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# The Rival Knights; or, the Fortunate Woodlander: A French Romance

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*Stop,' said he, 'whoever thou art, the fright that  
Lady is in, shews the violence thou intendest.*

THE  
*RIVAL KNIGHTS;*  
OR, THE  
FORTUNATE  
WOODLANDER:

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A FRENCH ROMANCE.

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Love, and a Crown, no rivalship can bear;  
All precious Things are all possess'd with Fear.—

*Didon.*

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# *THE RIVAL KNIGHTS;*

OR,

## The Fortunate Woodlander.

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PHARAMOND, after having subdued all the kings of France, was now peaceful monarch of the whole kingdom. The lovely Rosamond shared the glory of his throne, but was still more dear to him than all his glory. The french monarch, after forty years victories, saw that conquest and happiness were not twins; he found real felicity in Tournay, his own capital city, where he at last gave himself up to the happiness of his people, his wife, and his children.

Prince Clodio, his son, scarce turned sixteen, had already signalized his intrepidity on many occasions. Accustomed to arms from his childhood, he had learned to fight by the side of his father. The name of Pharamond, the immense empire which he was born to sway, his valor, his person, and more particularly the flattery of his courtiers had contaminated the soul of this fine youth with excessive vanity. As fortunate in love, as his father had been in war, Clodio had won the hearts of as many ladies as Pharamond had taken cities. Proud of his person, his glory and his birth, the French prince was at once the most handsome, the most confident, and the most giddy knight of his time.

The lovely Felicia, his sister, was not yet sixteen years of age, and was blest with more charms than even her mother. But these were the least of Felicia's qualifications. She seemed inattentive to the gifts of nature, that she might the more effectually add to them. Information and not vanity excited her to the cultivation of her mind. All amiable and modest, she forgot she was princess, excepting when she could, as a princess, do an act of beneficence. Felicia scarce yet in her teens was a refuge for the distressed, the idol of her father's heart, and to every knight who knew her an object of respect and love.

Brittany was then tributary to Pharamond, and divided into many petty kingdoms. That of Ganne

was swayed by king Boort, or rather by his courtiers. Weak princes are almost always cruel. Boort gave a proof of it in putting his daughter to death, for having given birth to Bliomberis. This too susceptible princess, had not been able to withstand the persuasive love of Palamedes, one of the most celebrated knights of these times. Her weakness cost her her life. The savage Boort made her be thrown into a well, and suffered her unhappy child to live.

Bliomberis, deprived of his mother the moment he was born, unknown by his father who had never once taken him in his arms, was educated in the court of king Boort: but his education was such as might be expected in a place of this description. The country of Gannes was half barbarous: there were in the whole kingdom but very few who could read: Bliomberis could just do as much, and that was all. He was now seventeen years of age, and the best thing he knew was the use of the bow and arrow, an exercise in which he was really great, because he had had no master but himself. Bliomberis was well made, of a noble deportment, and open countenance; with a mien more attracting than handsome, for he was a child of love, and his mind was so much the more just in its conceptions as he had never had any one to fashion it.

Bliomberis was soon made acquainted with the misfortune of his mother, and the glory of his father. His name made the whole court of Gannes tremble: the dread of this hero's arms was the only motive of their paying any kind of respect to his son. But this respect, such as it was, was loathsome to Bliomberis; he grew tired of the Gannese Barons; who knew nothing, no, not even to fight. 'Twas in vain that their ladies strove to attach him. He perceived that they knew how to make love without feeling it; and Bliomberis had a heart that despised love without sensibility.

This made him delight to be alone. He soon was seen no where but in the woods, making use of his dexterity on the flying deer. Hunting made a misanthropist of him; and misanthropy made him a philosopher. Bliomberis was only eighteen years of age, but his own reflections, and the happiness of never



having kuown flattery was worth thirty years experience to him.

King Boort had a son, who had nothing of his father in him; his name was Lionel, and his exploits had gained him a place at the round table. On his return from England, he heard, with indignation of the tribute that Pharamond had exacted; and consulting his valour, instead of his prudence, he persuaded the indolent Boort to declare war against the French monarch.

Pharamond did not think that his presence was necessary to bring those back he had so often conquered; he chose to resign the whole glory of the war to his son, and named him his general.

The joyful Clodio embraced his father, and assured him that before the end of the month he should enter Tournay, in a car drawn by King Boort and his son: he already divided among his favourites the kingdom he was going to conquer; he six or seven times reviewed all his army; and by long marches arrived, within fifteen days, on the borders of the kingdom of Gannes.

Lionel was ready for him. The battle was long and bloody. Clodio did wonders; but his impetuosity, and even his valour, made him frequently blunder. Bliomberis never left the side of the brave Lionel. 'Twas the first time he viewed a field of battle, and during the whole action he never once lost that cool intrepidity which ever accompanies the true hero. But his bravery and the efforts of Lionel could not have hindered victory from flying off with Pharamond's army. The violent ardour of Clodio had already broken the center of their lines: Lionel flew to oppose this prince, and with him began a single combat which left the Gannese without a general. Clodio's lieutenant, an old warrior who had grown grey in the field of battle, seizes on the happy opportunity, gathers together the different corps, gives the signal for a general attack, and confident in the manœuvre, marches forward with the assurance of a conqueror. Lionel was employed with Clodio: the Gannese are lost; nobody commands; disorder runs riot through the ranks. Bliomberis young and unexperienced as he was, saw the danger and prevented it; he throws down his sword; takes his bow,

which, in his hands, had ever been fatal in its aim; he chooses his best shaft, singles out the French chief and lodges it beneath his buckler. The old warrior falls, his troops stop, they press eagerly round their dying captain; while Bliomberis with the rapidity of a flash of lightening flies to his squadron, falls upon the French, breaks their ranks, disperses them, and soon the plain is covered with their dead. The rest save themselves by flight.

The deserted Clodio, full of shame and fury aims a formidable blow at Lionel, and then piercing through the victorious army, he flies, but like a hero, flies from his flying army.

Bliomberis did not give himself up to the pursuit of the French, he took care to restrain the ardour of his troops, and to hinder that disorder, which so often robs the conquerors of their victory, and on that memorable day he joined the talents of a general, to the courage of a soldier. Lionel soon came and crowned the defeat. Bliomberis was then only busy to put a stop to slaughter; he made the prisoners be treated with generosity and kindness, and as the hissing of arrows and the noise of arms had not raised the least commotion in his manly soul during the combat, so the shouts of joy and acclamations of his applauding troops had not the smallest effect on the unmoved tranquillity of the hero, whose reward was self-content. He was pleased; he was, at last, of some use to his country.

Meanwhile the impetuous Clodio enraged that he should have been discomfited the very first time he had ever commanded an army, flew along the plain uncertain of what he was about. 'Twas a cutting stroke to his vanity. He dared not again make his appearance in Tournay, after having made a distribution of the conquered country, and commanded the victorious car to which he was to have chained king Boort and his son. He took a resolution of never returning to his father, till he had gloriously wiped off the ignominy, and embarking for England, he set off in search of adventures and victory.

While he was thus carrying his impetuosity and his valor to the court of king Arthur, Pharamond heard of his defeat. This monarch was not accustomed to

such news. He flew to revenge the honor of his arms; and taking up that sword, which so many kings had found to be of mortal temper, he assembles his old warriors, and marches towards Little Brittany. The French, impatient to take revenge for their countrymen, carry fire and sword into the dominions of the king of Gandes. Lionel proud of his first victory was desirous of going to meet the enemy; Bliomberis thought it more prudent to encamp and wait their arrival; but the general had his way, and orders were given to prepare for battle.

It did not remain one moment undecided. Pharamond advanced, and all gave way. The routed Gannese drew their general off in their flight. Bliomberis, after extraordinary efforts of valor strove to save the corps he commanded; but the king of France himself came and attacked them. The troops of Bliomberis scarce saw the French flower-de-luce on Pharamond, but a sudden fear ran through their ranks: They dispersed, and the young Bliomberis was left alone in the midst of his enemies. Surrender, said Pharamond, 'tis I who ask your sword. Bliomberis, too great to make the rash and useless effort of a boy, gave his sword to the king and followed him to his camp.

A few days were sufficient for Pharamond to make himself master of all the country of Gannes. He made king Boort pay the expences of the war, placed a garrison in the town, and kept Bliomberis as an hostage. When he had thus put an end to this expedition, the French monarch sent in search of his son throughout all Brittany: but the search was in vain: the distressed father returned to Tournay and Bliomberis followed him. On his return Pharamond found joy in every heart and on every countenance. The news of victory had been beforehand with him. Rosamond and Felicia came to meet him while his crowding subjects were hailing the return of their much loved king. Rosamond expected to see her son: the victory of her husband could not keep back her tears, when she learned that nobody knew what was become of Ciodio, Felicia partook of her grief, and wept while she kissed her father's triumphant hands.



Bliomberis, who was present at this sight, had already to reproach himself that he had been the cause of her tears. The beauty of Felicia gave rise to a sensation he had never before experienced. 'Twas in vain he turned his eyes aside; his eyes in spite of his endeavours still returned to Felicia. The wise and prudent Bliomberis knew no more what was become of himself, when the king presented him to Rosamond and Felicia as a prisoner, whom his valor entitled to respect: then taking a sword, You use it too well, said he, brave youth, that it should not be restored to you. The interest of our state is concerned in your enlargement; but your parole alone shall be the fetters that bind you to us. Bliomberis thanked the king, but he did it confusedly, for Felicia's eyes were upon him.

Bliomberis soon observed that to her personal charms Felicia added the uprightness of the best of souls, the sensibility of the most feeling heart; and a mind excellently cultivated. This discovery heightened a flame that was already strong; but in a first love one fears so much least it may be criminal; one hopes so little for a return, that the pleasure of adoring in silence is still looked upon as a degree of supreme happiness. Bliomberis was a trembling lover: the court of Pharamond was a formidable dwelling place for him. This youth who had never left Gannes, who had passed his life in the woods, found himself carried into one of the most magnificent and brilliant courts in the world; where he was in love with the daughter of the first of monarchs, a princess who had spurned at the proffered hands of a thousand suitors: Had he any hopes of being singled from the rest, the unknown son of a simple knight, the luckless cause of the disgrace and death of his mother, and favored by fortune with nothing but a hand that knew how to fight, and a heart that knew as well how to love.

To a lover these reflections were terrible, and prudence must have shrunk from all hope. But Bliomberis did not possess any more the share of wisdom which had been hitherto his best guide. At the risk of future wretchedness, he gave himself up to the pleasing byass, and took a resolution of studying to acquire all that was wanting to him, in order to please.

From that time Bliomberis cultivated that politeness, that knowledge and use of the world that makes almost every fool in it supportable. But to them, he added more solid accomplishments; he adorned his mind, and improved his talents. Love was his master; and a good master he is. In less than a year Bliomberis was the most amiable and elegant knight of the court of Pharamond.

Felicia who had considered Bliomberis the very first day she had ever seen him, soon guessed his secret. The least knowing of the sex, knows that a man is in love with her a little before he, who loves her, knows it himself. The passion of the young woodlander flattered the princess; but when the young woodlander became the fine, the finished, the elegant man, Felicia in dread, began to question her own heart. The result was that she thought there was no harm in being at least grateful: that gratitude soon overtook friendship, and this friendship in three months time melted into love. Wise as she was, she did not well know what to make of her situation; but her reason counselled her not to listen to her heart.

When a young princess is forced to become arbitress betwixt the heart and reason, the sentence is, sometimes long of being pronounced; but never is a dubious one. Felicia soon gave herself up to the charm. She received a note from Bliomberis: a note from a lover's hand is a talisman that destroys wisdom's boldest resolutions. Let the young lover never despair, if once he can make himself be read. Felicia answered Bliomberis, by begging him to write to her no more, Bliomberis again wrote that he might obtain the permission; this granted, they ceased writing and interviews came round in their turn.

You who have loved, can you ever forget the first pleasure of a passion reciprocally felt? Every day, every hour is interesting; now 'tis a glance that makes us happy, then we wish for more; we dispute, we obtain it; the next day we quarrel, and on making it up, we find ourselves the gainers by it. How quickly do these happy hours flow; how pleasing are the pangs we then endure. O love! when we regret thee, 'tis less for thy last pleasures than for thy first favours.

One day that the lovely Felicia went to walk in a grove near the city, she ordered her attendants to wait without for her, while she herself went into one of the most shady recesses of the wood: She was thinking of Bliomberis. Their love had now been one year old: one year had passed since they had sworn to love each other eternally, and, if necessary, die for each other. Felicia was perusing a letter in which Bliomberis a thousand times repeated this vow: she thought she heard her lover speak the words that were only written, and during the pleasing reverie she impressed a thousand kisses on the dear letter: on a sudden a foaming wild boar appears; he comes straight up to the princess; he is upon the point of falling on her - - - - Where art thou Bliomberis?

Bliomberis was not far off: he had been beforehand with Felicia, and, hidden among the the underwood, he enjoyed the heart-felt pleasure of seeing her employed in thinking on him. He sees the fierce animal, and flies to meet it. The boar comes up to him, and wounds him, but it was slightly, for the dextrous youth struck at it the moment he was only grazed. Their mixed blood bedews the grass. The trembling Felicia, her eyes fixed on her lover, her heart vehemently throbbing, felt all her blood fly its wonted channels; but an instant was enough to dissipate her fears; Bliomberis takes a trusty arrow and pierces the savage animal to the heart.

Felicia flew to Bliomberis, makes him sit down by her side; he leans his head on her bosom, while she ties up his wound. It was not a deep one, she soon stopped the blood, but during the operation, no pain was felt; the anguish was lost in the balsamic sweets of a thousand kisses.

She had scarce done dressing her lover, but her eyes fixed on his, seemed to ask how she should repay so great a service: Bliomberis looked at her, and sighed. Hazard instantly favoured them.

A turtle flew by them eagerly endeavouring to save itself from the hawk that pursued it. She was upon the point of being caught when the male bird flew in betwixt his companion and the hawk, and gave himself up to his talons in order to save her. The bird of

prey leaves the female and flies off with her mate: but Bliomberis had the time to prepare an arrow; the shaft flew, killed the murderer, and delivered the generous turtle.

When he had escaped he flew to the tree that was just opposite Felicia and Bliomberis. His faithful companion flew to him, her cooings expressed her thanks, her bill layed his plumage ruffled by the cruel hawk; she fluttered round him, while he, returning equal signs of affection, proved that love is stronger than fear.

What a sight was this for our two lovers! They gazed at the faithful couple with wet but vivid eyes. Their quickened sighs, their shortened breathings explained all that passed between them. Bliomberis had been as generous as the turtle: Felicia was not less loving than his companion; could she avoid being less grateful.

That grove, that recess became the rendezvous of these lovers. Love who watched over them, guarded them from ever suspicion: their happiness was great, but alas there was none lasting!

Two years had already gone over their heads like two days; for we soon grow old, when we are in love; Felicia was in her eighteenth year, and the king, her father, announced to her, that she must now chuse a husband from among the princes who courted her good will.

What news was this for Felicia! she flew to the grove to consult her dear Bliomberis. Our felicity is over, said the said Felicia to him: you can no more here hope for my hand, though you alone shall ever have my heart. I never can obey, nor dare resist my father; let us fly off together. Love will take care of us. Bliomberis watering with tears her lovely countenance, declared to her that flight was impracticable, since he was prisoner on his parole. But if we can gain a little time added he, I hope I shall make myself worthy to pretend to the honor of this dear alliance. I am the son of Palamades; Pharamond himself respects the name. My mother was the daughter of a king; my father is descended from the royal line of the kings of Babylon. I shall go in search of my father,



he will know me, he himself shall come and ask you of Pharamond; and if Felicia cannot be obtained without a kingdom, nothing is impossible to the sword of Palamedes, and the love of Bliomberis.

While he pronounced these words courage brightened in his eyes. Hope finds so easy an entrance into a lover's heart that Felicia and Bliomberis gave themselves up to it with transport. They then decided that the princess should assemble all her suitors, and declare to them that whoever should return in the course of two years, with most trophies and most glory, should receive her hand and her love as a reward for their heroic exertions.

When Pharamond heard the proposal of his daughter, he subscribed to it with joy. It was soon rumoured throughout all France, at what price the hand of Felicia was to be had; and all the knights of blood-royal left the court, in quest of adventures, where they might signalize their valor and deserve the beauteous prize.

Bliomberis laid hold of the opportunity of asking his liberty; it was not refused him. Felicia herself took care of this sad commission. What must have been their anguish at the moment of separation, when the dire farewell, a word so dreadful to lovers, was to be spoken! how they sigh'd! how they wept! Bliomberis could not quit Felicia; she pressed to her bosom the hand of Bliomberis; they looked on each other; they again wept; they forbid each other to cry, and at the same time burst into a torrent of tears bereaving them of the power of speech. 'Twas in vain they repeated a thousand times over, that they only parted to meet for ever. Vain endeavour! two years are but a point, when passed with the one we love; but two years are an eternity when passed without her! ah, what must Bliomberis have suffered in tearing himself from her arms; but it was necessary; he embraces her, says adieu, squeezes her hand; says adieu again, but more inarticulately, and at last flies off without daring to turn his head about.

The wretched princess forced to restrain her grief in presence of the ladies who belonged to her mother's court, went and hid herself in her apartments. There

she wept, there she read, and read again the letters of her Bliomberis. Alas! said she, he will no more write to me: I have perhaps had him in my arms for the last time. That idea gives strength to her grief; her imagination aggrandizes all the dangers that threaten Bliomberis; and, as if it were not enough to suffer the present, she anticipates future evils.

Poor Bliomberis let his horse go on at random. That horse had been given him by Felicia. She had sent for it from Iberia, and 'twas a steed fit to be presented so the god of war by the hands of love. He was black as jett, a white star shone on his front; swift as a bird he could fly along the shore nor leave a track behind him. Felicia had sometime rode him, and given him the name of Ebony, Ebony knew Bliomberis, and was attached to him: so true it is that love electrifies every thing round it.

While Bliomberis was crossing along and deep wood, he found he was going too fast from the object he loved; he stopped, dismounted, and allowing the faithful animal to feed the while, he went and threw himself down at the foot of a tree by a stream that flowed near it. He there began to reflect, a thing he had not done for some time past.

In love, reflections are generally useless enough. One leaves off, by acting just as if one had not reflected at all: thus, it is at least, time lost. But Bliomberis wished for nothing else. He wept some manly tears and imperceptibly fell into one of these soliloquies that nothing but solitude and love can excuse. My dearest Felicia, said he, I find I cannot live without thee. Love supported my life in captivity, and now when free, love is going to take life from me. But still to thee, Felicia, I will remain the same I ever was, and when death threatens the last blow: I will receive it, nor think of myself, but thee! I thought I might taste repose at the foot of this tree; but solitude adds to my anguish. This grove calls to memory another for-ever-dear to my heart, and the turtle I hear cooing draws a fresh tear of sad remembrance. When I listen to this murmuring brook, I think it speaks of thee. I see thee in every thing, nor will my grief suf-

fer me to reflect that you are no where here but in my heart.

Bliomberis was going to continue when he perceived a knight advancing towards him, who no sooner looked at him, than leaping to the ground, caught him in his arms. It was the brave Lionel. I was going to you, said he, with a letter from Palamedes. Heavens? exclaimed Bliomberis, have you seen him? Yes, answered Lionel, he is returned to Gannes in hopes of finding his dear Arlinda, and desperate by her loss he challenged the king my father, and killed him with the first stroke of his lance. I wished to revenge his death, but the terrible Palamedes has conquered me, and one of the conditions of the combat was that I myself should be the bearer of this letter to you.

In this letter Palamedes excused himself to his son for having been twenty years without returning to his unfortunate mother; he had been all that time in the prisons of the king of Aquitania. He assured Bliomberis of his love, and ordered him to meet him immediately at the court of king Arthur. Bliomberis, eager to see his father, takes leave of Lionel, rides to a seaport and embarks for England.

When he arrived in that kingdom, he directed his journey towards the court of Arthur. As he was passing the famous wood of Brocelianda, he saw a lady on horseback flying with all speed to avoid a knight that pursued her, and was upon the point of being up with her. Bliomberis galloped up to him, and laying hold of his horse's bridle: Stop, said he, whoever thou art, the fright that lady is in, shews the violence thou intendest; and wherever I am, the weaker party shall find a defender. What hast thou to do with us? replied the ferocious Brehus; I will chastise thee for it, and teach thee never henceforth to interrupt a knight in pursuit of a fugitive.

With that Brehus raised a tremendous spear, and rushed against Bliomberis. The youth avoided the dreadful blow, and, with his sword reached the helmet and head of Brehus which he forced to bend even to his horses neck. Furious for having been so violently struck, without so much as having touched his adversary, Brehus throws down his spear, and with his hands

taking his broad sword, and rising on his stirrups, he returns against Bliomberis, swearing and blaspheming his gods. Bliomberis, calling on the name of Felicia and invoking her, observed that the movement of his antagonist had left his side exposed: he aimed beneath his arm, and plunged his sword to the hilt in the barbarian's body. Brehus gave a horrible roar, fell, bit the earth, and expired.

At the same time Bliomberis saw in bright armour a knight advancing with full speed and followed by the lady he had just saved. This knight had his lance erect, and his helmet over his eyes, but seeing Brehus on the dust, he dismounted and came to thank Bliomberis. The barbarian you have killed, said the lady, wished to do violence to me, because I had been but a moment from the side of my knight, who had stopped a while at Merlin's cave. As soon as I saw your combat begin, I flew to the cavern, and this short interval has been enough for you to deliver England of one of its most infamous robbers, unworthy of the name of knight. He whom you see beside me is Percival the Gaul. My name is Blanchefleur, his well-beloved, and both of us are indebted to the valour of your arm.

Bliomberis, delighted to be acquainted with a knight so illustrious as Percival begged him to be his guide to the court of Arthur. I will no more part with thee, said the Gaul to him. This day has brought a lasting share of my friendship. The two new friends embraced each other, and made the best of their way to Cramalot the capital city of King Arthur.

During the journey, Bliomberis informed Percival of the motive of his voyage, and asked him news of Palamedes. Percival could not satisfy him on that head: he had often heard talk of that hero, but he had never met with him. He took the resolution of seeking him in company with Bliomberis, who made him his confidant of whatever concerned him. The brave Gaul loved him the more for it; and vowed a warlike alliance with him. He promised to travel with him to France, on the expiration of the two years, that Pharamond might hear from him the exploits of Bliomberis. Blanchefleur whose heart was all love, and took



a part in the troubles of lovers, wished much to see Felicia. Would to heaven she were here, said she, we would all four travel together; and that the pleasure might be more lasting we should travel from one end of the world to the other.

While she was yet speaking they saw a knight coming towards them with great speed. His arms covered with dust, did not reflect the burning sun beam: his fatigued steed had his sides gored with the keen spur, and seemed ready to drop with lassitude. The impetuous knight urged him the closer for it. As soon as he came up to Blomberis, Make haste, exclaimed he, dismount, and exchange horses with me, do not detain me. Blomberis and Percival looking at each other, smiled. The irritated stranger cried out with a threatening voice: If my vows will not do, my lance shall; defend yourselves, and attack me one after the other or both at once, I care not.

The haughty Percival was going to draw that instant and punish the rash aggressor; but Blomberis told him it was his quarrel, and with pointed lance, charges and strikes the stranger with such violent strength that he threw him and his horse, twenty paces off, both rolling on the dust.

Our hero, not less humane than brave, ran up to assist him: but the stranger's fall had so shocked him that he lay motionless. Blomberis took off his helmet that he might breathe more freely, and placing him on the grass, he assisted him with an eagerness, that he himself could not account for. Blanchefleur lends her succour also, while the haughty Percival who could not excuse the stranger's pride, said he should have more dearly paid for his extravagance.

Blomberis excited by a supernatural power, was endeavouring to reanimate the conquered stranger, when he saw drop from his cuirass a letter on which was written *To Prince Clodio*. He scarce read the words, but detesting his victory, he swore not to quit the brother of his mistress: he ran and sought for water in his helmet, and with the help of Blanchefleur and Percival restored the unhappy Clodio to life. He had scarce recovered, when, with a doleful accent, he exclaimed, Alas! this adventure has made me lose

an appointment. O prince, said Blomberis to him, you are here with the best of your friends. I am ready to undertake any thing to make amends for the harm I have done. Clodio thanked him, and the beautiful Blanchefleur asked him his motive in attacking two knights who did not provoke him.

Clodio turning towards her, forgot all his pains as he looked on her: You will excuse my imprudence, said he, to her, when you know love is the cause of it. Be kind enough to listen to my adventure, and share in my grief. Then the handsome Clodio with a weak voice and some confusion in his looks, thus began his story:

Three years ago I went to a tournament, the prize of which I disdained to carry off, because my antagonists did not appear worthy of fighting me. Seated among the ladies who were spectators of the tilt, I waited till one of the champions had conquered all the rest, that I might go, and with one blow bear away his glory and his crowns, but love was also in ambush for me, and conquered without fighting.

A young lady, called Celina, attracted all my attention; I approached her; I spoke to her; her softness, her gracefulness, her modesty, completed the conquest her beauty had begun. During the three days that the tilting continued I never left her, and I am not afraid telling you, that on the second day, she was as much pleased as I was myself.

Celina informed me of her birth and situation. I am, said she, the daughter of the Earl of Suffolk: During my infancy I lost my parents; I am heiress to all their fortune, and law has allotted me for tutor a distant relation, who pretends becoming my husband. The name of this man whom I detest, is Brunor. It is the knight you now see in the lists. He every where drags me with him; and to-morrow morning I must return with him to a dismal castle, where I am condemned to pass my days with Brunor and a friend of his, called Danain, whom he is never without, and who is not a jot more amiable than himself.

This circumstance was enough to induce me to carry off Celina from Brunor. That moment I formed a scheme of having admittance into the castle of the two

friends. I sprung into the lists and challenged the ferocious Brunor. I scarce felt the force of the first lunge of his lance: However, I let myself fall from my horse, I counterfeited being numbed by the blow, and when I seemed to regain the use of my senses; Gallant knight, said I to him with a dying voice, I have need of help; I am a stranger and know nobody in this kingdom; your courage is a sure pledge of your generosity; I address myself to my conqueror, that he may take care of the little life he has left me. Brunor proud of his victory and of the trust I reposed in him, encouraged me with a degree of assumed dignity, and consulting his best friend Danian, they agreed that they were under a kind of obligation of bringing me to their castle, that I might recover the health I had lost by my fall.

They then placed me on a branch-woven litter, and paid me every kind of attention. Brunor, Danian, and Celina escorted me to the castle. During the whole way my eyes were riveted on Celina; and when I met those of Brunor, I cried aloud with the anguish I feigned to be in, by the violence of my fall.

At length we arrived at that castle the access to which no mortal had, save Brunor and Danian. They sent for the most expert physician in the place. He examined me much; and after many wise reflections concluded that there was some internal fracture, and that the complaint would take a considerable time in being removed. That was the very thing I wanted.

The sweet Celina who was to be the physician of my real evils, came sometimes to see me. Brunor very seldom left her alone; but he did leave her for a moment, and that moment was enough to inform her of the part love had prompted me to play. Celina was at first alarmed; she soon recovered herself, she joined hastily in the fiction and rewarded me for every falshood I had told on the occasion.

In this manner did I pass a space of three months in Bruno's castle, always ailing, and ever tended by the lovely Celina. Alas, when habituated to felicity, we generally at last become imprudent. One morning that I was with my charming Celina, Danian, Bruno's ever-faithful friend, wished to know how the sick

knight did, and believing me to be asleep, he took all the care he could not to disturb me. What must have been his astonishment, when he saw me very alert at her knees in a posture of thanking for a favor received, rather than that of soliciting one!

Whether it was friendship for Brunor, or vexation that he had been deceived, I know not, but he flew at me sword in hand. I soon had mine prepared: and even in our apartment we begun a combat so much the more dangerous as the sword was our only weapon. Happy lovers, are happy in every thing: I wounded Danain who fell in his blood, I went to him, and promised life only when he had sworn, as he was a knight, never to reveal the secret to Brunor and to find a pretext for his wound. I, on my side, promised to depart that instant; and I was as good as my word. I bade farewell to my lovely Celina; I took leave of Brunor, and I left the castle with an intention of returning thither as soon as I could without danger.

Many adventures led me at last to the court of king Camelides, where I was this morning when my Celina's dwarf came to me with a letter from her own hand, informing me that Danain, on his recovery, was about to depart with Brunor to king Perles, and that their absence left her mistress of herself and the castle. That moment I flew to the appointment. But I had thirty leagues to ride, and knowing that my horse could not keep pace with my eager haste, I swore to fight whoever refused to exchange horses with me. This mode of bating had succeeded with me: I had only four leagues more to be at my journey's end when to my misfortune I met you.

Clodio fetched a deep sigh, and ended the narrative. Blanchefleur could not help smiling at his adventures: Percival, who, in his youth had been very impetuous, easily excused the french prince; and Bliomberis, sorry for the victory he had gained, embraced him, and said, If you think yourself able to continue your journey, my horse will make amends for the wrong I have done you. Promise me, that in eight day's time, you will bring him back to me to the court of king Arthur, and I shall entrust you with him. I too well no the pang



of living far from the object we love. Clodio thanks his generous victor, asks his name, and swears that in eight days, Ebony shall be returned to Bliomberis. Then endeavouring to raise himself up, he with difficulty mounted on the beautiful Ebony, clapping spurs to his sides, and flies off with the swiftness of the winds.

Bliomberis rejoiced to have been of some service to the brother of Felicia, mounted the horse that Clodio had worn out, and begging Blanchefleur and Perceval to slaken their pace, they went on towards Cramalot. They were only a short league from the town, when they saw a knight on foot, who flying up to Bliomberis, sword in hand, I meet thee again, exclaimed he, and thus hast thou used my poor horse! Dismount, if thou art an honorable knight, and let us see if hazard befriend thee as it did this morning. 'Twas in vain for Bliomberis to explain the mistake, or for Perceval, who knew the knight, to restrain his fury. Nothing could appease him. He forced Bliomberis to begin a-foot, one of the most terrible combats he had ever engaged in.

This knight was the valiant Gowan, one of the heroes of the round table. Young Clodio had conquered him in the morning, and Gowan, enraged at his defeat, fought with a spirit that would have been fatal to any other but Bliomberis. The combat lasted an hour. Their forces were now exhausted, and both demanded a moment's rest. During this interval, Gowan's wounds made him listen to his mistake: he was sorry for his precipitancy, asked pardon, and both vowed friendship to each other, so much the sooner as the poor horse, the cause of the contest, had expired during the fray. They rose, and with Perceval and Blanchefleur set off a-foot, and arrived all together at Cramalot.

Our hero was introduced to the great Arthur by his friend Perceval. Having been eye-witness to his exploits, he presented him to the heroes of the round table, as worthy to become, one day, their brother.

Lancelot, Tristan, king Carrados, and every knight of the court of Arthur received him with every mark of sincere friendship. The monarch was delighted,

and wished in vain to keep him with him. The first cares of Bliomberis were given to enquiries after his father. Gowan was the only one who could satisfy him. He had met Palamedes on his way to Orcania. Bliomberis would have instantly set off, but he was obliged to wait for his horse, Ebony, and he already repented he had intrusted it to the imprudent Clodio.

He had reason to repent. The eight days were expired and Clodio did not yet appear. Bliomberis grew quite uneasy; he fain would have gone to the castle of Brunor; but the desire of seeing his father called him to Orcania. Perceval told king Arthur the anxiety that Bliomberis laboured under, and this monarch to satisfy the impatience of a son so affectionate, gave him one of his most beautiful steeds. Bliomberis after having thanked the king, instantly took the road of Orcania in company with Blanchefleur and Perceval.

After two days journey, they went astray in the mountains, and rode a long time without meeting any one to direct them to the right way. All of a sudden a disconsolate woman came and threw herself on her knees before them; Brave knights, she cried, come and save the most wretched and most tender of lovers. My mistress is about to perish in the flames, if your valor does not rescue her. Our two heroes desire the woman to be that moment their guide; they soon arrive at a castle, of which the draw-bridge was up. A dark smoke and rolling flames were seen above the fortification. Perceval and Bliomberis feared that they were too late. They blew their horns with great violence; the bridge fell, and our Palladines saw two other knights appear, one in black armor, the other in gold.

Strangers, said he in the sable mail, come not hither to deprecate torments justly inflicted; nor hinder us from punishing the guilty. There may be guilt, replied the Gaul, and in that case my sword will have unreasonably served my courage: but there may be innocence, and then my weapon will have punished barbarians! These words were scarcely spoken, when Perceval fell on the knight in the sable armor, and Bliomberis on him who was clothed in golden mail.

As their lances were raised to strike, the horse that

the antagonist of Bliomberis rode upon, plunged aside and hindered the blow. In vain did the furious knight make his sides feel the violence of his spur, the steed still resisted, plunged, threw his rider far from him, and flew neighing up to Bliomberis, whose feet he covered with his foam. Bliomberis cried aloud, 'Tis Ebony! 'Tis my own dear horse! He sprung to the ground to lay hold of it, and welcome it: when the treacherous knight of the golden armor taking advantage of the situation, stole up behind and prepared a mortal blow. The horse observed it, and with a desperate plungestruck him with both hoofs to the ground, and in spite of Bliomberis passed twenty times over him.

During this, Perceval had got the better of his adversary: Bliomberis, victor without fighting, mounts Ebony, and flies with the Gaul to deliver the wretched victim. It was young Clodio chained down with Celina, both ready to be thrown into the funeral pile. The imprudent lovers had been surprized by Brunor and Danain, who had ordered them to be burnt alive. But Danain, was killed by the hand of Perceval; and Brunor mangled by the hoofs of Ebony, had scarce the power of respiration left him. Bliomberis made him be carried into his castle, gave Celina to Clodio, restored his arms to him, and presented him with king Arthur's horse. Clodio embraced a thousand times his dear deliverers, swore never to forget what he owed them, and eager, to leave a country where so many misfortunes had befallen him, he embarked immediately, and happily arrived at Tournay with his Celina.

Bliomberis again took the road to Orcania; but Palamedes was not there: Fate ever seemed willing to keep him far from this hero. During eighteen months that he travelled all over England he could not meet with him. Bliomberis, meanwhile, did deeds of immortal renown. Perceval, charmed with his valiant friend, loved him as he would his dearest brother. Blanchefleur would have given every thing but her lover to see Bliomberis and Felicia united, and knowing the conditions on which only the hero could claim his mistress, she kept an exact register of every glorious atchievment, that she herself might convince Phar and of the bravery of Bliomberis.

All this time he was less sensible to his fame than he was to the absence of his father. He was again returning to the court of king Arthur, when in the forest of Brocelianda, and near the Cave of Merlin; where he had delivered Blanchefleur, he saw a tall majestic knight in sable armor, sleeping on the brink of Merlin's well. Through the heat of the weather his helmet was off, and his countenance witnessed more affliction than years. His lance and his buckler were by his side: upon his shield was painted a crown of cypress, with this inscription, *I ask no other*. Perceval, did not know him, and wishing to satisfy his curiosity, he made a noise. The stranger awoke, and suddenly, without saying a word, mounts a fine steed that stood beside him, raises his lance and rushes like a clap of thunder against Perceval. The proud Gaul gallops to his rencounter; but though his blow was terrible, the stranger sat unmoved, while Perceval, for the first time in his life was unhorsed and fell. Bliomberis wished to revenge his brother warrior, and seating himself firmly on Ebony, grasps his lance and charges the stranger. 'Twas in vain; he too fell at the first blow, and when the knight had brought back the horses to their masters, he saluted Blanchefleur with graceful majesty, galloped off, and was soon out of sight.

Our two heroes were thunder-struck. They never till then had been unhorsed. Blanchefleur, when she saw they were not hurt, could not help smiling. They could believe nothing else but that it was an enchantment, they being so near Merlin's cave: This idea made them think better of themselves, and they continued their journey towards Cramalot, where Perceval designed to have Bliomberis admitted to the round table. The account he gave king Arthur of the deeds of Bliomberis engaged the monarch to grant his request. Every English knight joined in it for the brother warrior that was presented to them. The lovely Genvieva, the tender Yseula were too fond of Blanchefleur to refuse their votes to the knight she protected. Bliomberis was therefore dubbed knight of that table where none sat but heroes. So many honors did not make him forget his Felicia: his thoughts were incessantly turned towards her; and he now with joy reflected



that his trials were within one month of being at an end. Previous to his departure for France, asking Arthur was one day at table with his damsels and Palladines, there entered a knight whose appearance challenged respect. His shield without any inscription, intimated that he wished not to be known; his helmet shaded his face, and approaching the king, he first saluted him with graceful dignity, and then said, Mighty king, your name has brought me from afar. The desire of seeing you and the beautiful Genvieva has led me hither, and I am pleased with my journey. There remains only one vow I must fulfil; and that is, to fight the most valiant of your heroes.

At these words, Lancelot, Tristan, Perceval, Gowon, Bliomberis, and Arrodian eagerly rise; they look askance at the rash stranger, and all plead for the honor of the combat. Arthur pleased with their ardor, turned towards the stranger; Gallant knight, said he, chuse from amongst those warriors. The stranger calls for a helmet, throws their names in it, shakes them, and himself draws the name of Bliomberis. When he read it, he looked at the youth and seemed dissatisfied with fate. Bliomberis piqued at the contemptuous manner in which he looked at him, and proud of being charged with the honor of the round table, embraces his dear Perceval, kisses the hand of king Arthur, and calls for Ebony. All the ladies and all the knights betake themselves to the field, and the king himself gives the signal to open the lists.

On one side entered the stranger whose imbrowned armor made a beautiful contrast with his steel as white as the driven snow. On the other was seen Bliomberis on Ebony, with an intrepid but still modest countenance. The combat begins: Their lances fly in shivers at the onset: their swords are already drawn; fire flashes from their helmets and shields! wrath heightens their valor at the unexpected resistance. Impatient to break through it, they seize each other by the middle, fall from their horses, but fell on their feet without quitting the fierce gripe: foot against foot, breast against breast, their armour is crashed betwixt them. Through an aperture on the stranger's bosom, Bliomberis perceives a Flower-de-luce; he in-

stantly knows his adversary: he falls on his knees, Great Pharamond, said he, I own myself conquered: but O this is the most glorious day in my life. This defeat is worth all my victories. Pharamond squeezing his hand exacted the secret: I will be gone, said he, unknown. I am satisfied I have fought the most valiant of Arthur's knights. I never will forget your valor, and your modesty; let us change swords: Bliomberis bent one knee before the king of France; the king embraces him, and remounting his steed, rides from the lists and disappears.

The court, the ladies, the knights were all astonished at the extraordinary event. Bliomberis confided the secret to none but his dear Perceval, though every one easily knew who his antagonist was. His fame was now in its meridian glory, and despairing ever to find his father, on the expiration of the two years of trial, he returned with Blanchefleur and Perceval who never quitted him, to contend for his ever-adored Felicia. Being now near Tournay, his only fear was that the sudden interview betwixt him and Felicia might betray their loves. Perceval was not less uneasy than himself and did not know how to guard against it. Blanchefleur suggested a means; a woman's imagination in an affair of love has more resources than all the enchanters in the world. She desired Bliomberis to write a letter to Felicia, which she and Perceval would carry to Tournay, while Bliomberis should go and wait for an answer in the turtle grove. The scheme was agreed to: they set off and arrive in Tournay, while he, once more, is in that grove whose every tree was dear to him.

Tears of joy filled his eyes when he looked at the spot where he had been wounded by the wild boar. He found on some trees the word *for ever*, that he himself had cut out. No, nothing is changed, said he, all is as I left it. Ah, Felicia, art thou still the same; thy heart - - - Still adores thee, cried out Felicia, who that moment arrived. She had hardly read the letter, when she was in the grove. She rushed into the arms of Bliomberis; they wished to speak: quick sobs cut off articulation: they clung to each other,

they wept, their burning lips are bedewed with their tears, and the intoxication of their felicity scarce leaves them the power of feeling it.

At last they spoke: but the princess to avoid suspicion was obliged to return to the palace, and for the same reason, Bliomberis agreed not to enter Tournay till the next day. That night he slept under a tree.

The next morning all Tournay was full of the knights who were returning from their adventures, each in hopes of their fair prize. They presented themselves at Pharamond's levee. Bliomberis among the rest. The king singled him out, and presented him to his queen, and then to Felicia, who could not help blushing when she enquired how he had fared during his stay.

Every thing was now ready for the tournament that was to determine the prize. A magnificent throne was erected for Pharamond and Rosamond. Clodio and the lovely Celina were at their feet, Felicia adorned like a goddess sat beside the queen. The circus shone in gold. The spectators were placed around, and thirty chosen knights entered the lists, for the king had determined that such only whose actions could bear examination should be admitted. He relied on their own narrative, for such was the frankness of these heroes, that they would speak the truth at the risk of losing the princess. When it came to Bliomberis to speak his adventures, he modestly ungirded his sword, and said, Mighty king, I have only this to entitle me to contend for the princess. 'Twas given me by the first knight in the world, as a token of his esteem: all my other actions I have forgot, since that fortunate and glorious hour. I understand you, said Pharamond smiling: fight, be victor, and my daughter is yours! Bliomberis embraced the king's knees, kissed the border of the queen's robe, caught Clodio, and Perceval to his bosom, and animated by a glance of the princess, he mounts Ebony with a look and air that already spoke victory.

The trumpets sound, Bliomberis flies, and rushes against the first rival that presents himself to him. He strikes him to the ground: another offers himself, Bliomberis unhorses him. A third has the same fate. Bliomberis was the god of war. The beautiful Ebony

more proud, more ardent then ever, struck fire and neighed at every victory. The trembling Felicia followed her lover with her eyes; she did not breathe 'till the moment that Bliomberis had struck down his adversary; she then took breath, and her cheeks became incarnadined with living beauty. Pharamond was pleased; Clodio applauded; Perceval swore whoever conquered Bliomberis must fight him; and in spite of remonstrances Blanchefleur, cried out every time, Courage, Bliomberis!

And now the young warrior, without breaking his lance had worsted all his rivals. Loud acclamations proclaimed him victor. Pharamond took his hand and led him to Felicia. The princess endeavoured to dissemble her joy. Bliomberis fell at her feet, and was receiving the reward of his courage, when an unknown knight demands the combat. Bliomberis enraged to see his happiness interrupted by an unexpected adversary, drops Felicia's hand, and grasping his lance in fury, Where, said he, where is the new rival? let him appear! It was the knight of the cypress crown who had conquered both him and Perceval at Merlin's Cave. A cold and sudden sweat ran down the face of Bliomberis; Well, said he, then I must die, when I thought myself blest. The knight of the cypress crown advanced; gracefully saluted the king and the princess; and while his mighty courser went round capering, Felicia was ready to expire with terror.

Perceval, who still remembered him, flew into the lists, and pretending revenge for a private quarrel demands to fight him instead of Bliomberis; The judges of the field opposed it, and the proud Gaul was obliged to sit down with threatening eyes fixed on the knight. The trembling princess dared not look on this last combat, a dead silence reigned through the multitude, and it was with horror they heard the shrill sound of the trumpet. Bliomberis looks at Felicia, recommends himself to her, fixes himself on Ebony, and flies at his antagonist.

The rencounter of two clouds charged with thunder and impelled by contrary winds was not so dreadful as this onset. Both knights fall back on the cruppers of their horses, which could not themselves sustain the



shock, but roll on the dust. Getting clear of the stirrups, they again met sword in hand, and recommence a battle that makes the valiant shudder. Ah, Felicia, your poor heart feels every blow, and you have no shield to guard it. The furious Percival can no longer contain himself. He is eager to die in the place of his friend, who yet is every way equal with his opponent. The young hero defends himself as vigorously as he is attacked. Already the fatal crown of cypress is struck off; every blow Bliomberis gives, rends the armor of his foe, and every stroke of the stranger breaks through that of Bliomberis. The blood does not yet flow, but it soon will; Bliomberis the valiant Bliomberis, totters, staggers, one blow crushes his helmet, and leaves his head all exposed; he covers it with his buckler; but soon he falls on one knee and still defends himself with gallant intrepidity. Felicia is in a swoon. Blanchefleur pierces the air with her cries, and Perceval, sword in hand flies in betwixt the combatants. *Barbarian, said he to the stranger, strike here, I am your inveterate enemy; I challenge you, I loathe you, I look upon you as the most cowardly of men if you follow the victory that chance has given you over Bliomberis - - - Bliomberis!* cried the stranger, *Bliomberis! ye gods, I was going to murder my son---* With that he throws down both shield and sword, and stretching his arms to Bliomberis; *My son, my son, my dear son, embrace Palamedes.* Bliomberis rushes into his father's arms; Palamedes presses him to his heart, bathes him with his tears. *Ah, my son, said he with sighs, my boy, my dear boy, my sword was going to pierce my own boy---him, for whose sake only I supported life---Warriors,* exclaimed he, addressing the spectators all around; *this is my conqueror: I lay down my arms to him: my son surpasses me! my son is a hero.* At these words the whole circus burst into loud applause and shouts of joy. Palamedes came and presented his son to Pharamond, who crowned the happy day with the union of Felicia and Bliomberis.

Palamedes, Perceval, and Blanchefleur would no more quit these tender lovers, and their marriage was not only a bliss to themselves but it communicated their happiness to the whole court of Pharamond.

# AMELIA,

OR,

## THE PERFIDIOUS HUSBAND.

**TURIN**, the metropolis of Piedmont, the ancient court of the dukes of Savoy, and the ordinary residence of his Sardinian majesty, about the midst of the last century, gave birth to the virtuous and beautiful, tho' unfortunate, Amelia. She was sole heiress to an opulent citizen, who was descended from one of the most considerable families in the whole principality, and was the darling of her aged parents, who had refused several very advantageous offers, which had been proposed to them, as not being able to bear the thoughts of parting with their dear daughter, whose budding beauties attracted the eyes of all who saw her. But the importunities of Fabrico, a promising young nobleman, of the first quality, were not to be resisted: and was accordingly espoused to the incomparable lady, for the first three or four years, they lived in perfect harmony, Fabrico expressing a most passionate fondness for the lovely Amelia: nor was she backward in grateful returns: and indeed excepting a too warm inclination to gaming, Fabrico's morals, and manner of proceeding, seemed irreproachable. He had, for several years before his marriage, constantly passed the carnival at Venice, where that festival is observed with much greater splendour and magnificence, than in any other part of Europe: nor was he known ever to have missed going thither about that time, where he generally stayed seven or eight weeks; yet Amelia never took the least umbrage at his so doing, any more than repining for the want of his company. As he was master of a large fortune, gamed high, and was not always unfortunate, he made a very considerable figure, and his conversation was courted by many of the chief nobility of Venice, and others of the first rank.

Unhappily, a certain senator, of a worthy character, though not very rich, became extremely fond of our young Piemontese, and had contracted such an intimacy with him, that he was never so easy or well pleased, as when he could get him to dine, or pass the evening at his palace. This hospitable nobleman had

a daughter, a young lady of most exquisite beauty and endowments, called Leonarda : with whom Fabricio (who had very carefully concealed his being married) became every day more enamoured ; and, as she appeared in his eyes the most finished beauty he had ever beheld, he soon found he was not master enough of himself to prevent his heart from falling a victim to her charms : Insomuch, that, regardless of the sacred ties under which he was engaged, he wholly abandoned himself to his growing passion for the lovely Leonarda.

As for the young lady, her judgment was too penetrating not to perceive the flame she had kindled in his breast ; nor was it long before he had some reason to flatter himself, that he was not indifferent to her. He met with no severe checks, or repulses, for the tender expressions he made to her ; and it was with great pleasure that she admitted his addresses, and gave ear to what his amorous disposition dictated, because she was very well assured of his being, by extraction, no way inferior to herself, and possessed of a plentiful inheritance ; little dreaming of the previous right marriage had given the virtuous Amelia, both to his person and affections ; nor did he omit daily to give the most solemn assurances, both to herself and her relations and acquaintance of his passion for Leonarda, and his firm resolution to devote himself to her lawful embraces ; declaring, that nothing delayed the consummation of his happiness, but the unavoidable waiting until some certain affairs, of the last importance, were settled and brought to a conclusion.

In the meanwhile his own lady, uneasy and impatient at his unusual stay at Venice, incessantly plied him with pressing letters, to return, expressing great apprehensions that some misfortune had befallen him ; having as yet, no suspicion of his infidelity. She wrote in terms so passionately tender, that, had he been less prepossessed than he was, her letters could not possibly have failed of making a due impression on him. His answers were kind, still feigning urgent business, that debarred him the happiness of her company ; and in this manner he put her off for a twelve-month ; and it is probable that he would never have thought of

leaving Venice, where was the sole object of all his present vows, had not the impatient Amelia, inconsolable at so unkind an absence, made it her daily business to enquire of every one that came from thence, concerning his conduct, and had the information from several persons on whose veracity she could depend, of what gave her mortal pangs.

Fabrico's love for his adored Leonarda, was too vehement to suffer him to keep it a secret; and as his acquaintance in that city was in a manner universal, it was no difficult matter for her to learn the particulars of an amour, which was managed with so little precaution: especially, as it was usual with him to declare publicly, in all company, that he designed to marry the lady to whom he made his addresses, and settle with her at Venice, as soon as ever the situation of his affairs would permit. This news was such a shock to the injured Amelia, that it almost deprived her of her senses, and, in the height of her resentment and despair she writ a long letter to her faithless husband, reproaching him with his baseness, and solemnly protesting, 'That if he was not at Turin within ten days, she would infallibly be with him at Venice, in a very short time after, in order to disabuse the family he had imposed on, and put a stop to the course of so base and infamous a procedure as that to which he had abandoned himself, and which was an injury that she would never suffer.'

Soon after he had received this unwelcome letter, he chanced to drop it out of his pocket, in his mistress's apartment. The sight of it raised her curiosity, and, watching an opportunity, she took it up, unperceived.

When her lover had taken his leave of her she opened it, with an agitation and concern which seemed to foretell the contents. Her amazement and indignation were beyond expression, when, upon her perusing those fatal lines, she was thoroughly convinced of her misfortune: For, at that very instant, and not till then, had she began to feel that her love for him was sincere.

She used her utmost efforts to prevail with her heart to detest a man who had so basely deceived her; but, base and perfidious as he was, he had already taken such an absolute possession of her heart, that she found



it extremely difficult to banish his idea from thence. But at length, after many violent struggles reason got the ascendancy, and opening her eyes, with horror and resentment she beheld the precipice from whence her treacherous lover was preparing to hurry her: The next time he came to visit her, she reproached him with his villainous attempt upon her, in such mortifying terms, that like one planet-struck, he remained utterly confounded and motionless: and, at the same time, throwing him his lady's letter she forbid him her presence, and, as she left him, solemnly vowed, never to see his face again, if she could possibly avoid it. This little expected shock so stupified his faculties, that he scarce knew where he was. At last, somewhat recovering from his lethargy, he went home; but so overwhelmed with passion and despair, that, when he entered his apartment, his rage was so excessively vehement, that he certainly would have laid violent hands on himself, had it not been for some of his acquaintance, who observing his disorder, follow'd him in, and prevented his doing himself any mischief, and prevailed with him to become somewhat more moderate; In the mean time, the unfortunate Leonarda, in order to deprive him of all future hopes of getting into her company, retired into a convent; which gave the finishing stroke to his despair. But in a day or two after, having received fresh letters from Turin, wherein he was assured the too-much injured Amelia was actually preparing to set out for Venice, positively determined there to say and do all that an injured jealous woman was capable of, when she found herself slighted and abandoned by an ungrateful husband; he thought the most prudent method he could take, was to endeavour to divert that storm which so apparently threatened him. As there was no longer staying for him at Venice, he packed up his baggage, and returned to Turin; where being arrived, his good lady received him in so obliging a manner, and even with such transports of joy, as plainly demonstrated that at the moment she beheld him, she entirely forgot all the just causes of complaint she had against him, never upbraiding him with his late unworthy conduct, or, indeed, scarce ever mentioning it to him; and whenever she did, it was in

a very mild and jocose manner, by way of jest. Both her relations, and his, were daily making entertainments, to welcome him home ; and the whole court, who had intelligence of what had been transacted at Venice, admired the kind reception which the virtuous Amelia gave to a person who so little merited any favour at her hands, bestowing on her all the praises her exemplary conduct deserved. Eight months passed in perfect harmony, by which time she began to appear in a state of parturition, and her husband was seemingly fonder of her than ever.

One evening, as he was sitting with her in their bed-chamber, he suddenly started up, saying, he was going to retire into his closet to his devotions, and, at the same time advised her to do the same ; she readily acquiesced, thanking him for putting her in mind of what she ought to have remembered of her own accord, and more especially, as she said, in the condition she was then in. This passed ; and the very next morning, waking sooner than ordinary, she was under no small surprize at missing her husband : But she was much more astonished, when a few moments after, she saw him coming from his closet, bearing in his arms all those materials used at the funerals of persons of distinction. Somewhat disordered and confused, she asked him the meaning of what she thought so extraordinary, and to what use he intended to put those things ? *‘ That you will be sensible of,’* replied he, his eyes sparkling with fury ; *‘ know, wretch, that they all belong to you : I have prepared them for you, and for no one else. This is the time I have fixed upon to take a direful vengeance on you for all the sufferings I have undergone, and whereof thou hast been the only cause ; and these are the wax tapers which are to surround thy bed, as soon as I have sacrificed you to that loss which you have occasioned by your detestable jealousy. Scarce had he uttered these words, but the unhappy lady sprang from her bed, confounded, pale, and trembling, cast herself at his feet, and melting into floods of tears, a sight sufficient, to have raised compassion in a tiger ; ‘ Alas !’ said she, ‘ pardon, my dearest lord, I beseech you, whatever I may, unadvisedly, have said or done to offend you. It was excess of love that made me*

culars of this dismal catastrophe, she being the only person in the family who had the least knowledge of it, till the whole were alarmed by the shrieks of the mother of the poor murdered lady; for otherwise, the unworthy perpetrator of this mischief could not have had leisure to put things in such order as they were found; and as for the wounded damsel, though she saw all, it would have been to little purpose for her to have attempted to call out for assistance, even had she been able.

As for the murderer, the surprize and confusion was too great for any-body to mind what became of him, and when, at last, they began to think of him, it was too late. He had so ordered his matters to prevent his being apprehended, that he soon got out of reach, and arrived safe at Venice. He had flattered himself with the hopes there to put an end to all his unhappiness, in the arms of Leonarda, upon whose account, and for whose sake, he had committed such a diabolical and infamous piece of villainy. At his arrival there, she was at her father's country seat, preparing to come to town: But the news of this detestable action soon spreading abroad, it reached her ears just as she was setting out for Venice. The thoughts of her having been the innocent occasion of that deplorable fact, struck her with such horror, that she immediately took a fixed resolution of quitting the world: and, notwithstanding all the arguments used by her relations, and others, in order to dissuade her, she soon after retired into a convent for the rest of her days.

Her impious, inhuman lover, unable to support himself under this last shock, the most insupportable he had ever yet met with, made all possible interest only to obtain a sight of her; but being absolutely refused, he left Venice, overwhelmed with despair; and now, utterly out of conceit with life, he wished for nothing but death: and, though he wanted courage to end his present misery with his own hands, yet it was not long before he met a deserved fate, being assassinated by a troop of Miquelets, as he was passing through Catalonia, in way to Madrid.