not quite rueful, exhibited a certain formality, which was the result of care and conscious importance. He was very little encumbered with flesh and blood; yet what body he had was well proportioned, his limbs were elegantly turned, and by his carriage he was well entitled to that compliment which we pay to any person when we say he has very much the air of a gentleman. There was also an evident singularity in his dress, which, though intended as an improvement, appeared to be an extravagant exaggeration of the mode, and at once evinced him an original to the discerning eyes of our adventurer, who received him with his usual complaisance, and made a very eloquent acknowledgment of the honour and satisfaction he received from the visit of the representative, and the hospitality of his constituents. The captain's peculiarities were not confined to his external appearance; for his voice resembled the sound of a bassoon, or the aggregate hum of a whole bee-hive, and his discourse was almost nothing else than a series of quotations from the English poets, interlarded with French phrases, which he retained for their significance, on the recommendation of his friends, being himself unacquainted with that or any other outlandish tongue.

Fathom, finding this gentleman of a very communicative disposition, thought he could not have a fairer opportunity of learning the history of his fellow-prisoners; and, turning the conversation on that subject, was not disappointed in his expectation. "I don't doubt, sir," said he, with the utmost solemnity of declamation, "but you look with horror upon every object that surrounds you in this uncomfortable place; but, nevertheless, here are some, who, as my friend Shakespeare has it, have seen better days, and have with holy bell been knolled to church; and sat at good men's feasts, and wiped their eyes of drops that sacred pity hath engendered. You must know, sir, that, exclusive of the canaille, or the profanum vulgus, as they are styled by Horace, there are several small communities in the jail, consisting of people who are attracted by the manners and dispositions of each other; for this place, sir, is quite a microcosm, and as the great world, so is this, a stage, and all the men and women merely players. For my own part, sir, I have always made it a maxim to associate with the best of company I can find. Not that I pretend to boast of my family or extraction; because, you know, as the poet says, *Vix ea nostra voco*. My father, 'tis true, was a man that piqued himself upon his pedigree, as well as upon his politesse and personal merit; for he had been a very old officer in the army, and I myself may say I was born with a spontoon in my hand. Sir, I have had the honour to serve his Majesty these twenty years, and have been bandied about in the course of duty through all the British plantations, and you see the recompense of all my service. But this is a disagreeable subject, and therefore I shall waive it; however, as Butler observes:

My only comfort is, that now
My dubbolt fortune is so low,

That either it must quickly end,
Or turn about again and mend.

"And now, to return from this digression, you will perhaps be surprised to hear that the head or chairman of our club is really a sovereign prince; no less, I'll assure you, than the celebrated Theodore king of Corsica, who lies in prison for a debt of a few hundred pounds. Heu! quantum mutatus ab illo. It is not my business to censure the conduct of my superiors; but I always speak my mind in a cavalier manner, and as, according to the Spectator, talking to a friend is no more than thinking aloud, *entre nous*, his Corsican majesty has been scurvily treated by a certain administration. Be that as it will, he is a personage of a very portly appearance, and is quite master of the *bienseance*. Besides, they will find it their interest to have recourse again to his alliance; and in that case some of us may expect to profit by his restoration. But few words are best.

"He that maintains the second rank in our assembly is one Major Macleaver, an Irish gentleman, who has served abroad; a soldier of fortune, sir, a man of unquestionable honour and courage, but a little overbearing, in consequence of his knowledge and experience. He is a person of good address,—to be sure, and quite free of the *mauvaise honte*, and he may have seen a good deal of service. But what then? other people may be as good as he, though they have not had such opportunities; if he speaks five or six languages, he does not pretend to any taste in the liberal arts, which are the criterion of an accomplished gentleman.

"The next is Sir Mungo Barebones, the representative of a very ancient family in the north; his affairs are very much deranged, but he is a gentleman of great probity and learning, and at present engaged in a very grand scheme, which, if he can bring it to bear, will render him famous to all posterity; no less than the conversion of the Jews and the Gentiles. The project, I own, looks chimerical to one who has not conversed with the author; but, in my opinion, he has clearly demonstrated, from an anagrammatical analysis of a certain Hebrew word, that his present Majesty, whom God preserve, is the person pointed at in Scripture as the temporal Messiah of the Jews; and, if he could once raise by subscription such a trifling sum as twelve hundred thousand pounds, I make no doubt but he would accomplish his aim, vast and romantic as it seems to be.

"Besides these, we have another messmate, who is a French chevalier, an odd sort of a man, a kind of Lazarillo de Tormes, a caricatura; he wears a long beard, pretends to be a great poet, and makes a d---ed fracas with his verses. The king has been obliged to exert his authority over him more than once, by ordering him into close confinement, for which he was so rash as to send his majesty a challenge; but he afterwards made his submission, and was again taken into favour. The truth is, I believe his brain is a little disordered, and, he being a stranger, we overlook his extravagancies.

"Sir, we shall think ourselves happy in your accession to our society. You will be under no sort of restraint; for, though we dine at one table, every individual calls and pays for his own mess. Our conversation, such as it is, will not, I hope, be disagreeable; and though we have not opportunities of breathing the pure Arcadian air, and cannot, 'under the shade of melancholy boughs, lose and neglect the creeping hours of time,' we may enjoy ourselves over a glass of punch or a dish of tea. Nor are we destitute of friends, who visit us in these shades of distress. The

major has a numerous acquaintance of both sexes; among others, a first cousin of good fortune, who, with her daughters, often cheer our solitude; she is a very sensible ladylike gentlewoman, and the young ladies have a certain degagee air, that plainly shows they have seen the best company. Besides, I will venture to recommend Mrs. Minikin as a woman of tolerable breeding and capacity, who, I hope, will not be found altogether deficient in the accomplishments of the sex. So that we find means to make little parties, in which the time glides away insensibly. Then I have a small collection of books which are at your service. You may amuse yourself with Shakespeare, or Milton, or Don Quixote, or any of our modern authors that are worth reading, such as the Adventures of Loveill, Lady Frail, George Edwards, Joe Thompson, Bampfylde Moore Carew, Young Scarron, and Miss Betsy Thoughtless; and if you have a taste for drawing, I can entertain you with a parcel of prints by the best masters."

A man of our hero's politeness could not help expressing himself in the warmest terms of gratitude for this courteous declaration. He thanked the captain in particular for his obliging offers, and begged he would be so good as to present his respects to the society, of which he longed to be a member. It was determined, therefore, that Minikin should return in an hour, when the Count would be dressed, in order to conduct him into the presence of his majesty; and he had already taken his leave for the present, when all of a sudden he came back, and taking hold of a waistcoat that lay upon a chair, "Sir," said he, "give me leave to look at that fringe; I think it is the most elegant knitting I ever saw. But pray, sir, are not these quite out of fashion? I thought plain silk, such as this that I wear, had been the mode, with the pockets very low." Before Fathom had time to make any sort of reply, he took notice of his hat and pumps; the first of which, he said, was too narrow in the brims, and the last an inch too low in the heels. Indeed, they formed a remarkable contrast with his own; for, exclusive of the fashion of the cock, which resembled the form of a Roman galley, the brim of his hat, if properly spread, would have projected a shade sufficient to shelter a whole file of musketeers from the heat of a summer's sun; and the heels of his shoes were so high as to raise his feet three inches at least from the surface of the earth.

Having made these observations, for the credit of his taste, he retired, and returning at the time appointed, accompanied Ferdinand to the apartment of the king, at the doors of which their ears were invaded with a strange sound, being that of a human voice imitating the noise of a drum. The captain, hearing this alarm, made a full stop, and, giving the Count to understand that his majesty was busy, begged he would not take it amiss, if the introduction should be delayed for a few moments. Fathom, curious to know the meaning of what he had heard, applied to his guide for information, and learned that the king and the major, whom he had nominated to the post of his general-in-chief, were employed in landing troops upon the Genoese territory; that is, that they were settling beforehand the manner of their disembarkation.

He then, by the direction of his conductor, reconnoitred them through the keyhole, and perceived the sovereign and his minister sitting on opposite sides of a deal board table, covered with a large chart or map, upon which he saw a great number of mussel and oyster shells ranged in a certain order, and, at a little distance, several regular squares and columns made of cards cut in small pieces. The prince himself, whose eyes were reinforced by spectacles, surveyed this armament with great attention, while the general put the whole in action, and conducted their

motions by beat of drum. The mussel-shells, according to Minikin's explanation, represented the transports, the oyster-shells were considered as the men-of-war that covered the troops in landing, and the pieces of card exhibited the different bodies into which the army was formed upon its disembarkation.

As an affair of such consequence could not be transacted without opposition, they had provided divers ambuscades, consisting of the enemy, whom they represented by grey peas; and accordingly General Macleaver, perceiving the said grey peas marching along shore to attack his forces before they could be drawn up in battalia, thus addressed himself to the oyster-shells, in an audible voice:--"You men-of-war, don't you see the front of the enemy advancing, and the rest of the detachment following out of sight? Arrah! the devil burn you, why don't you come ashore and open your batteries?" So saying, he pushed the shells towards the breach, performed the cannonading with his voice, the grey peas were soon put in confusion, the general was beat, the cards marched forwards in order of battle, and the enemy having retreated with great precipitation, they took possession of their ground without farther difficulty.

CHAPTER FORTY

HE CONTEMPLATES MAJESTY AND ITS SATELLITES IN ECLIPSE.

This expedition being happily finished, General Macleaver put the whole army, navy, transports, and scene of action into a canvas bag, the prince unsaddled his nose, and Captain Minikin being admitted, our hero was introduced in form. Very gracious was the reception he met with from his majesty, who, with a most princely demeanour, welcomed him to court, and even seated him on his right hand, in token of particular regard. True it is, this presence-chamber was not so superb, nor the appearance of the king so magnificent, as to render such an honour intoxicating to any person of our hero's coolness and discretion. In lieu of tapestry, the apartment was hung with halfpenny ballads, a truckle-bed without curtains supplied the place of a canopy, and instead of a crown his majesty wore a woollen night-cap. Yet, in spite of these disadvantages, there was an air of dignity in his deportment, and a nice physiognomist would have perceived something majestic in the features of his countenance.

He was certainly a personage of very prepossessing mien; his manners were engaging, his conversation agreeable, and any man whose heart was subject to the meltings of humanity would have deplored his distress, and looked upon him as a most pathetic instance of that miserable reverse to which all human grandeur is exposed. His fall was even greater than that of Belisarius, who, after having obtained many glorious victories over the enemies of his country, is said to have been reduced to such extremity of indigence, that, in his old age, when he was deprived of his eyesight, he sat upon the highway like a common mendicant, imploring the charity of passengers in the piteous exclamation of *Date obolum Belisario*; that is, "Spare a farthing to your poor old soldier Belisarius." I say, this general's disgrace was not so remarkable as that of Theodore, because he was the servant of Justinian, consequently his fortune depended upon the nod of that emperor; whereas the other actually possessed the throne of sovereignty by the best of all titles, namely, the unanimous election of the people over whom he reigned; and attracted the eyes of all Europe, by

the efforts he made in breaking the bands of oppression, and vindicating that liberty which is the birthright of man.

The English of former days, alike renowned for generosity and valour, treated those hostile princes, whose fate it was to wear their chains, with such delicacy of benevolence, as even dispelled the horrors of captivity; but their posterity of this refined age feel no compunction at seeing an unfortunate monarch, their former friend, ally, and partisan, languish amidst the miseries of a loathsome jail, for a paltry debt contracted in their own service. But, moralising apart, our hero had not long conversed with this extraordinary debtor, who in his present condition assumed no other title than that of Baron, than he perceived in him a spirit of Quixotism, which all his experience, together with the vicissitudes of his fortune, had not been able to overcome. Not that his ideas soared to such a pitch of extravagant hope as that which took possession of his messmates, who frequently quarrelled one with another about the degrees of favour to which they should be entitled after the king's restoration; but he firmly believed that affairs would speedily take such a turn in Italy, as would point out to the English court the expediency of employing him again; and his persuasion seemed to support him against every species of poverty and mortification.

While they were busy in trimming the balance of power on the other side of the Alps, their deliberations were interrupted by the arrival of a scullion, who came to receive their orders touching the bill of fare for dinner, and his majesty found much more difficulty in settling this important concern, than in compromising all the differences between the Emperor and the Queen of Spain. At length, however, General Macleaver undertook the office of purveyor for his prince; Captain Minikin insisted upon treating the Count; and in a little time the table was covered with a cloth, which, for the sake of my delicate readers, I will not attempt to describe.

At this period they were joined by Sir Mungo Barebones, who, having found means to purchase a couple of mutton chops, had cooked a mess of broth, which he now brought in a saucepan to the general rendezvous. This was the most remarkable object which had hitherto presented itself to the eyes of Fathom. Being naturally of a meagre habit, he was, by indigence and hard study, wore almost to the bone, and so bended towards the earth, that in walking his body described at least 150 degrees of a circle. The want of stockings and shoes he supplied with a jockey straight boot and an half jack. His thighs and middle were cased in a monstrous pair of brown trunk breeches, which the keeper bought for his use from the executor of a Dutch seaman who had lately died in the jail. His shirt retained no signs of its original colour, his body was shrouded in an old greasy tattered plaid nightgown; a blue and white handkerchief surrounded his head, and his looks betokened that immense load of care which he had voluntarily incurred for the eternal salvation of sinners. Yet this figure, uncouth as it was, made his compliments to our adventurer in terms of the most elegant address, and, in the course of conversation, disclosed a great fund of valuable knowledge. He had appeared in the great world, and borne divers offices of dignity and trust with universal applause. His courage was undoubted, his morals were unimpeached, and his person held in great veneration and esteem; when his evil genius engaged him in the study of Hebrew, and the mysteries of the Jewish religion, which fairly disordered his brain, and rendered him incapable of managing his temporal affairs. When he ought to have been employed in the functions of his post, he was always wrapt in visionary conferences with Moses on the Mount; rather than regulate the economy of his

household, he chose to exert his endeavours in settling the precise meaning of the word Elohim; and having discovered that now the period was come, when the Jews and Gentiles would be converted, he postponed every other consideration, in order to facilitate that great and glorious event.

By this time Ferdinand had seen every member of the club, except the French chevalier, who seemed to be quite neglected by the society; for his name was not once mentioned during this communication, and they sat down to dinner, without asking whether he was dead or alive. The king regaled himself with a plate of ox-cheek; the major, who complained that his appetite had forsaken him, amused himself with some forty hard eggs, malaxed with salt butter; the knight indulged upon his soup and bouilli, and the captain entertained our adventurer with a neck of veal roasted with potatoes; but before Fathom could make use of his knife and fork, he was summoned to the door, where he found the chevalier in great agitation, his eyes sparkling like coals of fire.

Our hero was not a little surprised at this apparition, who, having asked pardon for the freedom he had used, observed, that, understanding the Count was a foreigner, he could not dispense with appealing to him concerning an outrage he had suffered from the keeper, who, without any regard to his rank or misfortunes, had been base enough to refuse him credit for a few necessaries, until he could have a remittance from his steward in France; he therefore conjured Count Fathom, as a stranger and nobleman like himself, to be the messenger of defiance, which he resolved to send to that brutal jailor, that, for the future, he might learn to make proper distinctions in the exercise of his function.

Fathom, who had no inclination to offend this choleric Frenchman, assured him that he might depend upon his friendship; and, in the meantime, prevailed upon him to accept of a small supply, in consequence of which he procured a pound of sausages, and joined the rest of the company without delay; making a very suitable addition to such an assemblage of rarities. Though his age did not exceed thirty years, his beard, which was of a brindled hue, flowed down, like Aaron's, to his middle. Upon his legs he wore red stockings rolled up over the joint of the knee, his breeches were of blue drab, with vellum button-holes, and garters of gold lace, his waistcoat of scarlet, his coat of rusty black cloth, his hair, twisted into a ramilie, hung down to his rump, of the colour of jet, and his hat was adorned with a white feather.

This original had formed many ingenious schemes to increase the glory and grandeur of France, but was discouraged by Cardinal Fleury, who, in all appearance, jealous of his great talents, not only rejected his projects, but even sent him to prison, on pretence of being offended at his impertinence. Perceiving that, like the prophet, he had no honour in his own country, he no sooner obtained his release, than he retired to England, where he was prompted by his philanthropy to propose an expedient to our ministry, which would have saved a vast effusion of blood and treasure; this was an agreement between the Queen of Hungary and the late Emperor, to decide their pretensions by a single combat; in which case he offered himself as the Bavarian champion; but in this endeavour he also proved unsuccessful. Then turning his attention to the delights of poetry, he became so enamoured of the muse, that he neglected every other consideration, and she as usual gradually conducted him to the author's never-failing goal--a place of rest appointed for all those sinners whom the profane love of poesy hath led astray.

CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

ONE QUARREL IS COMPROMISED, AND ANOTHER DECIDED BY UNUSUAL ARMS.

Among other topics of conversation that were discussed at this genial meeting, Sir Mungo's scheme was brought upon the carpet by his majesty, who was graciously pleased to ask how his subscription filled? To this interrogation the knight answered, that he met with great opposition from a spirit of levity and self-conceit, which seemed to prevail in this generation, but that no difficulties should discourage him from persevering in his duty; and he trusted in God, that, in a very little time, he should be able to confute and overthrow the false philosophy of the moderns, and to restore the writings of Moses to that pre-eminence and veneration which is due to an inspired author. He spoke of the immortal Newton with infinite contempt, and undertook to extract from the Pentateuch a system of chronology which would ascertain the progress of time since the fourth day of the creation to the present hour, with such exactness, that not one vibration of a pendulum should be lost; nay, he affirmed that the perfection of all arts and sciences might be attained by studying these secret memoirs, and that he himself did not despair of learning from them the art of transmuting baser metals into gold.

The chevalier, though he did not pretend to contradict these assertions, was too much attached to his own religion to acquiesce in the knight's project of converting the Jews and the Gentiles to the Protestant heresy, which, he said, God Almighty would never suffer to triumph over the interests of his own Holy Catholic Church. This objection produced abundance of altercation between two very unequal disputants; and the Frenchman, finding himself puzzled by the learning of his antagonist, had recourse to the argumentum ad hominem, by laying his hand upon his sword, and declaring that he was ready to lose the last drop of his blood in opposition to such a damnable scheme.

Sir Mungo, though in all appearance reduced to the last stage of animal existence, no sooner heard this epithet applied to his plan, than his eyes gleamed like lightning, he sprung from his seat with the agility of a grasshopper, and, darting himself out at the door like an arrow from a bow, reappeared in a moment with a long rusty weapon, which might have been shown among a collection of rarities as the sword of Guy Earl of Warwick. This implement he brandished over the chevalier's head with the dexterity of an old prize-fighter, exclaiming, in the French language, "Thou art a profane wretch marked out for the vengeance of Heaven, whose unworthy minister I am, and here thou shalt fall by the sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

The chevalier, unterrified by this dreadful salutation, desired he would accompany him to a more convenient place; and the world might have been deprived of one or both these knights-errant, had not General Macleaver, at the desire of his majesty, interposed, and found means to bring matters to an accommodation.

In the afternoon the society was visited by the major's cousin and her daughters, who no sooner appeared than they were recognised by our adventurer, and his acquaintance with them renewed in such a manner as alarmed the delicacy of Captain Minikin, who in the evening repaired to

the Count's apartment, and with a formal physiognomy, accosted him in these words: "Sir, I beg pardon for this intrusion, but I come to consult you about an affair in which my honour is concerned; and a soldier without honour, you know, is no better than a body without a soul. I have always admired that speech of Hotspur in the first part of Henry the Fourth:

By Heaven, methinks it were an easy leap,
To pluck bright honour from the pale-fac'd moon;
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,
And pluck up drowned honour by the locks--

"There is a boldness and ease in the expression, and the images are very picturesque. But, without any further preamble, pray, sir, give me leave to ask how long you have been acquainted with those ladies who drank tea with us this afternoon. You'll forgive the question, sir, when I tell you that Major Macleaver introduced Mrs. Minikin to them as to ladies of character, and, I don't know how, sir, I have a sort of presentiment that my wife has been imposed upon. Perhaps I may be mistaken, and God grant I may. But there was a *je ne sais quoi* in their behaviour to-day, which begins to alarm my suspicion. Sir, I have nothing but my reputation to depend upon, and I hope you will excuse me, when I earnestly beg to know what rank they maintain in life."

Fathom, without minding the consequence, told him, with a simper, that he knew them to be very good-natured ladies, who devoted themselves to the happiness of mankind. This explanation had no sooner escaped from his lips, than the captain's face began to glow with indignation, his eyes seemed bursting from their spheres, he swelled to twice his natural dimensions, and, raising himself on his tiptoes, pronounced, in a strain that emulated thunder, "Blood! sir, you seem to make very light of the matter, but it is no joke to me, I'll assure you, and Macleaver shall see that I am not to be affronted with impunity. Sir, I shall take it as a singular favour if you will be the bearer of a billet to him, which I shall write in three words; nay, sir, you must give me leave to insist upon it, as you are the only gentleman of our mess whom I can intrust with an affair of this nature."

Fathom, rather than run the risk of disobliging such a punctilious warrior, after having in vain attempted to dissuade him from his purpose, undertook to carry the challenge, which was immediately penned in these words:

"SIR,--You have violated my honour in imposing upon Mrs. Minikin your pretended cousins as ladies of virtue and reputation. I therefore demand such satisfaction as a soldier ought to receive, and expect you will adjust with my friend Count Fathom the terms upon which you shall be met by the much injured
GOLIAH MINIKIN."

This morceau being sealed and directed, was forthwith carried by our adventurer to the lodgings of the major, who had by this time retired to rest, but hearing the Count's voice, he got up and opened the door in *cuerpo*, to the astonishment of Ferdinand, who had never before seen such an Herculean figure. He made an apology for receiving the Count in his birthday suit, to which he said he was reduced by the heat of his constitution, though he might have assigned a more adequate cause, by owning that his shirt was in the hands of his washerwoman; then shrouding himself in a blanket, desired to know what had procured him the honour of

such an extraordinary visit. He read the letter with great composure, like a man accustomed to such intercourse; then addressing himself to the bearer, "I will be after diverting the gentleman," said he, "in any manner he shall think proper; but, by Jesus, this is no place for such amusements, because, as you well know, my dear Count, if both should be killed by the chance of war, neither of us will be able to escape, and after the breath is out of his body, he will make but a sorry excuse to his family and friends. But that is no concern of mine, and therefore I am ready to please him in his own way."

Fathom approved of his remarks, which he reinforced with sundry considerations, to the same purpose, and begged the assistance of the major's advice, in finding some expedient to terminate the affair without bloodshed, that no troublesome consequences might ensue either to him or to his antagonist, who, in spite of this overstraining formality, seemed to be a person of worth and good-nature. "With all my heart," said the generous Hibernian, "I have a great regard for the little man, and my own character is not to seek at this time of day. I have served a long apprenticeship to fighting, as this same carcase can testify, and if he compels me to run him through the body, by my shoul, I shall do it in a friendly manner."

So saying, he threw aside the blanket, and displayed scars and seams innumerable upon his body, which appeared like an old patched leathern doublet. "I remember," proceeded this champion, "when I was a slave at Algiers, Murphy Macmorris and I happened to have some difference in the bagnio, upon which he bade me turn out. 'Arra, for what?' said I; 'here are no weapons that a gentleman can use, and you would not be such a negro as to box like an English carman.' After he had puzzled himself for some time, he proposed that we should retire into a corner, and funk one another with brimstone, till one of us should give out. Accordingly we crammed half a dozen tobacco pipes with sulphur, and, setting foot to foot, began to smoke, and kept a constant fire, until Macmorris dropped down; then I threw away my pipe, and taking poor Murphy in my arms, 'What, are you dead?' said I; 'if you are dead, speak.' 'No, by Jesus!' cried he, 'I an't dead, but I'm speechless.' So he owned I had obtained the victory, and we were as good friends as ever. Now, if Mr. Minikin thinks proper to put the affair upon the same issue, I will smoke a pipe of brimstone with him to-morrow morning, and if I cry out first, I will be after asking pardon for this supposed affront."

Fathom could not help laughing at the proposal, to which, however, he objected on account of Minikin's delicate constitution, which might suffer more detriment from breathing in an atmosphere of sulphur than from the discharge of a pistol, or the thrust of a small sword. He therefore suggested another expedient in lieu of the sulphur, namely, the gum called assafatida, which, though abundantly nauseous, could have no effect upon the infirm texture of the lieutenant's lungs. This hint being relished by the major, our adventurer returned to his principal, and having repeated the other's arguments against the use of mortal instruments, described the succedaneum which he had concerted with Macleaver. The captain at first believed the scheme was calculated for subjecting him to the ridicule of his fellow-prisoners, and began to storm with great violence; but, by the assurances and address of Fathom, he was at length reconciled to the plan, and preparations were made on each side for this duel, which was actually smoked next day, about noon, in a small closet, detached from the challenger's apartment, and within hearing of his majesty, and all his court, assembled as witnesses and umpires of the contest.

The combatants, being locked up together, began to ply their engines with great fury, and it was not long before Captain Minikin perceived he had a manifest advantage over his antagonist. For his organs were familiarised to the effluvia of this drug, which he had frequently used in the course of an hypochondriac disorder; whereas Macleaver, who was a stranger to all sorts of medicine, by his wry faces and attempts to puke, expressed the utmost abhorrence of the smell that invaded his nostrils.

Nevertheless, resolved to hold out to the last extremity, he continued in action until the closet was filled with such an intolerable vapour as discomposed the whole economy of his entrails, and compelled him to disgorge his breakfast in the face of his opponent, whose nerves were so disconcerted by this disagreeable and unforeseen discharge, that he fell back into his chair in a swoon, and the major bellowed aloud for assistance. The door being opened, he ran directly to the window, to inhale the fresh air, while the captain, recovering from his fit, complained of Macleaver's unfair proceeding, and demanded justice of the arbitrators, who decided in his favour; and the major being prevailed upon to ask pardon for having introduced Mrs. Minikin to women of rotten reputation, the parties were reconciled to each other, and peace and concord re-established in the mess.

Fathom acquired universal applause for his discreet and humane conduct upon this occasion; and that same afternoon had an opportunity of seeing the lady in whose cause he had exerted himself. He was presented to her as the husband's particular friend, and when she understood how much she was indebted to his care and concern for the captain's safety, she treated him with uncommon marks of distinction; and he found her a genteel, well-bred woman, not without a good deal of personal charms, and a well-cultivated understanding.

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

AN UNEXPECTED RENCONTRE, AND A HAPPY REVOLUTION IN THE AFFAIRS OF OUR ADVENTURER.

As she did not lodge within the precincts of this garrison, she was one day, after tea, conducted to the gate by the captain and the Count, and just as they approached the turnkey's lodge, our hero's eyes were struck with the apparition of his old companion Renaldo, son of his benefactor and patron, the Count de Melvil. What were the emotions of his soul, when he saw that young gentleman enter the prison, and advance towards him, after having spoke to the jailor! He never doubted that, being informed of his confinement, he was come to upbraid him with his villany and ingratitude, and he in vain endeavoured to recollect himself from that terror and guilty confusion which his appearance had inspired; when the stranger, lifting up his eyes, started back with signs of extreme amazement, and, after a considerable pause, exclaimed, "Heaven and earth! Sure my eyes do not deceive me! is not your name Fathom? It is, it must be my old friend and companion, the loss of whom I have so long regretted!" With these words he ran towards our adventurer, and, while he clasped him in his arms with all the eagerness of affection, protested that this was one of the happiest days he had ever seen.

Ferdinand, who, from this salutation, concluded himself still in possession of Renaldo's good opinion, was not deficient in expressions of

tenderness and joy; he returned his embraces with equal ardour, the tears trickled down his cheeks, and that perturbation which proceeded from conscious perfidy and fear, was mistaken by the unsuspecting Hungarian for the sheer effects of love, gratitude, and surprise. These first transports having subsided, they adjourned to the lodgings of Fathom, who soon recollected his spirits and invention so well as to amuse the other with a feigned tale of his having been taken by the French, sent prisoner into Champagne, from whence he had written many letters to Count Melvil and his son, of whom he could hear no tidings; of his having contracted an intimacy with a young nobleman of France, who died in the flower of his age, after having, in token of his friendship, bequeathed to him a considerable legacy; by this he had been enabled to visit the land of his forefathers in the character of a gentleman, which he had supported with some figure, until he was betrayed into a misfortune that exhausted his funds, and drove him to the spot where he was now found. And he solemnly declared, that, far from forgetting the obligation he owed to Count Melvil, or renouncing the friendship of Renaldo, he had actually resolved to set out for Germany on his return to the house of his patron in the beginning of the week posterior to that in which he had been arrested.

Young Melvil, whose own heart had never known the instigations of fraud, implicitly believed the story and protestations of Fathom; and though he would not justify that part of his conduct by which the term of his good fortune was abridged, he could not help excusing an indiscretion into which he had been hurried by the precipitancy of youth, and the allurements of an artful woman. Nay, with the utmost warmth of friendship, he undertook to wait upon Trapwell, and endeavour to soften him into some reasonable terms of composition.

Fathom seemed to be quite overwhelmed with a deep sense of all this goodness, and affected the most eager impatience to know the particulars of Renaldo's fate, since their unhappy separation, more especially his errand to this uncomfortable place, which he should henceforth revere as the providential scene of their reunion. Nor did he forget to inquire, in the most affectionate and dutiful manner, about the situation of his noble parents and amiable sister.

At mention of these names, Renaldo, fetching a deep sigh, "Alas! my friend," said he, "the Count is no more; and, what aggravates my affliction for the loss of such a father, it was my misfortune to be under his displeasure at the time of his death. Had I been present on that melancholy occasion, so well I knew his generosity and paternal tenderness, that, sure I am, he would in his last moments have forgiven an only son, whose life had been a continual effort to render himself worthy of such a parent, and whose crime was no other than an honourable passion for the most meritorious of her sex. But I was removed at a fatal distance from him, and doubtless my conduct must have been invidiously misrepresented. Be that as it will, my mother has again given her hand in wedlock to Count Trebasi; by whom I have the mortification to be informed that I am totally excluded from my father's succession; and I learn from other quarters, that my sister is barbarously treated by this inhuman father-in-law. Grant, Heaven, I may soon have an opportunity of expostulating with the tyrant upon that subject."

So saying, his cheeks glowed, and his eyes lightened with resentment. Then he thus proceeded: "My coming hither to-day was with a view to visit a poor female relation, from whom I yesterday received a letter, describing her most deplorable situation, and soliciting my assistance;

but the turnkey affirms that there is no such person in the jail, and I was on my way to consult the keeper, when I was agreeably surprised with the sight of my dear Fathom."

Our adventurer having wiped from his eyes the tears which were produced by the news of his worthy patron's death, desired to know the name of that afflicted prisoner, in whose behalf he interested himself so much, and Renaldo produced the letter, subscribed, "Your unfortunate cousin, Helen Melvil." This pretended relation, after having explained the degree of consanguinity which she and the Count stood in to each other, and occasionally mentioned some anecdotes of the family in Scotland, gave him to understand that she had married a merchant of London, who, by repeated losses in trade, had been reduced to indigence, and afterwards confined to prison, where he then lay a breathless corpse, having left her in the utmost extremity of wretchedness and want, with two young children in the smallpox, and an incurable cancer in one of her own breasts. Indeed, the picture she drew was so moving, and her expressions so sensibly pathetic, that no person, whose heart was not altogether callous, could peruse it without emotion. Renaldo had sent two guineas by the messenger, whom she had represented as a trusty servant, whose fidelity had been proof against all the distress of her mistress; and he was now arrived in order to reinforce his bounty.

Fathom, in the consciousness of his own practices, immediately comprehended the scheme of this letter, and confidently assured him that no such person resided in the prison or in any other place. And when his friend applied for information to the keeper, these assurances were confirmed; and that stern janitor told him he had been imposed upon by a stale trick, which was often practised upon strangers by a set of sharpers, who make it their business to pick up hints of intelligence relating to private families, upon which they build such superstructures of fraud and imposition.

However piqued the young Hungarian might be to find himself duped in this manner, he rejoiced at the occasion which had thrown Fathom in his way; and, after having made him a tender of his purse, took his leave, on purpose to wait upon Trapwell, who was not quite so untractable as an enraged cuckold commonly is; for, by this time, he had accomplished the best part of his aim, which was to be divorced from his wife, and was fully convinced that the defendant was no more than a needy adventurer, who, in all probability, would be released by an act of parliament for the benefit of insolvent debtors; in which case, he, the plaintiff, would reap no solid advantage from his imprisonment.

He, therefore, listened to the remonstrances of the mediator, and, after much canvassing, agreed to discharge the defendant, in consideration of two hundred pounds, which were immediately paid by Count Melvil, who, by this deduction, was reduced to somewhat less than thirty.

Nevertheless, he cheerfully begged himself in behalf of his friend, for whose release he forthwith obtained an order; and, next day, our adventurer, having bid a formal adieu to his fellows in distress, and, in particular, to his majesty, for whose restoration his prayers were preferred, he quitted the jail, and accompanied his deliverer, with all the outward marks of unutterable gratitude and esteem.

Surely, if his heart had been made of penetrable stuff, it would have been touched by the circumstances of this redemption; but had not his soul been invincible to all such attacks, these memoirs would possibly

never have seen the light.

When they arrived at Renaldo's lodgings, that young gentleman honoured him with other proofs of confidence and friendship, by giving him a circumstantial detail of all the adventures in which he had been engaged after Fathom's desertion from the imperial camp. He told him, that, immediately after the war was finished, his father had pressed him to a very advantageous match, with which he would have complied, though his heart was not at all concerned, had not he been inflamed with the desire of seeing the world before he could take any step towards a settlement for life. That he had signified his sentiments on this head to the Count, who opposed them with unusual obstinacy, as productive of a delay which might be fatal to his proposal; for which reason he had retired incognito from his family, and travelled through sundry states and countries, in a disguise by which he eluded the inquiries of his parents.

That, in the course of these peregrinations, he was captivated by the irresistible charms of a young lady, on whose heart he had the good fortune to make a tender impression. That their mutual love had subjected both to many dangers and difficulties, during which they suffered a cruel separation; after the torments of which, he had happily found her in England, where she now lived entirely cut off from her native country and connexions, and destitute of every other resource but his honour, love, and protection. And, finally, that he was determined to combat his own desires, how violent soever they might be, until he should have made some suitable provision for the consequences of a stricter union with the mistress of his soul, that he might not, by a precipitate marriage, ruin the person whom he adored.

This end he proposed to attain, by an application to the court of Vienna, which he did not doubt would have some regard to his own service, and that of his father; and thither he resolved to repair, with the first opportunity, now that he had found a friend with whom he could intrust the inestimable jewel of his heart.

He likewise gave our hero to understand, that he had been eight months in England, during which he had lived in a frugal manner, that he might not unnecessarily exhaust the money he had been able to raise upon his own credit; that, hitherto, he had been obliged to defer his departure for Germany on account of his attendance upon the mother of his mistress, who was lately dead of sorrow and chagrin; and that, since he resided in London, he had often heard of the celebrated Count Fathom, though he never imagined that his friend Ferdinand could be distinguished by that appellation.

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

FATHOM JUSTIFIES THE PROVERB, "WHAT'S BRED IN THE BONE WILL NEVER COME OUT OF THE FLESH."

Some circumstances of this conversation made a deep impression upon the mind of our adventurer, who nevertheless concealed his emotions from the knowledge of his friend, and was next day introduced to that hidden treasure of which Renaldo had spoken with such rapture and adoration. It was not without reason he had expatiated upon the personal attractions of

this young lady, whom, for the present, we shall call Monimia, a name that implies her orphan situation. When she entered the room, even Fathom, whose eyes had been sated with beauty, was struck dumb with admiration, and could scarce recollect himself so far as to perform the ceremony of his introduction.

She seemed to be about the age of eighteen. Her stature was tall; her motion graceful. A knot of artificial flowers restrained the luxuriancy of her fine black hair, that flowed in shining ringlets adown her snowy neck. The contour of her face was oval; her forehead remarkably high; her complexion clean and delicate, though not florid; and her eyes were so piercing, as to strike the soul of every beholder. Yet, upon this occasion, one half of their vivacity was eclipsed by a languishing air of melancholy concern; which, while it in a manner sheathed the edge of her beauty, added a most engaging sweetness to her looks. In short, every feature was elegantly perfect; and the harmony of the whole ravishing and delightful.

It was easy to perceive the mutual sentiments of the two lovers at meeting, by the pleasure that sensibly diffused itself in the countenances of both. Fathom was received by her as the intimate friend of her admirer, whom she had often heard of in terms of the most sincere affection; and the conversation was carried on in the Italian language, because she was a foreigner who had not as yet made great proficiency in the knowledge of the English tongue. Her understanding was such as, instead of diminishing, reinforced the prepossession which was inspired by her appearance; and if the sum-total of her charms could not melt the heart, it at least excited the appetite of Fathom to such a degree, that he gazed upon her with such violence of desire, as had never transported him before; and he instantly began to harbour thoughts, not only destructive to the peace of his generous patron, but also to the prudential maxims he had adopted on his first entrance into life.

We have already recorded divers instances of his conduct to prove that there was an intemperance in his blood, which often interfered with his caution; and although he had found means to render this heat sometimes subservient to his interest, yet, in all probability, Heaven mingled the ingredient in his constitution, on purpose to counteract his consummate craft, defeat the villany of his intention, and at least expose him to the justice of the law, and the contempt of his fellow-creatures.

Stimulated as he was by the beauty of the incomparable Monimia, he foresaw that the conquest of her heart would cost him a thousand times more labour and address than all the victories he had ever achieved; for, besides her superior understanding, her sentiments of honour, virtue, gratitude, religion, and pride of birth, her heart was already engaged by the tenderest ties of love and obligation, to a man whose person and acquired accomplishments at least equalled his own; and whose connexion with him was of such a nature as raised an almost insurmountable bar to his design; because, with what face could he commence rival to the person whose family had raised him from want and servility, and whose own generosity had rescued him from the miseries of a dreary gaol?

Notwithstanding these reflections, he would not lay aside an idea which so agreeably flattered his imagination. He, like every other projector in the same circumstances, was so partial to his own qualifications, as to think the lady would soon perceive a difference between him and Renaldo that could not fail to turn to his advantage in her opinion. He depended a good deal on the levity and inconstancy of the sex; and did

not doubt that, in the course of their acquaintance, he should profit by that languor which often creeps upon and flattens the intercourse of lovers cloyed with the sight and conversation of each other.

This way of arguing was very natural to a man who had never known other motives than those of sensuality and convenience; and perhaps, upon these maxims, he might have succeeded with nine-tenths of the fair sex. But, for once, he erred in his calculation; Monimia's soul was perfect, her virtue impregnable. His first approaches were, as usual, performed by the method of insinuation, which succeeded so well, that in a few days he actually acquired a very distinguished share of her favour and esteem. To this he had been recommended, in the warmest strain of exaggerating friendship, by her dear Renaldo; so that, placing the most unreserved confidence in his honour and integrity, and being almost quite destitute of acquaintance, she made no scruple of owning herself pleased with his company and conversation; and therefore he was never abridged in point of opportunity. She had too much discernment to overlook his uncommon talents and agreeable address, and too much susceptibility to observe them with indifference. She not only regarded him as the confidant of her lover, but admired him as a person whose attachment did honour to Count Melvil's choice. She found his discourse remarkably entertaining, his politeness dignified with an air of uncommon sincerity, and she was ravished with his skill in music, an art of which she was deeply enamoured.

While he thus ingratiated himself with the fair Monimia, Renaldo rejoiced at their intimacy, being extremely happy in the thought of having found a friend who could amuse and protect the dear creature in his absence. That she might be the better prepared for the temporary separation which he meditated, he began to be less frequent in his visits, or rather to interrupt, by gradual intermissions, the constant attendance he had bestowed upon her since her mother's death. This alteration she was enabled to bear by the assiduities of Fathom, when she understood that her lover was indispensably employed in negotiating a sum of money for the purposes of his intended voyage. This was really the case; for, as the reader hath been already informed, the provision he had made for that emergency was expended in behalf of our adventurer; and the persons of whom he had borrowed it, far from approving of the use to which it was put, and accommodating him with a fresh supply, reproached him with his benevolence as an act of dishonesty to them; and, instead of favouring this second application, threatened to distress him for what he had already received. While he endeavoured to surmount these difficulties, his small reversion was quite exhausted, and he saw himself on the brink of wanting the common necessities of life.

There was no difficulty which he could not have encountered with fortitude, had he alone been concerned. But his affection and regard for Monimia were of such a delicate nature, that, far from being able to bear the prospect of her wanting the least convenience, he could not endure that she should suspect her situation cost him a moment's perplexity; because he foresaw it would wring her gentle heart with unspeakable anguish and vexation. This, therefore, he endeavoured to anticipate by expressions of confidence in the Emperor's equity, and frequent declarations touching the goodness and security of that credit from which he derived his present subsistence.

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

ANECDOTES OF POVERTY, AND EXPERIMENTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

His affairs being thus circumstanced, it is not to be supposed that he passed his time in tranquillity. Every day ushered in new demands and fresh anxiety; for though his economy was frugal, it could not be supported without money; and now not only his funds were drained, but also his private friends tired of relieving his domestic necessities; nay, they began to relinquish his company, which formerly they had coveted; and those who still favoured him with their company embittered that favour with disagreeable advice, mingled with impertinent reproof. They loudly exclaimed against the last instance of his friendship for Fathom, as a piece of wrong-headed extravagance, which neither his fortune could afford nor his conscience excuse; and alleged that such specimens of generosity are vicious in any man, let his finances be never so opulent, if he has any relations of his own who need his assistance; but altogether scandalous, not to say unjust, in a person who depends for his own support on the favour of his friends.

These expostulations did not even respect the beauteous, the accomplished, the gentle-hearted, the orphan Monimia. Although they owned her perfections, and did not deny that it would be highly meritorious in any man of fortune to make her happy, they disapproved of Renaldo's attachment to the fair beggar, made light of that intimate union of hearts which subsisted between the two lovers, and which no human consideration could dissolve; and some among them, in the consummation of their prudence, ventured to hint a proposal of providing for her in the service of some lady of fashion.

Any reader of sensibility will easily conceive how these admonitions were relished by a young gentleman whose pride was indomitable, whose notions of honour were scrupulously rigid and romantic, whose temper was warm, and whose love was intense. Every such suggestion was as a dagger to his soul; and what rendered the torture more exquisite, he lay under obligations to those very persons whose selfish and sordid sentiments he disdained; so that he was restricted by gratitude from giving vent to his indignation, and his forlorn circumstances would not permit him to renounce their acquaintance. While he struggled with these mortifications, his wants grew more and more importunate, and his creditors became clamorous.

Fathom, to whom all his grievances were disclosed, lamented his hard hap with all the demonstrations of sympathy which he could expect to find in such a zealous adherent. He upbraided himself incessantly as the cause of his patron's distress; took God to witness that he would rather have perished in gaol than have enjoyed his liberty, had he known it would have cost his dearest friend and benefactor one-tenth part of the anguish he now saw him suffer; and, in conclusion, the fervency of his affection glowed to such a degree, that he offered to beg, steal, or plunder on the highway, for Renaldo's assistance.

Certain it is, he might have recollected a less disagreeable expedient than any of these to alleviate the pangs of this unhappy lover; for, at that very period he was possessed of money and moveables to the amount of a much greater sum than that which was necessary to remove the severest pangs of the Count's misfortune. But, whether he did not reflect upon

this resource, or was willing to let Melvil be better acquainted with adversity, which is the great school of life, I shall leave the reader to determine. Yet, so far was he from supplying the wants of the young Hungarian, that he did not scruple to receive a share of the miserable pittance which that gentleman made shift to extort from the complaisance of a few companions, whose countenance he still enjoyed.

Renaldo's life was now become a sacrifice to the most poignant distress. Almost his whole time was engrossed by a double scheme, comprehending his efforts to render his departure practicable, and his expedients for raising the means of daily bread. With regard to the first, he exerted himself among a set of merchants, some of whom knew his family and expectations; and, for the last, he was fain to depend upon the assistance of a few intimates, who were not in a condition to furnish him with sums of consequence. These, however, gradually dropped off, on pretence of friendly resentment for his indiscreet conduct; so that he found himself naked and deserted by all his former companions, except one gentleman, with whom he had lived in the most unreserved correspondence, as with a person of the warmest friendship, and the most unbounded benevolence; nay, he had actually experienced repeated proofs of his generosity; and such were the Count's sentiments of the gratitude, love, and esteem, which were due to the author of these obligations, that he would have willingly laid down his own life for his interest or advantage. He had already been at different times accommodated by this benefactor with occasional supplies, amounting in the whole to about forty or fifty pounds; and so fearful was he of taking any step by which he might forfeit the goodwill of this gentleman, that he struggled with unparelled difficulty and vexation, before he could prevail upon himself to put his liberality to another proof.

What maxims of delicacy will not the dire calls of necessity infringe! Reduced to the alternative of applying once more to that beneficence which had never failed him, or of seeing Monimia starve, he chose the first, as of two evils the least, and intrusted Fathom with a letter explaining the bitterness of his case. It was not without trepidation that he received in the evening from his messenger an answer to this billet; but what were his pangs when he learned the contents! The gentleman, after having professed himself Melvil's sincere well-wisher, gave him to understand, that he was resolved for the future to detach himself from every correspondence which would be inconvenient for him to maintain; that he considered his intimacy with the Count in that light; yet, nevertheless, if his distress was really as great as he had described it, he would still contribute something towards his relief; and accordingly had sent by the bearer five guineas for that purpose; but desired him to take notice, that, in so doing, he laid himself under some difficulty.

Renaldo's grief and mortification at this disappointment were unspeakable. He now saw demolished the last screen betwixt him and the extremity of indigence and woe; he beheld the mistress of his soul abandoned to the bleakest scenes of poverty and want; and he deeply resented the lofty strain of the letter, by which he conceived himself treated as a worthless spendthrift and importunate beggar. Though his purse was exhausted to the last shilling; though he was surrounded with necessities and demands, and knew not how to provide another meal for his fair dependent, he, in opposition to all the suggestions and eloquence of Fathom, despatched him with the money and another billet, intimating, in the most respectful terms, that he approved of his friend's new-adopted maxim, which, for the future, he should always take care to remember; and

that he had sent back the last instance of his bounty, as a proof how little he was disposed to incommode his benefactor.

This letter, though sincerely meant, and written in a very serious mood, the gentleman considered as an ungrateful piece of irony, and in that opinion complained to several persons of the Count's acquaintance, who unanimously exclaimed against him as a sordid, unthankful, and profligate knave, that abused and reviled those very people who had generously befriended him, whenever they found it inconvenient to nourish his extravagance with further supplies. Notwithstanding these accumulated oppressions, he still persevered with fortitude in his endeavours to disentangle himself from this maze of misery. To these he was encouraged by a letter which about this time he received from his sister, importing, that she had good reason to believe the real will of her father had been suppressed for certain sinister views; and desiring him to hasten his departure for Hungary, where he would still find some friends who were both able and willing to support his cause. He had some trinkets left; the pawnbroker's shop was still open; and hitherto he made shift to conceal from Monimia the extent of his affliction.

The money-broker whom he employed, after having amused him with a variety of schemes, which served no other purpose than that of protracting his own job, at length undertook to make him acquainted with a set of monied men who had been very venturous in lending sums upon personal security; he was therefore introduced to their club in the most favourable manner, after the broker had endeavoured to prepossess them separately, with magnificent ideas of his family and fortune.--By means of this anticipation he was received with a manifest relaxation of that severity which people of this class mingle in their aspects to the world in general; and they even vied with each other in their demonstrations of hospitality and respect; for every one in particular looked upon him as a young heir, who would bleed freely, and mortgage at cent. per cent.

Renaldo, buoyed up with these exterior civilities, began to flatter himself with hopes of success, which, however, were soon checked by the nature of the conversation; during which the chairman upbraided one of the members in open club for having once lent forty pounds upon slight security. The person accused alleged, in his own defence, that the borrower was his own kinsman, whose funds he knew to be sufficient; that he had granted his bond, and been at the expense of insuring his life for the money; and, in conclusion, had discharged it to the day with great punctuality. These allegations were not deemed exculpatory by the rest of the assembly, who with one voice pronounced him guilty of unwarrantable rashness and indiscretion, which, in time coming, must undoubtedly operate to the prejudice of his character and credit.

This was a bitter declaration to the young Count, who nevertheless endeavoured to improve the footing he had gained among them, by courting their company, conforming to their manners, and attentively listening to their discourse. When he had cultivated them with great assiduity for the space of some weeks, dined at their houses upon pressing invitations, and received repeated offers of service and friendship, believing that things were now ripe for the purpose, he, one day, at a tavern to which he had invited him to dinner, ventured to disclose his situation to him whose countenance was the least unpromising; and as he introduced the business with a proposal of borrowing money, he perceived his eyes sparkle with a visible alacrity, from which he drew a happy presage. But, alas! this was no more than a transient gleam of sunshine, which was suddenly obumbrated by the sequel of his explanation; insomuch, that,

when the merchant understood the nature of the security, his visage was involved in a most disagreeable gloom, and his eyes distorted into a most hideous obliquity of vision; indeed, he squinted so horribly, that Renaldo was amazed and almost affrighted at his looks, until he perceived that this distortion proceeded from concern for a silver tobacco box which he had laid down by him on the table, after having filled his pipe. As the youth proceeded to unfold his necessities, the other became gradually alarmed for this utensil, to which he darted his eyes askance in this preternatural direction, until he had slyly secured it in his pocket.

Having made this successful conveyance, he shifted his eyes alternately from the young gentleman to the broker for a considerable pause, during which he in silence reproached the last for introducing such a beggarly varlet to his acquaintance; then taking the pipe from his mouth, "Sir," said he, addressing himself to the Count, "if I had all the inclination in the world to comply with your proposal, it is really not in my power. My correspondents abroad have remitted such a number of bad bills of late, that all my running cash hath been exhausted in supporting their credit. Mr. Ferret, sure I am, you was not ignorant of my situation; and I'm not a little surprised that you should bring the gentleman to me on business of this kind; but, as the wise man observes, Bray a fool in a mortar, and he'll never be wise." So saying, with a most emphatic glance directed to the broker, he rung the bell, and called for the reckoning; when, finding that he was to be the guest of Renaldo, he thanked him drily for his good cheer, and in an abrupt manner took himself away.

Though baffled in this quarter, the young gentleman would not despair; but forthwith employed Mr. Ferret in an application to another of the society; who, after having heard the terms of his commission, desired him to tell his principal, that he could do nothing without the concurrence of his partner, who happened to be at that time in one of our American plantations. A third being solicited, excused himself on account of an oath which he had lately taken on the back of a considerable loss. A fourth being tried, made answer, that it was not in his way. And a fifth candidly owned, that he never lent money without proper security.

Thus the forlorn Renaldo tried every experiment without success, and now saw the last ray of hope extinguished. Well-nigh destitute of present support, and encompassed with unrelenting duns, he was obliged to keep within doors, and seek some comfort in the conversation of his charming mistress, and his faithful friend; yet, even there, he experienced the extremest rigour of adverse fate. Every rap at the door alarmed him with the expectation of some noisy tradesman demanding payment. When he endeavoured to amuse himself with drawing, some unlucky feature of the occasional portrait recalled the image of an obdurate creditor, and made him tremble at the work of his own hands. When he fled for shelter to the flattering creation of fancy, some abhorred idea always started up amidst the gay vision, and dissolved the pleasing enchantment.--Even the seraphic voice of Monimia had no longer power to compose the anxious tumults of his mind. Every song she warbled, every tune she played, recalled to his remembrance some scene of love and happiness elapsed; and overwhelmed his soul with the woful comparison of past and present fate. He saw all that was amiable and perfect in woman, all that he held most dear and sacred upon earth, tottering on the brink of misery, without knowing the danger of her situation, and found himself unable to prevent her fall, or even to forewarn her of the peril; for as we have already observed, his soul could not brook the thought of communicating the tidings of distress to the tender-hearted Monimia.

CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

RENALDO'S DISTRESS DEEPENS, AND FATHOM'S PLOT THICKENS.

Such aggravated misfortune could not fail to affect his temper and deportment. The continual efforts he made to conceal his vexation produced a manifest distraction in his behaviour and discourse. He began to be seized with horror at the sight of poor Monimia, whom he therefore shunned as much as the circumstances of their correspondence would allow; and every evening he went forth alone to some solitary place, where he could, unperceived, give a loose to the transports of his sorrow, and in silence meditate some means to lighten the burden of his woe. His heart was sometimes so savaged with despair, which represented mankind as his inveterate enemies, that he entertained thoughts of denouncing war against the whole community, and supplying his own wants with the spoils he should win. At other times he was tempted with the desire of putting an end to his miseries and life together. Yet these were but the transitory suggestions of temporary madness, that soon yielded to the dictates of reason. From the execution of the first he was restrained by his own notions of honour and morality; and, from using the other expedient, he was deterred by his love for Monimia, together with the motives of philosophy and religion.

While in this manner he secretly nursed the worm of grief that preyed upon his vitals, the alteration in his countenance and conduct did not escape the eyes of that discerning young lady. She was alarmed at the change, yet afraid to inquire into the source of it; for, being ignorant of his distress, she could impute it to no cause in which her happiness was not deeply interested. She had observed his strained complaisance and extraordinary emotion. She had detected him in repeated attempts to avoid her company, and taken notice of his regular excursions in the dark. These were alarming symptoms to a lover of her delicacy and pride. She strove in vain to put the most favourable construction on what she saw; and, finally, imputed the effects of his despondence to the alienation of his heart. Made miserable beyond expression by these suspicions, she imparted them to Fathom, who, by this time, was in full possession of her confidence and esteem, and implored his advice touching her conduct in such a nice conjuncture.

This artful politician, who rejoiced at the effect of her penetration, no sooner heard himself questioned on the subject, than he gave tokens of surprise and confusion, signifying his concern to find she had discovered what, for the honour of his friend, he wished had never come to light. His behaviour on this occasion confirmed her fatal conjecture; and she conjured him, in the most pathetic manner, to tell her if he thought Renaldo's heart had contracted any new engagement. At this question, he started with signs of extreme agitation, and stifling an artificial sigh, "Sure, madam," said he, "you cannot doubt the Count's constancy--I am confident--he is certainly--I protest, madam, I am so shocked."

Here he made a full pause, as if the conflict between his integrity and his friendship would not allow him to proceed, and summoned the moisture into either eye--"Then are my doubts removed," cried the afflicted Monimia; "I see your candour in the midst of your attachment to Renaldo;

and will no longer torment you with impertinent interrogations and vain complaints." With these words, a flood of tears gushed from her enchanting eyes, and she instantly withdrew into her own apartment, where she indulged her sorrow to excess. Nor was her grief unanimated with resentment. She was by birth, nature, and education inspired with that dignity of pride which ennobles the human heart; and this, by the circumstance of her present dependence, was rendered extremely jealous and susceptible; insomuch that she could not brook the least shadow of indifference, much less an injury of such a nature, from the man whom she had honoured with her affections, and for whom she had disoblged and deserted her family and friends.

Though her love was so unalterably fixed on this unhappy youth, that, without the continuation of reciprocal regard, her life would have become an unsupportable burden, even amidst all the splendour of affluence and pomp; and although she foresaw, that, when his protection should cease, she must be left a wretched orphan in a foreign land, exposed to all the miseries of want; yet, such was the loftiness of her displeasure, that she disdained to complain, or even demand an explanation from the supposed author of her wrongs.

While she continued undetermined in her purpose, and fluctuating on this sea of torture, Fathom, believing that now was the season for working upon her passions, while they were all in commotion, became, if possible, more assiduous than ever about the fair mourner, modelled his features into a melancholy cast, pretended to share her distress with the most emphatic sympathy, and endeavoured to keep her resentment glowing by cunning insinuations, which, though apparently designed to apologise for his friend, served only to aggravate the guilt of his perfidy and dishonour. This pretext of friendly concern is the most effectual vehicle for the conveyance of malice and slander; and a man's reputation is never so mortally stabbed, as when the assassin begins with the preamble of, "For my own part, I can safely say that no man upon earth has a greater regard for him than I have; and it is with the utmost anguish and concern that I see him misbehave in such a manner." Then he proceeds to mangle his character, and the good-natured hearers, concluding he is even blacker than he is represented, on the supposition that the most atrocious circumstances are softened or suppressed by the tenderness or friendship of the accuser, exclaim, "Good lack! what a wretch he must be, when his best friends will no longer attempt to defend him!" Nay, sometimes these well-wishers undertake his defence, and treacherously betray the cause they have espoused, by omitting the reasons that may be urged in his vindication.

Both these methods were practised by the wily Ferdinand, according to the predominant passion of Monimia. When her indignation prevailed, he expatiated upon his love and sincere regard for Renaldo, which, he said, had grown up from the cradle, to such a degree of fervour, that he would willingly part with life for his advantage. He shed tears for his apostasy; but every drop made an indelible stain upon his character; and, in the bitterness of his grief, swore, notwithstanding his fondness for Renaldo, which had become a part of his constitution, that the young Hungarian deserved the most infamous destiny for having injured such perfection. At other times, when he found her melted into silent sorrow, he affected to excuse the conduct of his friend. He informed her, that the young gentleman's temper had been uneven from his infancy; that frailty was natural to man; that he might in time be reclaimed by self-conviction; he even hinted, that she might have probably ascribed to inconstancy, what was really the effect of some chagrin which he

industriously concealed from his participation. But, when he found her disposed to listen to this last suggestion, he destroyed the force of it, by recollecting the circumstances of his nocturnal rambles, which, he owned, would admit of no favourable construction.

By these means he blew the coals of her jealousy, and enhanced the value of his own character at the same time; for she looked upon him as a mirror of faith and integrity, and the mind being overcharged with woe, naturally seeks some confidant, upon whose sympathy it can repose itself. Indeed, his great aim was to make himself necessary to her affliction, and settle a gossiping correspondence, in the familiarity of which he hoped his purpose would certainly be answered.

Yet the exertion of these talents was not limited to her alone. While he laid these trains for the hapless young lady, he was preparing snares of another kind for her unsuspecting lover, who, for the completion of his misery, about this time began to perceive marks of disquiet and displeasure in the countenance and deportment of his adored Monimia. For that young lady, in the midst of her grief, remembered her origin, and over her vexation affected to throw a veil of tranquillity, which served only to give an air of disgust to her internal disturbance.

Renaldo, whose patience and philosophy were barely sufficient to bear the load of his other evils, would have been quite overwhelmed with the additional burden of Monimia's woe, if it had not assumed this appearance of disesteem, which, as he knew he had not deserved it, brought his resentment to his assistance. Yet this was but a wretched cordial to support him against the baleful reflections that assaulted him from every quarter; it operated like those desperate remedies, which, while they stimulate exhausted nature, help to destroy the very fundamentals of the constitution. He reviewed his own conduct with the utmost severity, and could not recollect one circumstance which could justly offend the idol of his soul. The more blameless he appeared to himself in this examination, the less excusable did her behaviour appear. He tasked his penetration to discover the cause of this alteration; he burned with impatience to know it; his discernment failed him, and he was afraid, though he knew not why, to demand an explanation. His thoughts were so circumstanced, that he durst not even unbosom himself to Fathom, though his own virtue and friendship resisted those sentiments that began to intrude upon his mind, with suggestions to the prejudice of our adventurer's fidelity.

Nevertheless, unable to endure the torments of such interesting suspense, he at length made an effort to expostulate with the fair orphan; and in an abrupt address, the effect of his fear and confusion, begged to know if he had inadvertently done anything to incur her displeasure. Monimia, hearing herself bluntly accosted in this unusual strain, after repeated instances of his reserve and supposed inconstancy, considered the question as a fresh insult, and, summoning her whole pride to her assistance, replied, with affected tranquillity, or rather with an air of scorn, that she had no title to judge, neither did she pretend to condemn his conduct. This answer, so wide of that tenderness and concern which had hitherto manifested itself in the disposition of his amiable mistress, deprived him of all power to carry on the conversation, and he retired with a low bow, fully convinced of his having irretrievably lost the place he had possessed in her affection; for, to his imagination, warped and blinded by his misfortunes, her demeanour seemed fraught, not with a transient gleam of anger, which a respectful lover would soon have appeased, but with that contempt and indifference which denote a total

absence of affection and esteem. She, on the other hand, misconstrued his sudden retreat; and now they beheld the actions of each other through the false medium of prejudice and resentment. To such fatal misunderstandings the peace and happiness of whole families often fall a sacrifice.

CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

OUR ADVENTURER BECOMES ABSOLUTE IN HIS POWER OVER THE PASSIONS OF HIS FRIEND, AND EFFECTS ONE HALF OF HIS AIM.

Influenced by this dire mistake, the breast of those unhappy lovers began to be invaded with the horrors of jealousy. The tender-hearted Monimia endeavoured to devour her griefs in silence; she in secret bemoaned her forlorn fate without ceasing; her tears flowed without intermission from night to morn, and from morn to night. She sought not to know the object for which she was forsaken; she meant not to upbraid her undoer; her aim was to find a sequestered corner, in which she could indulge her sorrow; where she could brood over the melancholy remembrance of her former felicity; where she could recollect those happy scenes she had enjoyed under the wings of her indulgent parents, when her whole life was a revolution of pleasures, and she was surrounded with affluence, pomp, and admiration; where she could, unmolested, dwell upon the wretched comparison between her past and present condition, and paint every circumstance of her misery in the most aggravating colours, that they might make the deeper impression upon her mind, and the more speedily contribute to that dissolution for which she ardently wished, as a total release from woe.

Amidst these pinings, she began to loathe all sustenance; her cheeks grew wan, her bright eyes lost their splendour, the roses vanished from her lips, and her delicate limbs could hardly support their burden; in a word, her sole consolation was limited to the prospect of depositing her sorrows in the grave; and her only wish was to procure a retreat in which she might wait with resignation for that happy period. Yet this melancholy comfort she could not obtain without the advice and mediation of Fathom, whom she therefore still continued to see and consult. While these consultations were held, Renaldo's bosom was ravaged with tempests of rage and distraction. He believed himself superseded in the affection of his mistress, by some favoured rival, whose success rankled at his soul; and though he scarce durst communicate the suspicion to his own heart, his observation continually whispered to him that he was supplanted by his friend Fathom; for Monimia was totally detached from the conversation of every other man, and he had of late noted their intercourse with distempered eyes.

These considerations sometimes transported him to such a degree of frenzy, that he was tempted to sacrifice them both as traitors to gratitude, friendship, and love; but such deliriums soon vanished before his honour and humanity. He would not allow himself to think amiss of Ferdinand, until some undoubted mark of his guilt should appear; and this was so far from being the case, that hitherto there was scarce a presumption. "On the contrary," said he to himself, "I am hourly receiving proofs of his sympathy and attachment. Not but that he may be the innocent cause of my mishap. His superior qualifications may have

attracted the eye, and engaged the heart of that inconstant fair, without his being sensible of the victory he has won; or, perhaps, shocked at the conquest he hath unwillingly made, he discourages her advances, tries to reason down her unjustifiable passion, and in the meantime conceals from me the particulars, out of regard to my happiness and quiet."

Under cover of these favourable conjectures, our adventurer securely prosecuted his scheme upon the unfortunate Monimia. He dedicated himself wholly to her service and conversation, except at those times when his company was requested by Renaldo, who now very seldom exacted his attendance. In his ministry about the person of the beauteous orphan, this cunning incendiary mingled such awful regard, such melting compassion, as effectually screened him from the suspicion of treachery, while he widened the fatal breach between her and her lover by the most diabolical insinuations. He represented his friend as a voluptuary, who gratified his own appetite without the least regard to honour or conscience; and, with a show of infinite reluctance, imparted some anecdotes of his sensuality, which he had feigned for the purpose; then he would exclaim in an affected transport, "Gracious Heaven! is it possible for any man who has the least title to perception or humanity to injure such innocence and perfection! for my own part, had I been so undeservedly happy--Heaven and earth! forgive my transports, madam, I cannot help seeing and admiring such divine attractions. I cannot help resenting your wrongs; it is the cause of virtue I espouse; it ought to be the cause of every honest man."

He had often repeated such apostrophes as these, which she ascribed to nothing else than sheer benevolence and virtuous indignation, and actually began to think he had made some impression upon her heart, not that he now entertained the hope of an immediate triumph over her chastity. The more he contemplated her character, the more difficult the conquest seemed to be: he therefore altered his plan, and resolved to carry on his operations under the shelter of honourable proposals, foreseeing that a wife of her qualifications, if properly managed, would turn greatly to the account of the husband, or, if her virtue should prove refractory, that he could at any time rid himself of the encumbrance, by decamping without beat of drum, after he should be cloyed with possession.

Elevated by these expectations, he one day, in the midst of a preconcerted rhapsody, importing that he could no longer conceal the fire that preyed upon his heart, threw himself on his knees before the lovely mourner, and imprinted a kiss on her fair hand. Though he did not presume to take this liberty till after such preparation as he thought had altogether extinguished her regard for Melvil, and paved the way for his own reception in room of that discarded lover, he had so far overshot his mark, that Monimia, instead of favouring his declaration, started up, and retired in silence, her cheeks glowing with shame, and her eyes gleaming with indignation.

Ferdinand no sooner recovered from the confusion produced by this unexpected repulse, than he saw the necessity of coming to a speedy determination, lest the offended fair one should appeal to Renaldo, in which case they might be mutually undeceived, to his utter shame and confusion; he therefore resolved to deprecate her anger by humble supplications, and by protesting, that, whatever tortures he might suffer by suppressing his sentiments, she should never again be offended with a declaration of his passion.

Having thus appeased the gentle Monimia, and discovered that, in spite of her resentment, his friend still kept possession of her heart, he determined to work an effectual separation, so as that the young lady, being utterly deserted by Melvil, should be left altogether in his power. With this Christian intention, he began to sadden his visage with a double shade of pensive melancholy, in the presence of Renaldo, to stifle a succession of involuntary sighs, to answer from the purpose, to be incoherent in his discourse, and, in a word, to act the part of a person wrapt up in sorrowful cogitation.

Count Melvil, soon as he perceived these symptoms, very kindly inquired into the cause of them, and was not a little alarmed to hear the artful and evasive answers of Ferdinand, who, without disclosing the source of his disquiet, earnestly begged leave to retire into some other corner of the world. Roused by this entreaty, the Hungarian's jealousy awoke, and with violent agitation, he exclaimed, "Then are my fears too true, my dear Fathom: I comprehend the meaning of your request. I have for some time perceived an host of horrors approaching from that quarter. I know your worth and honour. I depend upon your friendship, and conjure you, by all the ties of it, to free me at once from the most miserable suspense, by owning you have involuntarily captivated the heart of that unhappy maiden."

To this solemn interrogation he made no reply, but shedding a flood of tears, of which he had always a magazine at command, he repeated his desire of withdrawing, and took God to witness, that what he proposed was solely for the quiet of his honoured patron and beloved friend. "Enough," cried the unfortunate Renaldo, "the measure of my woes is now filled up." So saying, he fell backwards in a swoon, from which he was with difficulty recovered to the sensation of the most exquisite torments. During this paroxysm, our adventurer nursed him with infinite care and tenderness, he exhorted him to summon all his fortitude to his assistance, to remember his forefathers, and exert himself in the imitation of their virtues, to fly from those bewitching charms which had enslaved his better part, to retrieve his peace of mind by reflecting on the inconstancy and ingratitude of woman, and amuse his imagination in the pursuit of honour and glory.

After these admonitions he abused his ears with a forged detail of the gradual advances made to him by Monimia, and the steps he had taken to discourage her addresses, and re-establish her virtue, poisoning the mind of that credulous youth to such a degree, that, in all probability, he would have put a fatal period to his own existence, had not Fathom found means to allay the rage of his ecstasy, by the cunning arrangement of opposite considerations. He set his pride against his love, he opposed his resentment to his sorrow, and his ambition to his despair. Notwithstanding the balance of power so settled among these antagonists, so violent were the shocks of their successive conflicts, that his bosom fared like a wretched province, harassed, depopulated, and laid waste, by two fierce contending armies. From this moment his life was nothing but an alternation of starts and reveries; he wept and raved by turns, according to the prevailing gust of passion; food became a stranger to his lips, and sleep to his eyelids; he could not support the presence of Monimia, her absence increased the torture of his pangs; and, when he met her by accident, he started back with horror, like a traveller who chances to tread upon a snake.

The poor afflicted orphan, worn to a shadow with self-consuming anguish, eager to find some lowly retreat, where she could breath out her soul in

peace, and terrified at the frantic behaviour of Renaldo, communicated to Fathom her desire of removing, and begged that he would take a small picture of her father, decorated with diamonds, and convert them into money, for the expense of her subsistence. This was the last pledge of her family, which she had received from her mother, who had preserved it in the midst of numberless distresses, and no other species of misery but that which she groaned under could have prevailed upon the daughter to part with it; but, exclusive of other motives, the very image itself, by recalling to her mind the honours of her name, upbraided her with living in dependence upon a man who had treated her with such indignity and ingratitude; besides, she flattered herself with the hope that she should not long survive the loss of this testimonial.

Our adventurer, with many professions of sorrow and mortification at his own want of capacity to prevent such an alienation, undertook to dispose of it to the best advantage, and to provide her with a cheap and retired apartment, to which he would conduct her in safety, though at the hazard of his life. In the meantime, however, he repaired to his friend Renaldo, and, after having admonished him to arm his soul with patience and philosophy, declared that Monimia's guilty passion for himself could no longer be kept within bounds, that she had conjured him, in the most pressing manner, to assist her in escaping from an house which she considered as the worst of dungeons, because she was in it daily exposed to the sight and company of a man whom she detested, and that she had bribed him to compliance with her request, not only with repeated promises of eternal love and submission, but also with the picture of her father set with diamonds, which she had hitherto reserved as the last and greatest testimony of her affection and esteem.

With these words he presented the fatal pledge to the eyes of the astonished youth, upon whom it operated like the poisonous sight of the basilisk, for in an instant, the whole passions of his soul were in the most violent agitation. "What!" cried he, in an ecstasy of rage, "is she so abandoned to perfidy, so lost to shame, so damned to constancy, to gratitude, and virtuous love, as to meditate the means of leaving me without decency, without remorse! to forsake me in my adversity, when my hapless fortune can no longer flatter the pride and vanity of her expectation! O woman! woman! woman! what simile shall I find to illustrate the character of the sex? But I will not have recourse to vain complaints and feeble exclamations. By Heaven! she shall not 'scape, she shall not triumph in her levity, she shall not exult in my distress; no! I will rather sacrifice her to my just resentment, to the injured powers of love and friendship. I will act the avenging minister of Heaven! I will mangle that fair bosom, which contains so false a heart! I will tear her to pieces, and scatter those beauteous limbs as a prey to the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air!"

Fathom, who expected this storm, far from attempting to oppose its progress, waited with patience until its first violence was overblown; then, assuming an air of condolence, animated with that resolution which a friend ought to maintain on such occasions, "My dear Count," said he, "I am not at all surprised at your emotion, because I know what an heart, susceptible as yours, must feel from the apostasy of one who has reigned so long the object of your love, admiration, and esteem. Your endeavours to drive her from your thoughts must create an agony much more severe than that which divorces the soul from the body. Nevertheless, I am so confident of your virtue and your manhood, as to foresee, that you will allow the fair Monimia to execute that resolution which she hath so unwisely taken, to withdraw herself from your love and protection.

Believe me, my best friend and benefactor, this is a step, in consequence of which you will infallibly retrieve your peace of mind. It may cost you many bitter pangs, it may probe your wounds to the quick; but those pangs will be soothed by the gentle and salutary wing of time, and that probing will rouse you to a due sense of your own dignity and importance, which will enable you to convert your attention to objects far more worthy of your contemplation. All the hopes of happiness you had cherished in the possession of Monimia are now irrecoverably blasted; her heart is now debased beneath your consideration; her love is, without all doubt, extinguished, and her honour irretrievably lost; insomuch, that, were she to profess sorrow for her indiscretion, and implore your forgiveness, with the most solemn promises of regarding you for the future with unalterable fidelity and affection, you ought not to restore her to that place in your heart which she hath so meanly forfeited, because you could not at the same time reinstate her in the possession of that delicate esteem without which there is no harmony, no rapture, no true enjoyment in love.

"No, my dear Renaldo, expel the unworthy tenant from your bosom; allow her to fill up the measure of her ingratitude, by deserting her lover, friend, and benefactor. Your glory demands her dismissal; the world will applaud your generosity, and your own heart approve of your conduct. So disencumbered, let us exert ourselves once more in promoting your departure from this island, that you may revisit your father's house, do justice to yourself and amiable sister, and take vengeance on the author of your wrongs; then dedicate yourself to glory, in imitation of your renowned ancestors, and flourish in the favour of your imperial patron."

These remonstrances had such an effect upon the Hungarian, that his face was lighted up with a transient gleam of satisfaction. He embraced Ferdinand with great ardour, calling him his pride, his Mentor, his good genius, and entreated him to gratify the inclination of that fickle creature so far as to convey her to another lodging, without loss of time, while he would, by absenting himself, favour their retreat.

Our hero having obtained this permission, went immediately to the skirts of the town, where he had previously bespoke a small, though neat apartment, at the house of an old woman, widow of a French refugee. He had already reconnoitred the ground, by sounding his landlady, from whose poverty and complaisance he found reason to expect all sorts of freedom and opportunity for the accomplishment of his aim upon Monimia's person. The room being prepared for her reception, he returned to that disconsolate beauty, to whom he presented ten guineas, which he pretended to have raised by pledging the picture, though he himself acted as the pawnbroker on this occasion, for a very plain and obvious reason.

The fair orphan was overjoyed to find her wish so speedily accomplished. She forthwith packed up her necessaries in a trunk; and a hackney-coach was called in the dusk of the evening, in which she embarked with her baggage and conductor.

Yet she did not leave the habitation of Renaldo without regret. In the instant of parting, the idea of that unfortunate youth was associated with every well-known object that presented itself to her eyes; not as an inconstant, ungenerous, and perjured swain, but as the accomplished, the virtuous, the melting lover, who had captivated her virgin heart. As Fathom led her to the door, she was met by Renaldo's dog, which had long been her favourite; and the poor animal fawning upon her as she passed, her heart was overwhelmed with such a gush of tenderness, that a flood of

tears streamed down her cheeks, and she had well-nigh sunk upon the floor.

Ferdinand, considering this emotion as the last tribute she would pay to Renaldo, hurried her into the coach, where she soon recovered her composure; and in a little time he ushered her into the house of Madam la Mer, by whom she was received with great cordiality, and conducted to her apartment, with which she found no other fault than that of its being too good for one in her forlorn situation. Here, while the tear of gratitude started in either eye, she thanked our adventurer for his benevolence and kind concern, assuring him, that she would not fail duly to beseech the Most High to shower down blessings upon him, as the orphan's friend and protector.

Fathom was not deficient in those expressions that were best adapted to her present turn of mind. He observed, that what he had done was in obedience to the dictates of common humanity, which would have prompted him to assist any fellow-creature in distress; but that her peculiar virtue and qualifications were such as challenged the utmost exertion of his faculties in her service. He said, that surely Heaven had not created such perfection in vain; that she was destined to receive as well as to communicate happiness; and that the Providence, which she so piously adored, would not fail, in due season, to raise her from distress and affliction, to that honour and felicity for which she was certainly ordained. In the meantime, he entreated her to depend upon his service and fidelity, and the article of her board being settled, he left her to the company and consolation of her discreet hostess, who soon insinuated herself into the good opinion of her beauteous lodger.

While our hero was employed in this transaction, Renaldo sallied forth in a sort of intoxication, which Fathom's admonitions had inspired; and, repairing to a certain noted coffee-house, engaged at chess with an old French refugee, that his attention, by being otherwise employed, might not stray towards that fatal object which he ardently wished to forget. But, unluckily for him, he had scarce performed three moves of the game, when his ears were exposed to a dialogue between two young gentlemen, one of whom asked the other if he would go and see the "Orphan" acted at one of the theatres; observing, as a farther inducement, that the part of Monimia would be performed by a young gentlewoman who had never appeared on the stage. At mention of that name, Renaldo started; for though it did not properly belong to his orphan, it was the appellation by which she had been distinguished ever since her separation from her father's house, and therefore it recalled her to his imagination in the most interesting point of view. Though he endeavoured to expel the image, by a closer application to his play, every now and then it intruded upon his fancy, and at each return made a stronger impression; so that he found himself in the situation of an unfortunate bark stranded upon some hidden rock, which, when the wind begins to blow, feels every succeeding wave more boisterous than the former, until, with irresistible fury, they surmount her deck, sweep everything before them, and dash her all to pieces.

The refugee had observed his first emotion, which he attributed to an unforeseen advantage he himself had gained over the Hungarian; but seeing him, in the sequel, bite his lip, roll his eyes, groan, writhe his body, ejaculate incoherent curses, and neglect his game, the Huguenot concluded that he was mad, and being seized with terror and dismay, got up and scampered off, without ceremony or hesitation.

Melvil, thus left to the horrors of his own thought, which tortured him with the apprehension of losing Monimia for ever, could no longer combat that suggestion, but ran homewards with all the speed he could exert, in order to prevent her retreat. When he crossed the threshold, he was struck with such a damp of presaging fear, that he durst not in person approach her apartment, nor even, by questioning the servant, inform himself of the particulars he wanted to know. Yet his suspense becoming more insupportable than his fear, he rushed from room to room in quest of that which was not to be found; and, seeing Monimia's chamber door open, entered the deserted temple in a state of distraction, calling aloud upon her name. All was silent, solitary, and woful. "She is gone," he cried, shedding a flood of tears, "she is for ever lost; and all my hopes of happiness are fled!"

So saying, he sunk upon that couch on which Monimia had oft reposed, and abandoned himself to all the excess of grief and despondence. In this deplorable condition he was found by our adventurer, who gently chid him for his want of resolution, and again repelled his sorrow, by arousing his resentment against the innocent cause of his disquiet, having beforehand forged the particulars of provocation.

"Is it possible," said he, "that Renaldo can still retain the least sentiment of regard for a fickle woman, by whom he has been so ungratefully forsaken and so unjustly scorned? Is it possible he can be so disturbed by the loss of a creature who is herself lost to all virtue and decorum?--Time and reflection, my worthy friend, will cure you of that inglorious malady. And the future misconduct of that imprudent damsel will, doubtless, contribute to the recovery of your peace. Her behaviour, at leaving the house where she had received so many marks of the most delicate affection, was in all respects so opposite to honour and decency, that I could scarce refrain from telling her I was shocked at her deportment, even while she loaded me with protestations of love. When a woman's heart is once depraved, she bids adieu to all restraint;--she preserves no measures. It was not simply contempt which she expressed for Renaldo; she seems to resent his being able to live under her disdain; and that resentment stoops to objects unworthy of indignation. Even your dog was not exempted from the effects of her displeasure. For, in her passage to the door, she kicked the poor animal as one of your dependents; and, in our way to the apartment I had provided for her, she entertained me with a ludicrous comment upon the manner in which you first made her acquainted with your passion. All that modesty of carriage, all that chastity of conversation, all that dignity of grief, which she knew so well how to affect, is now entirely laid aside, and, when I quitted her, she seemed the most gay, giddy, and impertinent of her sex."

"Gracious powers!" exclaimed Renaldo, starting from the couch, "am I under the delusion of a dream; or are these things really so, as my friend has represented them? Such a total and sudden degeneracy is amazing! is monstrous and unnatural!"

"Such, my dear Count," replied our hero, "is the caprice of a female heart, fickle as the wind, uncertain as a calm at sea, fixed to no principle, but swayed by every fantastic gust of passion, or of whim. Congratulate yourself, therefore, my friend, upon your happy deliverance from such a domestic plague--upon the voluntary exile of a traitor from your bosom.--Recollect the dictates of your duty, your discretion, and your glory, and think upon the honours and elevated enjoyment for which you are certainly ordained. To-night let us over a cheerful bottle

anticipate your success; and to-morrow I will accompany you to the house of an usurer, who, I am informed, fears no risk, provided twenty per cent be given, and the borrower's life insured."

CHAPTER FORTY-SEVEN

THE ART OF BORROWING FURTHER EXPLAINED, AND AN ACCOUNT OF A STRANGE PHENOMENON.

In this manner did the artful incendiary work upon the passions of the credulous unsuspecting Hungarian, who pressed him to his breast with the most cordial expressions of friendship, calling him his guardian, his saviour, his second father, and gave himself up wholly to his advice.

Next morning, according to the plan they had laid overnight, they repaired to a tavern in the neighbourhood of the person to whom our adventurer had been directed, and were fortunate enough to find him in the house, transacting a money affair with a young gentleman who treated him with his morning's whet.

That affair being negotiated, he adjourned into another room with Renaldo and his companion, who were not a little surprised to see this minister of Plutus in the shape of a young sprightly beau, trimmed up in all the foppery of the fashion; for they had hitherto always associated with the idea of an usurer old age and rusty apparel. After divers modish congees, he begged to know to what he should attribute the honour of their message; when Ferdinand, who acted the orator, told him, that his friend Count Melvil, having occasion for a sum of money, had been directed to a gentleman of his name, "and, I suppose," added he, "you are the son of the person with whom the affair is to be negotiated."

"Sir," said this petit-maitre, with a smile, "I perceive you are surprised to see one of my profession in the appearance of a gentleman; and perhaps your wonder will not cease, when I tell you, that my education was liberal, and that I once had the honour to bear a commission in the British army. I was indeed a first lieutenant of marines, and will venture to say, that no officer in the service was more delicate than myself in observing all the punctilios of honour. I entertained the utmost contempt for all the trading part of the nation, and suffered myself to be run through the body in a duel, rather than roll with a brother-lieutenant, who was a broker's son. But, thank Heaven! I have long ago conquered all those ridiculous prejudices. I soon observed, that without money there was no respect, honour, or convenience to be acquired in life; that wealth amply supplied the want of wit, merit, and pedigree, having influence and pleasure ever at command; and that the world never failed to worship the flood of affluence, without examining the dirty channels through which it commonly flowed.

"At the end of the war, finding my appointments reduced to two shillings and fourpence per day, and being addicted to pleasures which I could not possibly purchase from such a fund, I sold my half-pay for two hundred pounds, which I lent upon bond to a young officer of the same regiment, on condition that he should insure his life, and restore one-fourth part of the sum by way of premium. I happened to be lucky in this first

essay; for the borrower, having in six weeks expended the money, made an excursion on the highway, was apprehended, tried, convicted of felony, and cut his own throat, to prevent the shame of a public execution; so that his bond was discharged by the insurers.

"In short, gentlemen, when I engaged in this business, I determined to carry it on with such spirit, as would either make my fortune, or entirely ruin me in a little time; and hitherto my endeavours have been tolerably successful. Nor do I think my proceedings a whit more criminal or unjust than those of other merchants, who strive to turn their money to the best account. The commodity I deal in is cash; and it is my business to sell it to the best advantage. A London factor sends a cargo of goods to market, and if he gets two hundred per cent upon the sale, he is commended for industry and address. If I sell money for one-fourth part of that profit, certain persons will be so unjust as to cry, Shame upon me, for taking such advantage of my neighbour's distress; not considering, that the trader took four times the same advantage of those people who bought his cargo, though his risk was not half so great as mine, and although the money I sold perhaps retrieved the borrower from the very jaws of destruction. For example, it was but yesterday I saved a worthy man from being arrested for a sum of money, for which he had bailed a friend who treacherously left him in the lurch. As he did not foresee what would happen, he had made no provision for the demand, and his sphere of life secluding him from all sorts of monied intercourse, he could not raise the cash by his credit in the usual way of borrowing; so that, without my assistance, he must have gone to jail; a disgrace which would have proved fatal to the peace of his family, and utterly ruined his reputation.--Nay, that very young gentleman, from whom I am just now parted, will, in all probability, be indebted to me for a very genteel livelihood. He had obtained the absolute promise of being provided for by a great man, who sits at the helm of affairs in a neighbouring kingdom; but, being destitute of all other resources, he could not have equipped himself for the voyage, in order to profit by his lordship's intention, unless I had enabled him to pursue his good fortune."

Renaldo was not a little pleased to hear this harangue, to which Fathom replied with many florid encomiums upon the usurer's good sense and humane disposition; then he explained the errand of his friend, which was to borrow three hundred pounds, in order to retrieve his inheritance, of which he had been defrauded in his absence.

"Sir," said the lender, addressing himself to Count Melvil, "I pretend to have acquired by experience some skill in physiognomy; and though there are some faces so deeply disguised as to baffle all the penetration of our art, there are others, in which the heart appears with such nakedness of integrity, as at once to recommend it to our goodwill. I own your countenance prepossesses me in your favour; and you shall be accommodated, upon those terms from which I never deviate, provided you can find proper security, that you shall not quit the British dominions; for that, with me, is a condition sine qua non."

This was a very disagreeable declaration to Renaldo, who candidly owned, that, as his concerns lay upon the Continent, his purpose was to leave England without delay. The usurer professed himself sorry that it was not in his power to oblige him; and, in order to prevent any further importunity, assured them, he had laid it down as a maxim, from which he would never swerve, to avoid all dealings with people whom, if need should be, he could not sue by the laws of this realm.

Thus the intervention of one unlucky and unforeseen circumstance blasted in an instant the budding hopes of Melvil, who, while his visage exhibited the most sorrowful disappointment, begged to know, if there was any person of his acquaintance who might be less scrupulous in that particular.

The young gentleman directed them to another member of his profession, and wishing them success, took his leave with great form and complaisance. This instance of politeness was, however, no more than a shift to disengage himself the more easily from their entreaties; for, when the case was opened to the second usurer, he blessed himself from such customers, and dismissed them with the most mortifying and boorish refusal. Notwithstanding these repulses, Renaldo resolved to make one

desperate push; and, without allowing himself the least respite, solicited, one by one, not fewer than fifteen persons who dealt in this kind of traffic, and his proposals were rejected by each. At last, fatigued by the toil, and exasperated at the ill success of his expedition, and half mad with the recollection of his finances, which were now drained to half-a-crown, "Since we have nothing to expect," cried he, "from the favour of Christians, let us have recourse to the descendants of Judah. Though they lie under the general reproach of nations, as a people dead to virtue and benevolence, and wholly devoted to avarice, fraud, and extortion, the most savage of their tribe cannot treat me with more barbarity of indifference, than I have experienced among those who are the authors of their reproach."

Although Fathom looked upon this proposal as an extravagant symptom of despair, he affected to approve of the scheme, and encouraged Renaldo with the hope of succeeding in another quarter, even if this expedition should fail; for, by this time, our adventurer was half resolved to export him at his own charge, rather than he should be much longer restricted in his designs upon Monimia.

Meanwhile, being resolved to try the experiment upon the children of Israel, they betook themselves to the house of a rich Jew, whose wealth they considered as a proof of his rapaciousness; and, being admitted into his counting-house, they found him in the midst of half a dozen clerks, when Renaldo, in his imagination, likened him unto a minister of darkness surrounded by his familiars, and planning schemes of misery to be executed upon the hapless sons of men. In spite of these suggestions, which were not at all mitigated by the forbidding aspect of the Hebrew, he demanded a private audience; and, being ushered into another apartment, he explained his business with manifest marks of disorder and affliction. Indeed, his confusion was in some measure owing to the looks of the Jew, who, in the midst of this exordium, pulled down his eyebrows, which were surprisingly black and bushy, so as, in appearance, totally to extinguish his visage, though he was all the time observing our youth from behind those almost impenetrable thickets.

Melvil, having signified his request, "Young gentleman," said the Israelite, with a most discordant voice, "what in the name of goodness could induce you to come to me upon such an errand? Did you ever hear that I lent money to strangers without security?" "No," replied Renaldo, "nor did I believe I should profit by my application; but my affairs are desperate; and my proposals having been rejected by every Christian to whom they were offered, I was resolved to try my fate among the Jews, who are reckoned another species of men."

Fathom, alarmed at this abrupt reply, which he supposed could not fail to disgust the merchant, interposed in the conversation, by making an apology for the plain dealing of his friend, who, he said, was soured and ruffled by his misfortunes; then exerting that power of eloquence which he had at command, he expostulated upon Renaldo's claim and expectations, described the wrongs he had suffered, extolled his virtue, and drew a most pathetic picture of his distress.

The Jew listened attentively for some time; then his eyebrows began to rise and fall alternately; he coughed, sneezed, and winking hard, "I'm plagued," said he, "with a salt rheum that trickles from my eyes without intermission." So saying, he wiped the moisture from his face, and proceeded in these words: "Sir, your story is plausible; and your friend is a good advocate; but before I give an answer to your demand, I must beg leave to ask if you can produce undeniable evidence of your being the identical person you really assume? If you are really the Count de Melvil, you will excuse my caution. We cannot be too much on our guard against fraud; though I must own you have not the air of an impostor."

Renaldo's eyes began to sparkle at this preliminary question; to which he replied, that he could procure the testimony of the Emperor's minister, to whom he had occasionally paid his respects since his first arrival in England.

"If that be the case," said the Jew, "take the trouble to call here to-morrow morning, at eight o'clock, and I will carry you in my own coach to the house of his excellency, with whom I have the honour to be acquainted; and, if he has nothing to object against your character or pretensions, I will contribute my assistance towards your obtaining justice at the Imperial court."

The Hungarian was so much confounded at this unexpected reception, that he had not power to thank the merchant for his promised favour, but stood motionless and silent, while the streams of emotion of the heart was of more weight with the Jew, than the eloquent acknowledgment which Ferdinand took the opportunity of making for his friend; and he was fain to dismiss them a little abruptly, in order to prevent a second discharge of that same rheum of which he had already complained.

Melvil recollected all that had happened as a dream, which had no foundation in truth, and was all day long in a sort of delirium, produced by the alternate gusts of hope and fear that still agitated his bosom; for he was not yet without apprehension of being again disappointed by some unlucky occurrence.

He did not, however, fail to be punctual to the hour of his appointment, when the Jew told him, there would be no occasion for visiting the ambassador, because Renaldo had been, the preceding day, recognised by one of the clerks who had been employed as a purveyor in the Imperial army; and who, knowing his family, confirmed everything he had alleged. "After breakfast," continued this benevolent Israelite, "I will give you an order upon my banker for five hundred pounds, that you may be enabled to appear at Vienna as the son and representative of Count Melvil; and you shall also be furnished with a letter of recommendation to a person of some influence at that court, whose friendship and countenance may be of some service to your suit; for I am now heartily engaged in your interest, in consequence of the fair and unblemished character which I find you have hitherto maintained."

The reader must appeal to his own heart, to acquire a just idea of Renaldo's feelings, when every tittle of these promises was fulfilled, and the merchant refused to take one farthing by way of premium, contenting himself with the slender security of a personal bond. He was, in truth, overwhelmed with the obligation, and certainly disposed to believe that his benefactor was something more than human. As for Fathom, his sentiments took a different turn; and he scrupled not to impute all this kindness to some deep-laid interested scheme, the scope of which he could not at present comprehend.

After the tumults of the young gentleman's joy had subsided, and he found himself eased of that burdensome poverty under which he had groaned so long, his thoughts, which before were dissipated upon the various circumstances of distress, began to collect themselves in a body, and to resume their deliberations upon a subject which they had been long accustomed to consider; this was no other than the forlorn Monimia, whose idea now emerged in his bosom, being disencumbered of one part of the load by which it had been depressed. He mentioned her name to Fathom with marks of the most melting compassion, deplored her apostasy, and, while he protested that he had divorced her for ever from his heart, expressed an inclination to see her once more before his departure, that he might in person exhort her to penitence and reformation.

Our adventurer, who dreaded such an interview as the infallible means of his own ruin, resisted the proposal with the whole power of his elocution. He affirmed, that Renaldo's desire was a manifest proof that he still retained part of the fatal poison which that enchantress had spread within his veins; and that the sight of her, softened by his reproaches into tears and affected contrition, would dispel his resentment, disable his manhood, and blow the embers of his former passion to such a rage, as would hurry him on to a reconciliation, which would debase his honour, and ruin his future peace. In a word, Ferdinand described the danger that would attend the meeting in such emphatic terms, that the Hungarian started with horror at the picture which he drew, and in this particular conformed with the admonition of his friend.

One hundred pounds of the Jew's money was immediately appropriated for the payment of his most urgent debts; the like sum he presented to his friend Fathom, with a solemn promise of sharing with him whatever good fortune might await him in Germany. And though Monimia had forfeited all title to his regard, so ill could he bear the prospect of her distress, that he entrusted his dear companion with the half of what remained, to be expended for her use, fully resolving to screen her from the shocks and temptations of want, as the circumstances of his future fate would allow.

Fathom, far from opposing, applauded his generosity with marks of extreme wonder and admiration, assuring him, that she should be put in possession of his bounty immediately after his departure, he being unwilling to make her acquainted with her good fortune before that period, lest, finding his affairs in a fair way of being retrieved, she should be base enough to worship his returning prosperity, and, by false professions, and artful blandishments, seek to ensnare his heart anew.

CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT

COUNT FATHOM UNMASKS HIS BATTERY; IS REPULSED; AND VARIES HIS OPERATIONS WITHOUT EFFECT.

Every necessary preparation being made, Renaldo, accompanied by our adventurer, took the road to Dover, where he embarked in a packet-boat for Calais, after having settled a correspondence with his dear Ferdinand, from whom he did not part without tears. He had before solicited him to be his fellow-traveller, that he might personally enjoy the benefit of his conversation and superior sagacity; but these entreaties he strenuously opposed, on pretence of his being determined to push his fortune in England, which he considered as his native country, and as the land in which, of all others, a man of merit has the best encouragement. Such were the reasons he alleged for refusing to attend his benefactor, who was himself eagerly desirous of attaining a settlement in the island of Great Britain. But our hero's real motives for staying were of a very different complexion.--The reader is already informed of his aim upon the fair orphan, which, at present, was the chief spring of his conduct. He may also recollect such passages of his life, as were sufficient to deter him from reappearing at Presburg or Vienna. But, besides these reflections, he was detained by a full persuasion that Renaldo would sink under the power and influence of his antagonist, consequently be rendered incapable to provide for his friends; and that he himself, fraught with wiles and experience as he was, could not fail to make himself amends for what he had suffered among a people equally rich and unthinking.

Melvil, having embraced our adventurer, and with a deep sigh bid him take care of the unfortunate Monimia, committed himself to the sea, and, by the assistance of a favourable gale, was in four hours safely landed on the French shore; while Fathom took post-horses for London, where he arrived that same night, and next day, in the forenoon, went to visit the beauteous mourner, who had as yet received no intimation of Renaldo's departure or design. He found her in the attitude of writing a letter to her inconstant lover, the contents of which the reader will be acquainted with in due time. Her countenance, notwithstanding the veil of melancholy by which it was overcast, seemed altogether serene and composed; she was the picture of pious resignation, and sat like PATIENCE on a monument, smiling at grief. After having paid the compliment of the morning, Fathom begged pardon for having omitted to visit her during three days, in which, he said, his time had been wholly engrossed in procuring a proper equipage for Count Melvil, who had at last bid an eternal adieu to the island of Great Britain.

At this information the hapless Monimia fell back in her chair, and continued some minutes in a swoon; from which being recovered, "Excuse me, Mr. Fathom," cried she with a deep sigh; "this, I hope, is the last agony I shall feel from my unhappy passion."--Then wiping the tears from her lovely eyes, she retrieved her tranquillity, and desired to know by what means Renaldo had been enabled to undertake his journey into the empire. Our hero, upon this occasion, assumed the whole merit of having promoted the interest of his friend, by giving her to understand, that he, in consequence of an unforeseen windfall, had defrayed the expense of the Count's equipment; though he observed, that it was not without reluctance he saw Renaldo make a wrong use of his friendship.

"Although I was happy," proceeded this artful traitor, "in being able to discharge my obligations to the house of Melvil, I could not help feeling the most sensible chagrin, when I saw my assistance rendered subservient

to the triumphs of the youth's baseness and infidelity; for he chose, as the companion of his travels, the abandoned woman for whom he had forsaken the all-perfect Monimia, whose virtue and accomplishments did not preserve her sacred from his ungrateful sarcasms and unmannerly ridicule. Believe me, madam, I was so shocked at his conversation on that subject, and so much incensed at his want of delicacy, that my temper was scarce sufficient for the ceremony of parting. And, now that my debt to his family is over-paid, I have solemnly renounced his correspondence."

When she heard that, instead of betraying the least symptom of regret or compassion for her unhappy fate, the perfidious youth had exulted over her fall, and even made her a subject for his mirth, the blood revisited her faded cheeks, and resentment restored to her eyes that poignancy which sorrow had before overcome. Yet she scorned to give speech to her indignation; but, forcing a smile, "Why should I repine," said she, "at the mortifications of a life which I despise, and from which, I hope, Heaven speedily will set me free!"

Fathom, fired by her emotion, which had recalled all the graces of her beauty, exclaimed in a rapture, "Talk not so contemptuously of this life, which hath still a fund of happiness in store for the amiable, the divine Monimia. Though one admirer hath proved an apostate to his vows, your candour will not suffer you to condemn the whole sex. Some there are, whose bosoms glow with passion equally pure, unalterable, and intense. For my own part, I have sacrificed to a rigid punctilio of honour the dearest ideas of my heart. I beheld your unrivalled charms, and deeply felt their power. Yet, while a possibility of Melvil's reformation remained, and while I was restrained by my niggard fortune from making a tender worthy of your acceptance, I combated with my inclinations, and bore without repining the pangs of hopeless love. But, now that my honour is disengaged, and my fortune rendered independent, by the last will of a worthy nobleman, whose friendship I was favoured with in France, I presume to lay myself at the feet of the adorable Monimia, as the most faithful of admirers, whose happiness or misery wholly depends upon her nod. Believe me, madam, these are not the professions of idle gallantry--I speak the genuine, though imperfect, language of my heart. Words, even the most pathetic, cannot do justice to my love. I gaze upon your beauty with ravishment; but I contemplate the graces of your soul with such awful veneration, that I tremble while I approach you, as if my vows were addressed to some superior being."

During this declaration, which was pronounced in the most emphatic manner, Monimia was successively agitated with shame, anger, and grief; nevertheless, she summoned her whole philosophy to her aid, and, with a tranquil, though determined air, begged he would not diminish the obligations he had already conferred, by disturbing with such unseasonable addresses a poor unhappy maid, who had detached all her thoughts from earthly objects, and waited impatiently for that dissolution which alone could put a period to her misfortunes.

Fathom, imagining that these were no other than the suggestions of a temporary disappointment and despondence, which it was his business to oppose with all his eloquence and art, renewed his theme with redoubled ardour, and, at last, became so importunate in his desires, that Monimia, provoked beyond the power of concealing her resentment, said, she was heartily sorry to find herself under the necessity of telling him, that, in the midst of her misfortunes, she could not help remembering what she had been. Then, rising from her seat, with all the dignity of

displeasure, "Perhaps," added she, "you have forgot who was the father of the once happy Monimia."

With these words she retired into another chamber, leaving our adventurer confounded by the repulse he had sustained. Not that he was discouraged from prosecuting his aim--on the contrary, this rebuff seemed to add fresh vigour to his operations. He now thought it high time to bring over Madam la Mer to his interest; and, to facilitate her conversion, took an opportunity of bribing her with some inconsiderable presents, after having amused her with a plausible tale of his passion for Monimia, with whom she undertook the office of his mediatrix, on the supposition that his intentions were honourable, and highly advantageous to her lodger.

She was, first of all, invested with the office of obtaining pardon for the offence he had given; and, in this negotiation she succeeded so well, as to become an advocate for his suit; accordingly, she took all occasions of magnifying his praise. His agreeable person was often the subject of her discourse to the fair mourner. Her admiration dwelt upon his politeness, good sense, and winning deportment; and she every day retailed little stories of his benevolence and greatness of soul. The defect in his birth she represented as a circumstance altogether foreign from the consideration of his merit; especially in a nation where such distinctions are as little respected as they will be in a future state. She mentioned several persons of note, who basked in the sunshine of power and fortune, without having enjoyed the least hereditary assistance from their forefathers. One, she said, sprung from the loins of an obscure attorney; another was the grandson of a valet-de-chambre; a third was the issue of an accountant; and a fourth the offspring of a woollen draper. All these were the children of their own good works, and had raised themselves upon their personal virtues and address; a foundation certainly more solid and honourable than a vague inheritance derived from ancestors, in whose deserts they could not be supposed to have borne the least share.

Monimia listened to all these arguments with great patience and affability, though she at once divined the source from which all such insinuations flowed. She joined in the commendations of Fathom, and owned herself a particular instance of that benevolence which the old lady had so justly extolled; but, once for all, to prevent the supplication which Madam la Mer was about to make, she solemnly protested that her heart was altogether shut against any other earthly engagement, and that her thoughts were altogether employed upon her eternal salvation.

The assiduous landlady, perceiving the steadiness of her disposition, thought proper to alter her method of proceeding, and, for the present, suspended that theme by which she found her fair lodger disobliged. Resolved to reconcile Monimia to life, before she would again recommend Ferdinand to her love, she endeavoured to amuse her imagination, by recounting the occasional incidents of the day, hoping gradually to decoy her attention to those sublunary objects from which it had been industriously weaned. She seasoned her conversation with agreeable sallies; enlarged upon the different scenes of pleasure and diversion appertaining to this great metropolis; practised upon her palate with the delicacies of eating; endeavoured to shake her temperance with repeated proffers and recommendations of certain cordials and restoratives, which she alleged were necessary for the recovery of her health; and pressed her to make little excursions into the fields that skirt the town, for

the benefit of air and exercise.

While this auxiliary plied the disconsolate Monimia on one hand, Fathom was not remiss on the other. He now seemed to have sacrificed his passion to her quiet; his discourse turned upon more indifferent subjects. He endeavoured to dispel her melancholy with arguments drawn from philosophy and religion. On some occasions, he displayed all his fund of good humour, with a view to beguile her sorrow; he importuned her to give him the pleasure of squiring her to some place of innocent entertainment; and, finally, insisted upon her accepting a pecuniary reinforcement to her finances, which he knew to be in a most consumptive condition.

CHAPTER FORTY-NINE

MONIMIA'S HONOUR IS PROTECTED BY THE INTERPOSITION OF HEAVEN.

With that complacency and fortitude which were peculiar to herself, this hapless stranger resisted all those artful temptations. Her sustenance was barely such as exempted her from the guilt of being accessory to her own death; her drink was the simple element. She encouraged no discourse but that which turned upon the concerns of her immortal part. She never went abroad, except in visits to a French chapel in the neighbourhood; she refused the proffered assistance of our adventurer with equal obstinacy and politeness, and with pleasure saw herself wasting towards that period of mortality which was the consummation of her wish. Yet her charms, far from melting away with her constitution, seemed to triumph over the decays of nature. Her shape and features still retained that harmony for which they had always been distinguished. A mixture of majesty and sweetness diffused itself in her looks, and her feebleness added to that soft and feminine grace which attracts the sympathy, and engages the protection of every humane beholder. The associates thus baffled in their attempts to excite her ideas of pleasure, again shifted their plan, and resolved to attack this forlorn beauty on the side of fear and mortification.

Our adventurer became less frequent in his visits, and more indifferent in his language and deportment; while Madam la Mer gradually relaxed in that complacency and respect with which she had hitherto behaved towards her fair lodger. She even began to drop hints of disapprobation and reproach against this pattern of innocence and beauty, and at length grew bold enough to tell her, that her misfortunes could be attributed to nothing but her own obstinacy and pride; that she had been at great pains to disoblige the only person who was able and willing to raise her above dependence; and that, if his protection should be withdrawn, she must be exposed to the utmost extremity of distress.

These insinuations, instead of producing the desired effect, inflamed the indignation of Monimia, who, in a most dignified style of rebuke, chid her for her indelicacy and presumption, observing, that she could have no title to take such freedoms with lodgers, whose punctuality and regular deportment left her no room to complain. Notwithstanding this animated reply, she underwent the most deplorable anguish, when she reflected upon the insolence of this woman, from whose barbarity she had no resource; and, seeing no other possibility of redress than that of appealing to the

good offices of Fathom, she conquered her reluctance so far, as to complain to him of Madam la Mer's incivility.

Pleased with this application, he gave her to understand, with very little ceremony or preamble, that it wholly depended upon herself whether she should continue to be wretched, or be delivered at once from all her cares and perplexity; that, notwithstanding the disdain with which she had treated his addresses, he was still ready to lay himself and his fortune at her feet; and that, if she should again reject the disinterested proposal, the whole world and her own conscience would charge upon herself whatever calamities she might be subjected to in the sequel. Interpreting into a favourable hesitation her silence, which was the result of wrath and amazement, he proceeded to throw himself at her feet, and utter a romantic rhapsody, in the course of which, laying aside all that restraint which he had hitherto preserved, he seized her delicate hand, and pressed it to his lips; nay, so far did he forget himself on this occasion, that he caught the fair creature in his arms, and rudely ravished a kiss from those lips which he had before contemplated with the most distant reverence of desire.

Having thus broken down the fences of decorum, and being heated with transport, he, in all probability, would have acted the part of young Tarquin, and violated by force that sacred shrine of honour, beauty, and unblemished truth, had not the wrath kindled by such an unexpected outrage inspired her with strength and spirits sufficient to protect her virtue, and intimidate the ruffian who could offer violence to such perfection. She broke from his detested embrace with surprising agility, and called aloud to her landlady for assistance; but that discreet matron was resolved to hear nothing, and Fathom's appetite being whetted to a most brutal degree of eagerness, "Madam," said he, "all opposition is vain. What you have refused to my entreaties, you shall yield to my power; and I am determined to force you to your own advantage."

So saying, he sprung towards her, with the most savage and impious intent, when this amiable heroine snatching up his sword, which lay upon a by-table, and unsheathing it instantaneously, presented the point to his breast, and, while her eyes glanced with intolerable keenness, "Villain!" cried she, "the spirit of my father animates my bosom, and the vengeance of Heaven shall not be frustrated." He was not so much affected by his bodily danger, as awestruck at the manner of her address, and the appearance of her aspect, which seemed to shine with something supernatural, and actually disordered his whole faculties, insomuch that he retreated without attempting to make the least reply; and she, having secured the door after his departure, sat down to ponder upon this shocking event.

Words are wanting to describe the accumulated horrors that took possession of her mind, when she thus beheld all her presaging fears realised, and found herself at the mercy of two wretches, who had now pulled off the mask, after having lost all sentiments of humanity. Common affliction was an agreeable reverie to what she suffered, deprived of her parents, exiled from her friends and country, reduced to the brink of wanting the most indispensable necessities of life, in a foreign land, where she knew not one person to whose protection she could have recourse, from the inexpressible woes that environed her. She complained to Heaven that her life was protracted, for the augmentation of that misery which was already too severe to be endured; for she shuddered at the prospect of being utterly abandoned in the last stage of mortality, without one friend to close her eyes, or do the last offices of humanity

to her breathless corse. These were dreadful reflections to a young lady who had been born to affluence and splendour, trained up in all the elegance of education, by nature fraught with that sensibility which refines the sentiment and taste, and so tenderly cherished by her indulgent parents, that they suffered not the winds of Heaven to visit her face too roughly.

Having passed the night in such agony, she rose at daybreak, and, hearing the chapel bell toll for morning prayers, resolved to go to this place of worship, in order to implore the assistance of Heaven. She no sooner opened her chamber door, with this intent, than she was met by Madam la Mer, who, after having professed her concern for what had happened overnight, and imputed Mr. Fathom's rudeness to the spirit of intoxication, by which she had never before seen him possessed, she endeavoured to dissuade Monimia from her purpose, by observing, that her health would be prejudiced by the cold morning air; but finding her determined, she insisted upon accompanying her to chapel, on pretence of respect, though, in reality, with a view to prevent the escape of her beautiful lodger. Thus attended, the hapless mourner entered the place, and, according to the laudable hospitality of England, which is the only country in Christendom where a stranger is not made welcome to the house of God, this amiable creature, emaciated and enfeebled as she was, must have stood in a common passage during the whole service, had not she been perceived by a humane gentlewoman, who, struck with her beauty and dignified air, and melted with sympathy at the ineffable sorrow which was visible in her countenance, opened the pew in which she sat, and accommodated Monimia and her attendant. If she was captivated by her first appearance, she was not less affected by the deportment of her fair guest, which was the pattern of genuine devotion.

In a word, this good lady, who was a merchant's widow in opulent circumstances, was inflamed with a longing desire to know and befriend the amiable stranger, who, after service, turning about to thank her for her civility, Madam Clement, with that frankness which is the result of true benevolence, told her, she was too much prepossessed in her favour to let slip this opportunity of craving her acquaintance, and of expressing her inclination to alleviate, if possible, that affliction which was manifest in her looks.

Monimia, overwhelmed with gratitude and surprise at this unexpected address, gazed upon the lady in silence, and when she repeated her tenders of service, could make no other reply to her goodness, than by bursting into a flood of tears. This was a species of eloquence which did not pass unregarded by Madam Clement, who, while her own eyes were bedewed with the drops of sympathy and compassion, took the lovely orphan by the hand, and led her, without further ceremony, to her own coach, that stood waiting at the door, whither they were followed by Mrs. la Mer, who was so much confounded at the adventure, that she made no objections to the proposal of the lady, who handed her lodger into the carriage; but retired, with all possible despatch, to make Fathom acquainted with this unforeseen event.

Meanwhile the agitation of Monimia, at this providential deliverance, was such as had well-nigh destroyed her tender frame. The blood flushed and forsook her cheeks by turns; she trembled from head to foot, notwithstanding the consolatory assurances of Madam Clement, and, without being able to utter one word, was conducted to the house of that kind benefactress, where the violence of her transports overpowered her constitution, and she sunk down upon a couch in a swoon, from which she

was not easily recovered. This affecting circumstance augmented the pity, and interested the curiosity of Madam Clement, who concluded there was something very extraordinary in the case of the stranger, to produce these agonies; and grew impatient to hear the particulars of her story.

Monimia no sooner retrieved the use of her faculties, than looking around, and observing with what humane concern her new hostess was employed in effecting her recovery, "Is this," said she, "a flattering illusion of the brain? or am I really under the protection of some beneficent being, whom Heaven hath inspired with generosity to rescue an hapless stranger from the most forlorn state of misery and woe?" Her voice was at all times ravishingly sweet; and this exclamation was pronounced with such pathetic fervour, that Madam Clement clasped her in her arms, and kissing her with all the eagerness of maternal affection, "Yes," cried she, "fair creature, Heaven hath bestowed upon me an heart to compassionate, and power, I hope, to lighten the burden of your sorrows."

She then prevailed upon her to take some nourishment, and afterwards to recount the particulars of her fate; a task she performed with such accuracy and candour, that Madam Clement, far from suspecting her sincerity, saw truth and conviction in every circumstance of her tale; and, having condoled her misfortunes, entreated her to forget them, or at least look upon herself as one sheltered under the care and tuition of a person whose study it would be to supply her want of natural parents. This would have been an happy vicissitude of fortune, had it not arrived too late; but such a sudden and unlooked-for transition not only disordered the faculties of poor Monimia's mind, but also overpowered the organs of her body, already fatigued and enfeebled by the distresses she had undergone; so that she was taken ill of a fever that same night, and became delirious before morning, when a physician was called to her assistance.

While this gentleman was in the house, Madam Clement was visited by Fathom, who, after having complained, in the most insinuating manner that she had encouraged his wife to abandon her duty, told her a plausible story of his first acquaintance with Monimia, and his marriage at the Fleet, which, he said, he was ready to prove by the evidence of the clergyman who joined them, and that of Mrs. la Mer, who was present at the ceremony. The good lady, although a little staggered at the genteel appearance and engaging address of this stranger, could not prevail upon herself to believe that she had been imposed upon by her fair lodger, who by this time had given too convincing a proof of her sincerity; nevertheless, in order to prevent any dispute that might be prejudicial to the health or recovery of Monimia, she gave him to understand, that she would not at present enter upon the merits of the cause, but only assure him, that the young lady was actually bereft of her senses, and in imminent danger of her life; for the truth of which assertions she would appeal to his own observation, and the opinion of the physician, who was then employed in writing a prescription for the cure of her disease.

So saying, she conducted him into the chamber, where he beheld the hapless virgin stretched upon a sick-bed, panting under the violence of a distemper too mighty for her weakly frame, her hair dishevelled, and discomposure in her looks; all the roses of her youth were faded, yet all the graces of her beauty were not fled. She retained that sweetness and symmetry, which death itself could not destroy; and though her discourse was incoherent, her voice was still musical, resembling those feathered songsters who warble their native wood-notes wild.

Fathom, as upon all other occasions, so on this, did behave like an inimitable actor; he ran to the bedside, with all the trepidation of a distracted lover; he fell upon his knees, and, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, imprinted a thousand kisses on the soft hand of Monimia, who regarding him with a lack-lustre and undistinguishing eye, "Alas! Renaldo," said she, "we were born to be unhappy." "Would to Heaven," cried Ferdinand, in a transport of grief, "the wretch Renaldo had never been born! that is the villain who seduced the affection of this unfortunate woman. I admitted the traitor into my friendship and confidence, relieved him in his necessities; and, like the ungrateful viper, he hath stung the very bosom that cherished him in his distress." Then he proceeded to inform Madam Clement how he had delivered that same Renaldo from prison, maintained him afterwards at a great expense, and at length furnished him with a sum of money and proper credentials to support his interest at the Court of Vienna.

Having finished this detail, he asked the physician's sentiments of his wife's distemper, and being told that her life was in extreme jeopardy, begged he would use his utmost endeavours in her behalf, and even made him a tender of an extraordinary fee, which was refused. He also thanked Madam Clement for her charity and benevolence towards a stranger, and took his leave with many polite professions of gratitude and esteem. He had no sooner quitted the house, than the physician, who was a humane man, and a foreigner, began to caution the lady against his insinuations, observing, that some circumstances of the story concerning Renaldo were, to his particular knowledge, contrary to truth; for that he himself had been applied to for letters of recommendation in behalf of Count Melvil, by a Jew merchant of his acquaintance, who had supplied the young gentleman with money sufficient for his occasions, in consequence of a minute inquiry he had made into the character of Renaldo, who was, by all reports, a youth of strict honour and untainted morals.

Madam Clement, thus cautioned, entered into deliberation with her own thoughts, and, comparing the particulars of this account with those of Monimia's own story, she concluded that Fathom was the very traitor he himself had described; and that he had, by abusing the confidence of both, effected a fatal breach between two innocent and deserving lovers. She accordingly looked upon him with horror and detestation; but nevertheless resolved to treat him with civility in the meantime, that the poor young lady might not be disturbed in her last moments; for she had now lost all hopes of her recovery. Yet the fever abated, and in two days she retrieved the use of her reason; though the distemper had affected her lungs, and she was in all appearance doomed to linger a few weeks longer in a consumption.

Fathom was punctual in his visitation, though never admitted into her presence after the delirium vanished; and he had the opportunity of seeing her conveyed in a chariot to Kensington Gravel Pits, a place which may be termed the last stage of many a mortal peregrination. He now implicitly believed that death would in a few days baffle all his designs upon the unfortunate Monimia; and foreseeing that, as he had owned himself her husband, he might be obliged to defray the expenses incurred by her sickness and burial, he very prudently intermitted in his visits, and had recourse to the intelligence of his auxiliary.

As for Monimia, she approached the goal of life, not simply with resignation, but with rapture. She enjoyed in tranquillity the conversation of her kind benefactress, who never stirred from her

apartment; she was blessed with the spiritual consolation of a worthy clergyman, who removed all her religious scruples; and she congratulated herself on the near prospect of that land of peace where sorrow is not known.

At length Mrs. la Mer gave notice to our adventurer of this amiable young lady's decease, and the time fixed for the interment. Upon which these two virtuous associates took possession of a place from whence they could, unperceived, behold the funeral. He must have a hard heart, who, without an emotion of pity, can see the last offices performed to a young creature cut off in the flower of youth and beauty, even though he knows not her name, and is an utter stranger to her virtues. How callous then must the soul of that wretch have been, who, without a symptom of remorse or concern, saw the sable hearse adorned with white plumes, as emblems of Monimia's purity, pass before him, while her incomparable merit stood full in his remembrance, and he knew himself the wicked cause of her untimely fate!

Perfidious wretch! thy crimes turn out so atrocious, that I half repent me of having undertaken to record thy memoirs; yet such monsters ought to be exhibited to public view, that mankind may be upon their guard against imposture; that the world may see how fraud is apt to overshoot itself; and that, as virtue, though it may suffer for a while, will triumph in the end; so iniquity, though it may prosper for a season, will at last be overtaken by that punishment and disgrace which are its due.

CHAPTER FIFTY

FATHOM SHIFTS THE SCENE, AND APPEARS IN A NEW CHARACTER.

Fathom's expectations with respect to the fair orphan having thus proved abortive, he lost no time in bewailing his miscarriage, but had immediate recourse to other means of improving his small fortune, which, at this period, amounted to near two hundred pounds. Whatever inclination he had to resume the character he had formerly borne in the polite world, he durst not venture to launch out again into the expense necessary to maintain that station, because his former resources were now stopped, and all the people of fashion by this time convinced of his being a needy adventurer. Nevertheless, he resolved to sound the sentiments of his old friends at a distance, and judge, from the reception he should meet with, how far he might presume upon their countenance and favour. For he rightly supposed, that if he could in any shape contribute to their interest or amusement, they would easily forgive his former pretensions to quality, arrogant as they were, and still entertain him on the footing of a necessary acquaintance.

With this view, he one day presented himself at court in a very gay suit of clothes, and bowed, at a distance, to many of his old fashionable friends of both sexes, not one of whom favoured him with any other notice, than that of a quarter curtesy, or slight inclination of the head. For, by this time, the few that remembered him knew from what retirement he now emerged, and avoided him accordingly as the jail infection. But the greater part of those who had cultivated him in the zenith of his fortune were now utter strangers to his person, which they had actually forgot, amidst the succession of novelties that surrounded

them; or, if they did recollect his name, it was remembered as an old fashion which had been many months out of date.

Notwithstanding these mortifying discouragements, our hero, that same evening, effected a lodgment in a certain gaming-house not far from St. James's; and, as he played pretty high, and made a parade of his ready money, he was soon recognised by divers persons of consequence, who cordially welcomed him to England, on pretence of believing he had been abroad, and with great complacency repeated their former professions of friendship. Though this was a certain way of retaining the favour of those worthies, while his finances continued to flourish, and his payments were prompt, he knew the weakness of his funds too well, to think they could bear the vicissitudes of play; and the remembrance of the two British knights who had spoiled him at Paris, hung over his imagination with the most frightful presages. Besides, he perceived that gaming was now managed in such a manner, as rendered skill and dexterity of no advantage. For the spirit of play having overspread the land, like a pestilence, raged to such a degree of madness and desperation, that the unhappy people who were infected, laid aside all thoughts of amusement, economy, or caution, and risked their fortunes upon issues equally extravagant, childish, and absurd.

The whole mystery of the art was reduced to the simple exercise of tossing up a guinea, and the lust of laying wagers, which they indulged to a surprising pitch of ridiculous intemperance. In one corner of the room might be heard a pair of lordlings running their grandmothers against each other, that is, betting sums on the longest liver; in another the success of the wager depended upon the sex of the landlady's next child; and one of the waiters happening to drop down in an apoplectic fit, a certain noble peer exclaimed, "Dead for a thousand pounds." The challenge was immediately accepted; and when the master of the house sent for a surgeon to attempt the cure, the nobleman, who set the price upon the patient's head, insisted upon his being left to the efforts of nature alone, otherwise the wager should be void. Nay, when the landlord harped upon the loss he shoul