

## **The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Decameron (Day 1 to Day 5), by Giovanni Boccaccio**

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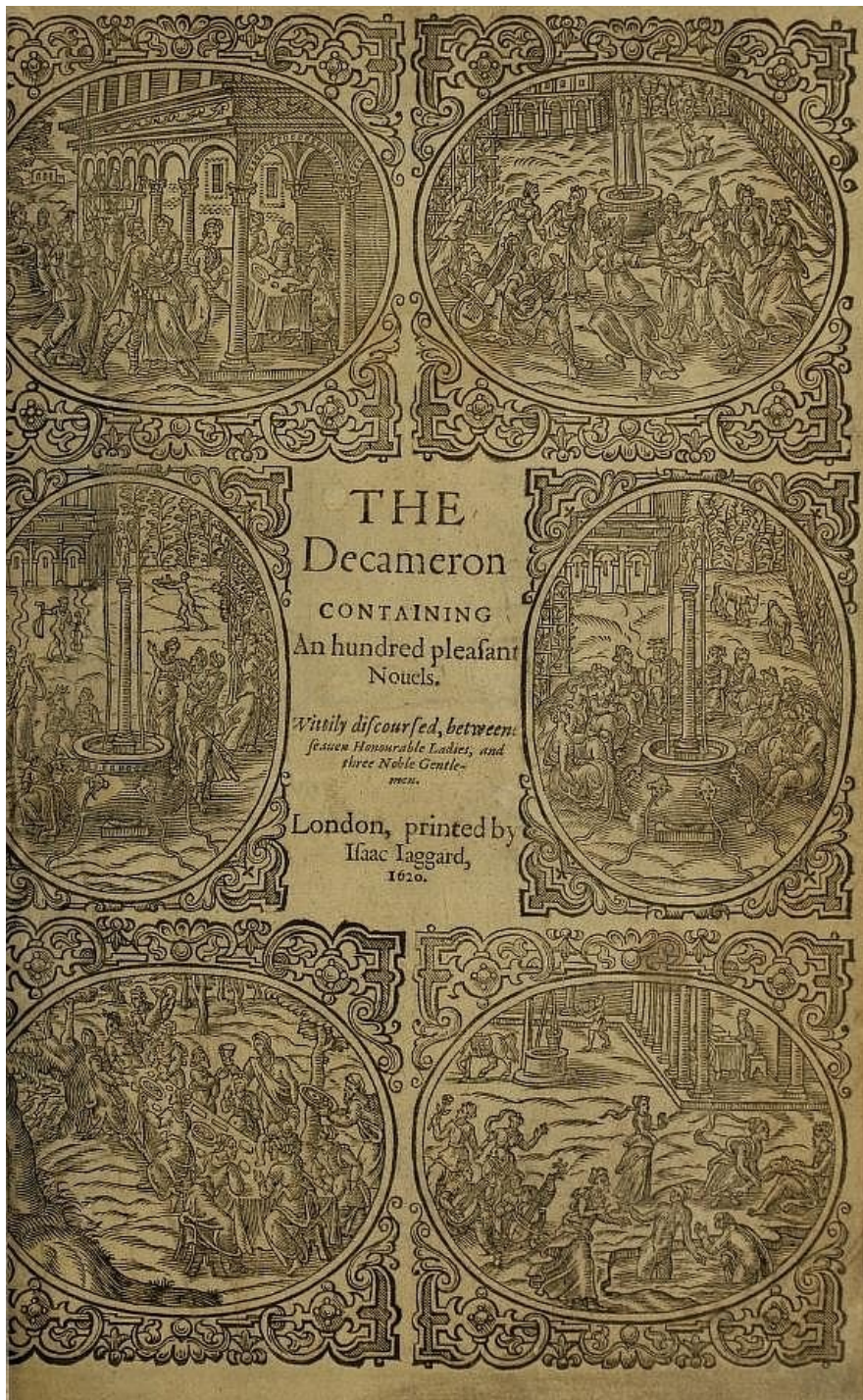
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# THE DECAMERON

CONTAINING  
An hundred pleasant  
Novels.

*Wittily discoursed, betweene  
seaven Honourable Ladies, and  
three Noble Gentlemen.*

London, printed by  
Isaac Iaggard,  
1620.

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**The Epistle Dedicatory.**

**TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE, SIR PHILLIP HERBERT, Knight of the Bath at the Coronation  
of our Sovereign Lord King James, Lord Baron of Sherland, Earle of Montgomery, and  
Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter, &c.**

*The Philosopher Zeno (Right Honourable, and my most worthily esteemed Lord) being demaunded on a time by what meanes a man might attaine to happinesse; made answere: By resorting to the dead, and having familiar conversation with them. Intimating thereby: The reading of ancient and moderne Histories, and endeavouring to learne such good instructions, as have bene observed in our Predecessors. A Question also was mooved by great King Ptolomy, to one of the learned wise Interpreters. In what occasions a King should exercise himselfe, whereto thus hee replyed: To know those things which formerly have bin done: And to read Bookes of those matters which offer themselves dayly, or are fittest for our instant affaires. And lastly, in seeking those things whatsoever, that make for a Kingdomes preservation, and the correction of evill manners or examples.*

*Upon these good and warrantable grounds (most Noble Lord) beside many more of the same Nature, which I omit, to avoide prolixity, I dare boldly affirme, that such as are exercised in the reading of Histories, although they seeme to be but yong in yeares, and slenderly instructed in worldly matters: yet gravity and gray-headed age speaketh maturely in them, to the no meane admiration of common and vulgar judgement. As contrariwise, such as are ignorant of things done and past, before themselves had any being: continue still in the estate of children, able to speake or behave themselves no otherwise; and, even within the bounds of their Native Countries (in respect of knowledge or manly capacity) they are no more then well-seeming dumbe Images.*

*In due consideration of the precedent allegations, and uppon the command, as also most Noble encouragement of your Honour from time to time; this Volume of singular and exquisite Histories, varied into so many and exact natures, appeareth in the worlds view, under your Noble patronage and defence, to be safely sheelded from foule-mouthed slander and detraction, which is too easily throwne upon the very best deserving labours.*

*I know (most worthy Lord) that many of them have (long since) bene published before, as stolne from the first originall Author, and yet not beautified with his sweete stile and elocution of phrases, neither favouring of his singular morall applications. For, as it was his full scope and ayme, by discovering all Vices in their ugly deformities, to make their mortall enemies (the sacred Vertues) to shine the clearer, being set downe by them, and compared with them: so every true and upright judgement, in observing the course of these well-carried Novels, shall plainly perceive, that there is no spare made of reproofe in any degree whatsoever, where sin is embraced, and grace neglected; but the just deserving shame and punishment thereon inflicted, that others may be warned by their example. In imitation of witty Æsope; who reciteth not a Fable, but graceth it with a judicious morall application; as many other worthy Writers have done the like.*

*For instance, let me heere insert one. A poore man, having a pike staffe on his shoulder, and travailing thorow a Countrey Village, a great Mastive Curre ran mainly at him, so that hardly he could defend himselfe from him. At the length, it was his chance to kill the Dogge: for which, the Owner immediately apprehending him, and bringing him before the Judge, alledged, that he had slaine his servant, which defended his life, house, and goods, and therefore challenged satisfaction. The Judge leaning more in favour to the Plaintiffe, as being his friend, neighbour, and familiar, then to the justice and equity of the cause; reprooved the poore fellow somewhat sharpely, and peremptorily commanded him, to make satisfaction, or els he would commit him to prison. That were injustice replyed the poore man, because I kilde the dogge in defence of mine owne life, which deserveth much better respect then a million of such Curses. Sirra, sirra, saide the Judge, then you should have turned the other end of your staffe, and not the pike, so the dogges life had bene saved, and your owne in no danger. True Sir (quoth the fellow) if the dog would have turn'd his taile, and bit mee with that, and not his teeth, then we both had parted quietly.*

*I know your honour to be so truly judicious, that your selfe can make the moral allusion, both in defence of my poore paines, and acceptation of the same into your protection: with most humble submission of my selfe, and all my uttermost endeavours, to bee alwayes ready at your service.*

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***The Authors Prologue, to the Lords, Ladies, and  
Gentlewomen.***

It is a matter of humanity, to take compassion on the afflicted, and although it be fitting towards all in generall, yet to such as are most tied by bond of duty, who having already stood in neede of comfort, do therefore most needfully deserve to enjoy it. Among whom, if ever any were in necessity, found it most precious, and thereforey received no small contentment, I am one of them; because from my verie yongest yeeres, even untill this instant: mine affections became extraordinarily enflamed, in a place high and Noble, more (perhaps) then beseemed my humble condition, albeit no way distasted in the judgement of such as were discreete, when it came truly to their knowledge and understanding. Yet (indeed) it was very painfull for me to endure, not in regard of her cruelty, whom I so deerely loved; as for want of better government in mine owne carriage; being altogether swayed by rash and peevish passions, which made my afflictions more

offensive to mee, then either wisdom allowed, or suited with my private particular.

But, as counsel in misery is no meane comfort, so the good advice of a worthy friend, by many sound and singular perswasions, wrought such a deliberate alteration; as not onely preserved my life (which was before in extreame perill) but also gave conclusion to my inconsiderate love, which in my precedent refractarie carriage, no deliberation, counsel, evident shame, or whatsoever perill should ensue thereon, could in any manner contradict; beganne to asswage of it selfe in time, bestowing not onely on me my former freedome; but delivering me likewise from infinite perplexities.

And because the acknowledgement of good turnes or courtesies received (in my poore opinion) is a vertue among all other highly to bee commended, and the contrary also to be condemned: to shewe my selfe not ingratefull, I determined (so soone as I saw my selfe in absolute liberty) in exchange of so great a benefit bestowne on mee, to minister some mitigation, I will not say to such as releevd me, because their owne better understanding, or blessednesse in Fortune, may defend them from any such necessity; but rather to them which truly stand in need. And although that my comfort, may some way or other availle the common needie, yet (methinkes) where griefe is greatest, and calamity most insulteth; there ought to be our paines soundly imployed, and our gravest instructions and advise wholly administred.

And who can deny, but that it is much more convenient, to commiserate the distresse of Ladies and Gentlewomen, then the more able condition of men? They, as being naturally bashfull and timorous, have their soft and gentle soules, often enflamed with amorous afflictions, which lie there closely concealed, as they can best relate the power of them, that have bin subject to the greatest proofe. Moreover, they being restrained from their wils and desires, by the severity of Fathers, Mothers, Bretheren, and Husbands, are shut up (most part of their time) in their Chambers, where constrainedly sitting idle, diversity of straunge cogitations wheele up and downe their braines, forging as many severall imaginations, which cannot be alwayes pleasant and contenting. If melancholly, incited by some amorous or lovely apprehension, oppresse their weake and unresisting hearts: they must be glad to beare it patiently (till by better Fortune) such occasions happen, as may overcome so proud an usurpation.

Moreover, we cannot but confesse, that they are lesse able, then men, to support such oppressions: for if men grow affectionate, wee plainly perceive, when any melancholly troublesome thoughts, or what griefes else can any way concerne them, their soules are not subject to the like sufferings. But admit they should fall into such necessity, they can come and go whither they will, heare and see many singular sights, hawk, hunt, fish, fowle, ride, or saile on the Seas, all which exercises have a particular power in themselves, to withdraw amorous passions, and appropriate the will to the pleasing appetite, either by alteration of ayre, distance of place, or protraction of time, to kill sorrow, and quicken delight.

Wherefore, somewhat to amend this error in humane condition, and where least strength is, as we see to bee in you most gracious Ladies and Gentlewomen, further off (then men) from all fraile felicities: for such as feele the weighty insultations of proud and impious love, and thereby are most in neede of comfort (and not they that can handle the Needle, Wheele, and Distaffe) I have provided an hundred Novelles, Tales, Fables, or Histories, with judicious moralles belonging to them, for your more delight, and queinter exercise. In a faire and worthy assembly, of seven Honourable Ladies, and three Noble Gentlemen, they were recounted within the compasse of ten dayes, during the wofull time of our so late dangerous sicknesse, with apt Sonnets or Canzons, for the conclusion of each severall day.

In which pleasing Novells, may be observed many strange accidents of Love, and other notable adventures, happening as well in our times, as those of graver antiquity: by reading whereof, you may receyve both pleasure and profitable counsel, because in them you shal perceive, both the sin to be shunned, and the vertue to be embraced; which as I wholly hate the one, so I do (and ever will) honour the others advancement.

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## ***The Table.***

[The Epistle Dedicatory.](#)

[The Authors Prologue, to the Lords, Ladies, and Gentlewomen.](#)

[The First Day, Governed by Madam Pampinea.](#)

[1. Novell.](#) *Messire Chappelet du Prat, by making a false confession, beguiled an holy religious man, and after dyed. And having during his life time, bene a very bad man, at his death was reputed to be a Saint, and called S. Chappelet.*

[2. Novell.](#) *Abraham a Jew, beeing admonished or advised by a friend of his, named Jehannot de Chevigny, travailed from Paris unto Rome: And beholding there, the wicked behaviour of men in the Church, returned to Paris againe, where (neverthelesse) he became a Christian.*

[3. Novell.](#) *Melchisedech a Jewe, by recounting a tale of three Rings, to the great Soldan, named Saladine, prevented a great danger which was prepared for him.*

[4. Novell.](#) *A monke having committed an offence, deserving to be very greevously punished; freed himselfe from the paine to be inflicted on him, by wittily reprehending his Abbot, with the very*

same fault.

[5. Novell.](#) *Lady Marquesse of Montferrat, with a Banket of Hens, and divers other gracious speeches beside, repressed the fond love of the King of France.*

[6. Novell.](#) *An honest plaine meaning man (simply & conscionably) reprehended the malignity, hypocrisie, and misdemeanour of many religious persons.*

[7. Novell.](#) *Bergamino, by telling a Tale of a skilfull man, named Primasso, and of an Abbot of Clugni; honestly checked a new kinde of covetousnesse, in Master Can de la Scala.*

[8. Novell.](#) *Guillaume Boursieur, with a few quaint & familiar words, checkt the miserable covetousness of Signior Herminio de Grimaldi.*

[9. Novell.](#) *How the King of Cyprus was wittily reprehended, by the words of a Gentlewoman of Gascoigne, and became vertuously altered from his vicious disposition.*

[10. Novell.](#) *Master Albert of Bullen, honestly made a Lady to blush, that thought to have done as much to him, because she perceived him to be amorously affected towards her.*

#### [The second Day, governed by Madam Philomena.](#)

[1. Novell.](#) *Martellino counterfetting to bee lame of his members, caused himselfe to bee set on the body of Saint Arriguo, where hee made shew of his sodaine recovery: but when his dissimulation was discovered, he was well beaten, being afterward taken prisoner, and in great danger of being hanged and strangled by the necke, and yet escaped in the end.*

[2. Novell.](#) *Rinaldo de Este, after he was robbed by theeves arrived at Chasteau Guillaume, where he was friendly lodged by a faire Widow, and recompenced likewise for all his losses; returning afterward safe and well home unto his owne house.*

[3. Novell.](#) *Of three yong Gentlemen, being Brethren, and having spent all their Landes and possessions vainly, became poore. A Nephew of theirs (falling almost into as desperate a condition) became acquainted with an Abbot, whom hee afterward found to be the King of Englands Daughter, and made him her Husband in marriage, recompencing all his Unckles losses, and seating them again in good estate.*

[4. Novell.](#) *Landolpho Ruffolo, falling into poverty, became a Pirate on the Seas, and beeing taken by the Genewayes, hardly escaped drowning: Which yet (neverthesse) he did, upon a little chest or coffer full of very rich Jewels, beeing carried thereon to Corfu, where he was well entertained by a good woman: and afterward, returned richly home to his owne house.*

[5. Novell.](#) *Andrea de Piero, travelling from Perouse unto Naples to buy Horses, was (in the space of one night) surprized by three admirable accidents, out of all which he fortunately escaped, and with a rich Ring, returned home to his owne house.*

[6. Novell.](#) *Madame Beritola Caracalla, was found in an Island with two Goates, having lost her two sons, and thence travailed into Lunigiana: where one of her Sonnes became servant to the Lord thereof, and was found some-what over-familiar with his Maisters daughter, who therefore caused him to be imprisoned. Afterward, when the Country of Sicily rebelled against King Charles, the aforesaid Sonne chanced to be known by his Mother, & was married to his Masters daughter. And his brother being found likewise, they both returned to great estate and credite.*

[7. Novell.](#) *The Soldane of Babylon sent one of his Daughters, to be joyned in marriage with the King of Cholcos; who by divers accidents (in the space of foure yeares) happened into the custodie of nine men, and in sundry places. At length, being restored back to her Father, she went to the said king of Cholcos, as a Maide, and as at first she was intended to be his Wife.*

[8. Novell.](#) *Count D'Angiers being falsely accused, was banished out of France, and left his two children in England in divers places. Returning afterward (unknowne) thorough Scotland, hee found them advanced unto great dignity: Then, repairing in the habit of a Servitor, into the King of Fraunce his army, and his innocency made publikely knowen, he was reseated in his former honourable degree.*

[9. Novell.](#) *Bernardo, a Merchant of Geneway, being deceived by another Merchant, named Ambrosio, lost a great part of his goods: and commanding his innocent wife to be murthered, she escaped, and in the habit of a man, became servant to the Soldan. The deceiver being found at last, she compassed such means, that her husband Bernardo came into Alexandria, and there after due punishment inflicted on the false deceiver, she resumed the garments againe of a woman, and returned home with her Husband to Geneway.*

[10. Novell.](#) *Pagamino da Monaco, a roving Pyrate on the seas, caried away the faire Wife of Signieur Ricciardo di Chinzica, who understanding where shee was, went thither; and falling into friendship with Pagamino, demanded his wife of him; whereto he yeilded, provided, that she would willingly go away with him: shee denied to part thence with her husband, and Signior Ricciardo dying, shee became the wife of Pagamino.*

#### [The third day, governed by Madame Neiphila.](#)

[1. Novell.](#) *Massetto di Lamporechio, by counterfetting himselfe dumbe, became a Gardiner in a Monastery of Nuns, where he had familiar conversation with them all.*

[2. Novell.](#) *A query of the stable belonging to Agilulffo, K. of the Lombards, found the meanes of accesse to the Queenes bedde, without any knowledge or consent in her. This beeing secretly discovered by the King, and the party knowne, hee gave him a marke, by shearing the hair of his head. Whereuppon, hee that was so shorne sheared likewise the heads of all his fellowes in the*

lodging and so escaped the punishment intended towards him.

[3. Novell.](#) Under colour of confession and of a most pure conscience, a faire yong Gentlewoman, being amorously affected to an honest man; induced a devout and solemne religious Friar, to advise her in the meanes (without his suspition or perceiving) how to enjoy the benefit of her friend, and bring her desires to their full effect.

[4. Novell.](#) A yong scholler named Felice, enstructed Puccio di Rinieri, how to become rich in a very short time. While Puccio made experience of the instructions taught him; Felice obtained the favour of his daughter.

[5. Novell.](#) Ricciardo, surnamed the Magnifico, gave a horse to signior Francesco Vergellisi, upon condition; that by his leave and license, he might speak to his wife in his presence, which he did, and she not returning him any answer, made answer to himself on her behalfe, and according to his answer, so the effect followed.

[6. Novell.](#) Ricciardo Minutolo fell in love with the Wife of Philippello Fighinolfi, and knowing her to bee very jealous of her husband, gave her to understand, that he was greatly enamored of his Wife, and had appointed to meete her privatly in a bathing house, on the next day following: where shee hoping to take him tardy with his close compacted Mistresse, found her selfe to be deceived by the said Ricciardo.

[7. Novell.](#) Thebaldo Elisei, having received an unkinde repulse by his beloved, departed from Florence, & returning thither againe (a long while after) in the habit of a pilgrime, hee spake with her, and made his wrongs knowne unto her. Hee delivered her husband from the danger of death, because it was proved that he had slaine Thebaldo, he made peace with his brethren, and in the end, wisely enjoyed his hearts desire.

[8. Novell.](#) Ferando, by drinking a certaine kind of powder, was buried for dead & by the Abbot who was enamored of his wife, was taken out of his grave, and put into a darke prison, where they made him beleeeve that he was in purgatory: afterward when time came that he should be raised to life againe, he was made to keepe a childe, which the Abbot had got by his wife.

[9. Novell.](#) Juliet of Narbona, cured the King of France of a dangerous Fistula: in recompence whereof, she requested to enjoy as her husband in mariage, Bertrand the Count of Roussillion. He having married her against his wil, as utterly despising her, went to Florence, where he made love to a yong Gentlewoman. Juliet, by a queint and cunning policy, compassed the meanes (insted of his chosen friend) to lye with her owne husband, by whom shee had two sonnes; which being afterward made knowne unto the Count, hee accepted her into his favour againe, and loved her as his loyall and honourable wife.

[10. Novell.](#) The wonderfull and chaste resolved continencie of faire Serictha, daughter to Siwalde King of Denmarke, who beeing sought and sued unto by many worthy persons, that did affect her dearely, would not looke any man in the face, untill such time as she was married.

#### The Fourth Day, governed by Philostratus.

[1. Novell.](#) Tancrede, Prince of Salerne, caused the amorous friend of his daughter to be slaine, and sent her his heart in a cup of Golde: which afterward she steeped in an impoysoned water, & then drinking it, so dyed.

[2. Novell.](#) Friar Albert made a yong Venetian Gentlewoman beleeeve, that God Cupid was falne in love with her, and he resorted oftentimes unto her, in disguise of the same God: afterward, being frighted by the Gentlewomans kindred and friends hee cast himselfe out of her chamber window, and was hidden in a poore mans house. On the day following, in the shape of a wilde or savage man, he was brought upon the Rialto of S. Mark, & being there publikely knowne by the Brethren of his Order, he was committed to prison.

[3. Novell.](#) Three yong Gentlemen affecting three Sisters, fled with them into Canaie. The eldest of them (through jealousy) becommeth the death of her Lover. The second, by consenting to the Duke of Canaies request, is the meanes of saving her life. Afterward, her owne friend killeth her, & thence flyeth away with the elder sister. The third couple, both man and woman are charged with her death, and being committed to prison, they confesse the fact: and fearing death, by corruption of money they prevaile with their keepers, escaping from thence to Rhodes, where they died in great poverty.

[4. Novell.](#) Gerbino, contrarie to the former plighted faith of his Grandfather King Gulielmo, soughte with a ship at sea belonging to the King of Thunis to take away his daughter, who was then in the same ship. She being slaine by them that had the possession of her, he likewise slew them; and afterward had his owne head smitten off.

[5. Novell.](#) The three Brethren to Isabella, slew a Gentleman that secretly loved her. His ghost appeared to her in her sleepe, and shewed her in what place they had buried his body. She (in silent manner) brought away his head, and putting it into a pot of earth, such as Flowers, Basile, or other sweet herbes are usually set in, she watered it (a long while) with her teares: whereof her Brethren having intelligence; soone after she died, with meere conceite of sorrow.

[6. Novell.](#) A beautifull yong Virgin, named Andreana, became enamored of a young Gentleman, called Gabriello. In conference together, shee declared a dreame of hers to him, and he another of his unto her; whereupon Gabriello fell down sodainly dead. She, and her Chamber-maid were apprehended by the Officers belonging unto the Seignury, as they were carrying Gabriello, to lay them before his owne doore. The Potestate offering violence to the virgin, and she resisting him vertuously: it came to the understanding of her Father, who approved the innocence of his

daughter, and compassed her deliverance. But she afterward, being wearie of all worldly felicities, entred into Religion, & became a Nun.

7. Novell. Faire Simonida affecting Pasquino, and walking with him in a pleasant garden, it fortuned that Pasquino rubbed his teeth with a leaf of Sage, and immediately fell downe dead. Simonida being brought before the bench of Justice, and charged with the death of Pasquino: she rubbed her teeth likewise, with one of the leaves of the same Sage, as declaring what she saw him do, & thereon she dyed also in the same manner.

8. Novell. Jeronimo affecting a yong Mayden named Silvestra was constrained by the earnest importunity of his Mother, to take a journey to Paris. At his returne home from thence againe, he found his love Silvestra married. By secret meanes he got entrance into her house and dyed upon the bed lying by her. Afterward, his body being caried unto the Church to receive buriall, shee likewise died there instantly upon his coarse.

9. Novell. Messer Guiglielmo of Rossiglione having slaine Messer Guiglielmo Guardastagno, whom he imagined to love his wife, gave her his hart to eat. Which she knowing afterward; threw her self out of an high window to the ground: and being dead, was then buried with her friend.

10. Novell. A Physitians wife laid a Lover of her maids, supposing him to be dead, in a chest, by reason that he had drunke water which usually was given to procure a sleepy entrancing. Two Lombard Usurers, stealing the chest, in hope of a rich booty, caried it into their owne house, where afterwarde the man awaking, was apprehended for a Theefe. The Chamber-maid to the Physitians wife, going before the bench of Justice, accuseth her self for putting the imagined dead body into the chest, whereby he escaped hanging: and the Theeves which stole away the chest, were condemned to pay a very great summe of money.

#### The Fift day, Governed by Madame Fiammetta.

1. Novell. Chynon, by falling in love, became wise, and by force of Armes, winning his faire Ladye Iphigenia on the seas, was afterward imprisoned at Rhodes. Being delivered by one name Lysimachus with him he recovered his Iphigenia againe, and faire Cassandra even in the middest of their mariage. They fled with them into Candye, where after they had married them, they were called home to their owne dwelling.

2. Novell. Faire Constance of Liparis, fell in Love with Martuccio Gomito: and hearing that hee was dead, desperately she entred into a Barke which being transported by the winds to Susa in Barbary, from thence she went to Thunis, where she found him to be living. There she made her selfe knowne to him, and he being in great authority, as a privy Counsellor to the King: he married the saide Constance, and returned richly home to her, to the Island of Liparis.

3. Novell. Pedro Bocamazzo, escaping away with a yong Damosel which he loved, named Angelina, met with Theeves in his journey. The Damosel flying fearfully into a Forest, by chaunce commeth to a Castle. Pedro being taken by the theeves, & hapning afterward to escape from them, accidentally came to the same Castle where Angelina was: & marrying her, they then returned home to Rome.

4. Novell. Ricciardo Manardy, was found by Messer Lizio da Valbonna, as he sat fast asleep at his daughters chamber window, having his hand fast in hirs and sleeping in the same manner. Whereupon they were joyned together in mariage, and their long loyall love mutually recompenced.

5. Novell. Guidotto of Cremona, departing out of this mortall life, left a daughter of his with Jacomino of Pavia. Giovanni di Severino, and Menghino da Minghole, fell both in love with the yong Maiden, and fought for her; who being afterward knowne to be the sister to Giovanni, shee was given in mariage to Menghino.

6. Novell. Guion di Procida, being found familiarly conversing with a yong Damosel which he loved, and had bene given formerly to Frederigo King of Sicily: was bound to a stake to bee consumed with fire. From which danger (neverthelesse) hee escaped; being knowne by Don Rogiero de Oria, Lorde Admirall of Sicily, and afterward married the Damosel.

7. Novell. Theodoro falling in love with Violenta, the daughter to his Master, named Amarigo, and she conceyving with childe by him, was condemnd to be hanged. As they were leading him unto the gallowes, beating and misusing him all the way: hee happened to bee knowne by his owne Father, whereupon he was released, and afterward joyned Violenta in mariage.

8. Novell. Anastasio, a Gentleman of the Family of the Honesti by loving the daughter to Signior Paulo Traversario, lavishly wasted a great part of his substance, without receiving any love from her againe. By perswasion of some of his kindred and friends, he went to a cuntry dwelling of his called Chiasso, where hee saw a Knight desperately pursue a yong Damosell, whom he slew, & afterward gave her to be devoured by his hounds. Anastasio invited his friends, and hers also whom he so dearly loved, to take part of a dinner with him, who likewise sawe the same Damosell so torne in peeces: which his unkind love perceiving, & fearing least the like ill fortune should happen to her, she accepted Anastasio to bee her husband.

9. Novell. Frederigo, of the Alberighi Family, loved a Gentlewoman, and was not requited with like love againe. By bountifull expences, and over liberal invitations, hee wasted and consumed all his lands and goods, having nothing lefte him, but a Hawke or Faulcon. His unkinde Mistresse, happeneth to come visit him, and he not having any other food for her dinner, made a dainty dish of his Faulcon for her to feed on. Being conquered by this his exceeding kinde courtesie, she changed her former hatred towards him, accepting him as her husband in marriage, and made him a man of wealthy possessions.

[10. Novell.](#) *Pedro di Vinciolo, went to sup at a friends house in the City. His wife (in the meane while) had a yong man whom she loved, at supper with her. Pedro returning home upon a sodaine, the young man was hidden under a Coope for Hens. Pedro, in excuse of his so soone coming home, declareth; how in the house of Herculano (with whome hee should have supt) a friend of his wives was found, which was the reason of the suppers breaking off. Pedroes wife reproving the error of Herculanoes wife: an Asse (by chance) treades on the young mans fingers that lay hidden under the Henne-Coope. Upon his crying out, Pedro steppeth thither, sees him, knowes him, and findeth the fallacie of his wife: with whom (neverthelesse) he groweth to agreement, in regard of some imperfections in himselfe.*

#### **The End of the Table.**

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## **THE DECAMERON, Containing, an Hundred pleasant NOVELLES.**

***Wherein, after demonstration made by the Author, upon what occasion it hapned, that the persons (of whom we shall speake heereafter) should thus meete together, to make so queint a Narration of Novels: Hee declareth unto you, that they first begin to devise and conferre, under the government of Madam Pampinea, and of such matters as may be most pleasing to them all.***

#### **The Induction of the Author, to the following Discourses.**

Gracious Ladies, so often as I consider with my selfe, and observe respectively, how naturally you are enclined to compassion; as many times do I acknowledge, that this present worke of mine, will (in your judgement) appeare to have but a harsh and offensive beginning, in regard of the mournfull remembrance it beareth at the verie entrance of the last Pestilentiall mortality, universally hurtfull to all that beheld it, or otherwise came to knowledge of it. But for all that, I desire it may not be so dreadfull to you, to hinder your further proceeding in reading, as if none were to looke thereon, but with sighes and teares. For, I could rather wish, that so fearefull a beginning, should seeme but as an high and steepy hill appeares to them, that attempt to travell farre on foote, and ascending the same with some difficulty, come afterward to walk upon a goodly even plaine, which causeth the more contentment in them, because the attaining thereto was hard and painfull. For, even as pleasures are cut off by grieffe and anguish; so sorrowes cease by joyes most sweete and happie arriving.

After this breefe molestation, briefe I say, because it is contained within small compasse of Writing; immediatly followeth the most sweete and pleasant taste of pleasure, whereof (before) I made promise to you. Which (peradventure) could not bee expected by such a beginning, if promise stode not thereunto engaged. And indeed, if I could wel have conveyed you to the center of my desire, by any other way, then so rude and rocky a passage as this is, I would gladly have done it. But because without this Narration, we could not demonstrate the occasion how and wherefore the matters hapned, which you shall reade in the ensuing Discourses: I must set them downe (even as constrained thereto by meere necessity) in writing after this manner.

The yeare of our blessed Saviours incarnation, 1348. that memorable mortality happened in the excellent City, farre beyond all the rest in *Italy*; which plague, by operation of the superiour bodies, or rather for our enormous iniquities, by the just anger of God was sent upon us mortals. Some few yeeres before, it tooke beginning in the Easterne partes, sweeping thence an innumerable quantity of living soules: extending it selfe afterward from place to place Westward, untill it seized on the said City. Where neither humane skill or providence, could use any prevention, notwithstanding it was cleansed of many annoyances, by diligent Officers thereto deputed: besides prohibition of all sickly persons enturance, and all possible provision dayly used for conservation of such as were in health, with incessant prayers and supplications of devoute people, for the asswaging of so dangerous a sicknesse.

About the beginning of the yeare, it also began in very strange manner, as appeared by divers admirable effects; yet not as it had done in the East Countries, where Lord or Lady being touched therewith, manifest signes of inevitable death followed thereon, by bleeding at the nose. But here it began with yong children, male and female, either under the armpits, or in the groine by certaine swellings, in some to the bignesse of an Apple, in others like an Egge, and so in divers greater or lesser, which (in their vulgar Language) they termed to be a Botch or Byle. In very short time after, those two infected parts were grown mortiferous, and would disperse abroad indifferently, to all parts of the body; whereupon, such was the qualitie of the disease, to shew it selfe by blacke or blew spottes, which would appeare on the armes of many, others on their thighes, and everie part else of the body: in some great and few, in others small and thicke.

Now as the Byle (at the beginning) was an assured signe of neere approaching death; so proved the spots likewise to such as had them: for the curing of which sicknesse it seemed, that the Physitians counsell, the vertue of Medicines, or any application else, could not yeeld any remedy: but rather it plainly appeared, that either the nature of the disease would not endure it, or



ignorance in the Physitians could not comprehend, from whence the cause proceeded, and so by consequent, no resolution was to be determined. Moreover, beside the number of such as were skilfull in Art, many more both women and men, without ever having any knowledge in Physicke, became Physitians: so that not onely few were healed, but (well-neere) all dyed, within three dayes after the saide signes were seene; some sooner, and others later, commonly without either Feaver, or any other accident.

And this pestilence was yet of farre greater power or violence; for, not onely healthfull persons speaking to the sicke, comming to see them, or ayring cloathes in kindnesse to comfort them, was an occasion of ensuing death: but touching their garments, or any foode whereon the sicke person fed, or any thing else used in his service, seemed to transferre the disease from the sicke to the sound, in very rare and miraculous manner. Among which matter of marvell, let me tell you one thing, which if the eyes of many (as well as mine owne) had not seene, hardly could I be perswaded to write it, much lesse to beleieve it, albeit a man of good credit should report it. I say, that the quality of this contagious pestilence was not onely of such efficacy, in taking and catching it one of another, either men or women: but it extended further, even in the apparant view of many, that the cloathes, or any thing else, wherein one died of that disease, being toucht, or lyen on by any beast, farre from the kind or quality of man, they did not onely contaminate and infect the said beast, were it Dogge, Cat, or any other; but also it died very soone after.

Mine owne eyes (as formerly I have said) among divers other, one day had evident experience hereof, for some poore ragged cloathes of linnen and wollen, torne from a wretched body dead of that disease, and hurled in the open streete; two Swine going by, and (according to their naturall inclination) seeking for foode on every dung-hill, tossed and tumbled the cloathes with their snouts, rubbing their heads likewise uppon them; and immediately, each turning twice or thrice about, they both fell downe dead on the saide cloathes, as being fully infected with the contagion of them: which accident, and other the like, if not far greater, begat divers feares and imaginations in them that beheld them, all tending to a most inhumane and uncharitable end; namely, to flie thence from the sicke, and touching any thing of theirs, by which meanes they thought their health should be safely warranted.

Some there were, who considered with themselves, that living soberly, with abstinence from all superfluity; it would be a sufficient resistance against all hurtfull accidents. So combining themselves in a sociable manner, they lived as separatists from all other company, being shut up in such houses, where no sicke body should be neere them. And there, for their more security, they used delicate viands and excellent wines, avoiding luxurie, and refusing speech to one another, not looking forth at the windowes, to heare no cries of dying people, or see any coarses carried to buriall; but having musicall instruments, lived there in all possible pleasure. Others were of a contrary opinion, who avouched, that there was no other physicke more certaine, for a disease so desperate, then to drinke hard, be merry among themselves, singing continually, walking every where, and satisfying their appetites with whatsoever they desired, laughing, and mocking at every mournfull accident, and so they vowed to spend day and night: for now they would goe to one Taverne, then to another, living without any rule or measure; which they might very easilie doe, because every one of them, (as if he were to live no longer in this World) had even forsaken all things that he had. By meanes whereof the most part of the houses were become common, and all strangers, might doe the like (if they pleased to adventure it) even as boldly as the Lord or owner, without any let or contradiction.

Yet in all this their beastly behaviour, they were wise enough, to shun (so much as they might) the weake and sickly: In which misery and affliction of our City, the venerable authority of the Lawes, as well divine as humane, was even destroyed, as it were, through want of the awfull Ministers of them. For they being all dead, or lying sicke with the rest, or else lived so solitary, in such great necessity of servants and attendants, as they could not execute any office, whereby it was lawfull for every one to doe as he listed.

Betweene these two rehearsed extremities of life, there were other of a more moderate temper, not being so daintily dieted as the first, nor drinking so dissolutely as the second; but used all things sufficient for their appetites, and without shutting up themselves, walked abroad, some carrying sweete nose-gayes of flowers in their hands; others odoriferous herbes, and others divers kinds of spiceries, holding them to their noses, and thinking them most comfortable for the braine, because the ayre seemed to be much infected, by the noysome smell of dead carkases, and other hurtfull savours. Some other there were also of more inhumane minde (howbeit peradventure it might be the surest) saying, that there was no better physicke against the pestilence, nor yet so good; as to flie away from it, which argument mainly moving them, and caring for no body but themselves, very many, both men and women, forsooke the City, their owne houses, their Parents, kindred, friends, and goods, flying to other mens dwellings elsewhere. As if the wrath of God, in punishing the sinnes of men with this plague, would fall heavily upon none, but such as were enclosed within the City wals; or else perswading themselves, that not any one should there be left alive, but that the finall ending of all things was come.

Now albeit these persons in their diversity of opinions died not all, so undoubtedly they did not all escape; but many among them becomming sicke, and making a generall example of their flight and folly, among them that could not stirre out of their beds, they languished more perplexedly then the other did. Let us omit, that one Citizen fled after another, and one neighbour had not any care of another, Parents nor kinred never visiting them, but utterly they were forsaken on all sides: this tribulation pierced into the hearts of men, and with such a dreadfull terror, that one Brother forsooke another; the Unkle the Nephew, the Sister the Brother, and the Wife her Husband: nay, a matter much greater, and almost incredible; Fathers and Mothers fled away

from their owne Children, even as if they had no way appertained to them. In regard whereof, it could be no otherwise, but that a countlesse multitude of men and women fell sicke; finding no charity among their friends, except a very few, and subjected to the avarice of servants, who attended them constrainedly, for great and unreasonable wages, yet few of those attendants to be found any where too. And they were men or women but of base condition, as also of groser understanding, who never before had served in any such necessities, nor indeed were any way else to be employed, but to give the sicke person such things as he called for, or to awaite the houre of his death; in the performance of which services, oftentimes for gaine, they lost their owne lives.

In this extreame calamity, the sicke being thus forsaken of neighbours, kinred, and friends, standing also in such need of servants; a custome came up among them, never heard of before, that there was not any woman, how noble, young, or faire soever shee was, but falling sicke, shee must of necessity have a man to attend her, were he young or otherwise, respect of shame or modesty no way prevailing, but all parts of her body must be discovered to him, which (in the like urgency) was not to be seene by any but women: whereon ensued afterward, that upon the parties healing and recovery, it was the occasion of further dishonesty, which many being more modestly curious of, refused such disgracefull attending, chusing rather to die, then by such helpe to be healed. In regard whereof, as well through the want of convenient remedies, (which the sicke by no meanes could attain unto) as also the violence of the contagion, the multitude of them that died night and day, was so great, that it was a dreadfull sight to behold, and as much to heare spoken of. So that meere necesssity (among them that remained living) begat new behaviours, quite contrary to all which had beene in former times, and frequently used among the City Inhabitants.

The custome of precedent dayes (as now againe it is) was, that women, kinred, neighbours, and friends, would meete together at the deceased parties house, and there, with them that were of nearest alliance, expresse their hearts sorrow for their friends losse. If not thus, they would assemble before the doore, with many of the best Cittizens and kindred, and (according to the quality of the deceased) the Clergy met there likewise, and the dead body was carried (in comely manner) on mens shoulders, with funerall pompe of Torch-light, and singing, to the Church appointed by the deceased. But these seemely orders, after that the fury of the pestilence began to encrease, they in like manner altogether ceased, and other new customes came in their place; because not onely people died, without having any women about them, but infinites also past out of this life, not having any witnesse, how, when, or in what manner they departed. So that few or none there were, to deliver outward shew of sorrow and grieving: but instead thereof, divers declared idle joy and rejoycing, a use soone learned of immodest women, having put off al feminine compassion, yea, or regard of their owne welfare.

Very few also would accompany the body to the grave, and they not any of the Neighbours, although it had beene an honourable Cittizen, but onely the meanest kinde of people, such as were grave-makers, coffin-bearers, or the like, that did these services onely for money, and the beere being mounted on their shoulders, in all haste they would runne away with it, not perhaps to the Church appointed by the dead, but to the nearest at hand, having some foure or sixe poore Priests following, with lights or no lights, and those of the silliest; short service being said at the buriall, and the body unreverently throwne into the first open grave they found. Such was the pittifull misery of poore people, and divers, who were of better condition, as it was most lamentable to behold; because the greater number of them, under hope of healing, or compelled by poverty, kept still within their houses weake and faint, thousands falling sick daily, and having no helpe, or being succoured any way with foode or physicke, all of them died, few or none escaping.

Great store there were, that died in the streetes by day or night, and many more beside, although they died in their houses; yet first they made it knowne to their neighbours, that their lives perished, rather by the noysome smell of dead and putrified bodies, then by any violence of the disease in themselves. So that of these and the rest, dying in this manner every where, the neighbours observed one course of behaviour, (moved thereto no lesse by feare, that the smell and corruption of dead bodies should harme them, then charitable respect of the dead) that themselves when they could, or being assisted by some bearers of coarses, when they were able to procure them, wold hale the bodies (alreadie dead) out of their houses, laying them before their doores, where such as passed by, especially in the mornings, might see them lying in no meane numbers. Afterward, Bieres were brought thither, and such as might not have the helpe of Bieres, were glad to lay them on tables, and Bieres have bin observed, not onely to be charged with two or three dead bodies at once, but many times it was seene also, that the wife with the husband, two or three Brethren together; yea, the Father and the mother, have thus beene carried along to the grave upon one Biere.

Moreover, oftentimes it hath bene seene, that when two Priests went with one Crosse to fetch the body; there would follow (behind) three or foure bearers with their Bieres, and when the Priests intended the buriall but of one bodie, sixe or eight more have made up the advantage, and yet none of them being attended by any seemly company, lights, teares, or the very least decencie, but it plainly appeared, that the verie like account was then made of men or Women, as if they had bene Dogges or Swine. Wherein might manifestly bee noted, that that which the naturall course of things could not shewe to the wise, with rare and little losse, to wit, the patient support of miseries and misfortunes, even in their greatest height: not onely the wise might now learne, but also the verie simplest people; & in such sort, that they should alwaies be prepared against all infelicities whatsoever.

Hallowed ground could not now suffice, for the great multitude of dead bodies, which were daily brought to every Church in the City, and every houre in the day; neither could the bodies have proper place of buriall, according to our ancient custome: wherefore, after that the churches and Church-yards were filled, they were constrained to make use of great deepe ditches, wherein they were buried by hundreds at once, ranking dead bodies along in graves, as Merchandizes are laide along in ships, covering each after other with a small quantity of earth, & so they filled at last up the whole ditch to the brim.

Now, because I would wander no further in everie particularity, concerning the miseries happening in our Citie: I tell you, that extremities running on in such manner as you have heard; little lesse spare was made in the Villages round about; wherein (setting aside enclosed Castles, which were now filled like to small Cities) poore Labourers and Husband-men, with their whole Families, dyed most miserably in out-houses, yea, and in the open fieldes also; without any assistance of physicke, or helpe of servants; & likewise in the high-wayes, or their ploughed landes, by day or night indifferently, yet not as men, but like brute beasts.

By meanes whereof, they became lazie and slothfull in their daily endeavours, even like to our Citizens; not minding or meddling with their wonted affaires: but, as awaiting for death every houre, employed all their paines, not in caring any way for themselves, their cattle, or gathering the fruits of the earth, or any of their accustomed labours; but rather wasted and consumed, even such as were for their instant sustenance. Whereupon, it fell so out, that their Oxen, Asses, Sheepe, and Goates, their Swine, Pullen, yea their verie Dogges, the truest and faithfulest servants to men, being beaten and banished from their houses, went wildly wandring abroad in the fields, where the Corne grew still on the ground without gathering, or being so much as reapt or cut. Many of the fore-said beasts (as endued with reason) after they had pastured themselves in the day time, would returne full fed at night home to their houses, without any government of Heardsmen, or any other.

How many faire Palaces! How many goodly Houses! How many noble habitations, filled before with families of Lords and Ladies, were then to be seene emptie, without any one there dwelling, except some silly servant? How many Kindreds, worthy of memory! How many great inheritances! And what plenty of riches, were left without any true successours? How many good men! How many woorthy Women! How many valiant and comely yong men, whom none but *Galen*, *Hippocrates*, and *Æsculapius* (if they were living) could have reputed any way unhealthfull; were seene to dine at morning, with their Parents, Friends, and familiar confederates, and went to sup in another world with their Predecessors?

It is no meane breach to my braine, to make repetition of so many miseries; wherefore, being willing to part with them as easily as I may: I say that our Citie being in this case, voide of inhabitants, it came to passe (as afterward I understoode by some of good credite) that in the venerable Church of *S. Marie la Neufue*, on a Tuesday morning, there being then no other person, after the hearing of divine Service, in mourning habits (as the season required) returned thence seven discreet yong Gentlewomen, all allyed together, either by friendship, neighbourhood, or parentage. She among them that was most entred into yeares, exceeded not eight and twenty, and the yongest was no lesse then eighteene; being of Noble descent, faire forme, adorned with exquisite behaviour, and gracious modesty.

Their names I could report, if just occasion did not forbid it, in regard of the occasions following by them related, and because times heereafter shall not taxe them with reproofe; the lawes of pleasure being more straited now adayes (for the matters before revealed) then at that time they were, not onely to their yeares, but to many much riper. Neither will I likewise minister matter to rash heades (over-readie in censuring commendable life) any way to impaire the honestie of Ladies, by their idle detracting speeches. And therefore, to the end that what each of them saith, may be comprehended without confusion; I purpose to stile them by names, wholly agreeing, or (in part) conformable to their qualities. The first and most aged, we will name *Pampinea*; the second *Fiammetta*; the third *Philomena*; the fourth *Æmilia*; the fift *Lauretta*; the sixt *Neiphila*; and the last we terme (not without occasion) *Elissa*, or *Eliza*. All of them being assembled at a corner of the Church, not by any deliberation formerly appointed, but meere by accident, and sitting as it were in a round ring: after divers sighs severally delivered, they conferred on sundry matters answerable to the sad qualitie of the time, and within a while after, Madam *Pampinea* began in this manner.

Faire Ladies, you may (no doubt as well as I) have often heard, that no injury is offered to any one, by such as make use but of their owne right. It is a thing naturall for everie one which is borne in this World, to aide, conserve, and defend her life so long as shee can; and this right hath bene so powerfully permitted, that although it hath sometimes happened, that (to defend themselves) men have beene slaine without any offence: yet Lawes have allowed it to be so, in whose solicitude lieth the best living of all mortals. How much more honest and just is it then for us, and for every other well-disposed person, to seeke for (without wronging any) and to practise all remedies that wee can, for the conservation of our lives? When I well consider, what we have heere done this morning, and many other already past; remembring (withall) what likewise is proper and convenient for us: I conceive (as all you may do the like) that everie one of us hath a due respect of her selfe, and then I mervaile not, but rather am much amazed (knowing none of us to be deprived of a Womans best judgement) that wee seeke not after some remedies for our selves, against that, which every one among us, ought (in reason) to feare.

Heere we meete and remaine (as it seemeth to mee) in no other manner, then as if we would or should be witnesses, to all the dead bodies at rest in their graves; or else to listen, when the religious Sisters here dwelling (whose number now are well-neere come to be none at all) sing

Service at such houres as they ought to do; or else to acquaint all commers hither (by our mourning habites) with the quality and quantitie of our hearts miseries. And when we part hence, we meete with none but dead bodies; or sicke persons transported from one place to another; or else we see running thorow the City (in most offensive fury) such as (by authoritie of publike Lawes) were banished hence, onely for their bad and brutish behaviour in contempt of those Lawes, because now they know, that the executors of them are dead and sicke. And if not these, more lamentable spectacles present themselves to us, by the base rascality of the Citie; who being fatted with our blood, tearme themselves Grave-makers, and in meere contemptible mockerie of us, are mounted on horse-backe, galloping everie where, reproaching us with our losses and misfortunes, with lewd and dishonest songs: so that we can hear nothing els but such and such are dead, and such and such lie a dying; heere hands wringing, and everie where most pittifull complaining.

If we returne home to our houses (I know not whether your case bee answerable to mine) when I can finde none of all my Family, but onely my poore waiting Chamber-maide; so great are my feares, that the verie haire on my head declareth my amazement, and wheresoever I go or sit downe, me thinkes I see the ghostes and shadowes of deceased friends, not with such lovely lookes as I was wont to behold them, but with most horrid and dreadfull regards, newly stolne upon them I know not how. In these respects, both heere, else-where, and at home in my house, methinkes I am alwaies ill, and much more (in mine owne opinion) then any other bodie, not having meanes or place of retirement, as all we have, and none to remaine heere but onely we.

Moreover, I have often heard it said, that in tarrying or departing, no distinction is made in things honest or dishonest; onely appetite will be served; and be they alone or in company, by day or night, they do whatsoever their appetite desireth: not secular persons onely, but such as are recluses, and shut up within Monasteries, breaking the Lawes of obedience, and being addicted to pleasures of the flesh, are become lascivious and dissolute, making the world beleieve, that whatsoever is convenient for other women, is no way unbeseeing them, as thinking in that manner to escape.

If it be so, as manifestlie it maketh shew of it selfe; What do we here? What stay we for? And whereon do we dreame? Why are we more respectlesse of our health, then all the rest of the Citizens? Repute we our selves lesse precious then all the other? Or do we beleieve, that life is linked to our bodies with stronger chaines, then to others, and that therefore we should not feare any thing that hath power to offend us? Wee erre therein, and are deceived. What brutishnesse were it in us, if wee should urge any such beleefe? So often as wee call to minde, what, and how many gallant yong men and women, have beene devoured by this cruell pestilence; wee may evidently observe a contrary argument.

Wherefore, to the end, that by being over-scrupulous and carelesse, we fall not into such danger, whence when we would (perhaps) we cannot recover our selves by any meanes: I thinke it meete (if your judgement therein shall jumpe with mine) that all of us as we are (at least, if we will doe as divers before us have done, and yet daily endeavour to doe) shunning death by the honest example of other, make our retreat to our Countrey houses, wherewith all of us are sufficiently furnished, and thereto delight our selves as best we may, yet without transgressing (in any act) the limits of reason. There shall we heare the pretty birds sweetly singing, see the hilles and plaines verdantly flourishing; the Corne waving in the field like the billowes of the Sea; infinite store of goodly trees, and the Heavens more fairely open to us, then here we can behold them: And although they are justly displeased, yet will they not there denie us better beauties to gaze on, then the walles in our City (emptied of Inhabitants) can afford us.

Moreover, the Ayre is much fresh and cleere, and generally, there is farre greater abundance of all things whatsoever, needefull at this time for preservation of our health, and lesse offence or molestation then wee find here.

And although Countrey people die, as well as heere our Citizens doe, the grieffe notwithstanding is so much the lesse, as the houses and dwellers there are rare, in comparison of them in our City. And beside, if we well observe it, here wee forsake no particular person, but rather wee may tearme our selves forsaken; in regard that our Husbands, Kinred, and Friends, either dying, or flying from the dead, have left us alone in this great affliction, even as if we were no way belonging unto them. And therefore, by following this counsell, wee cannot fall into any reprehension; whereas if we neglect and refuse it, danger, distresse, and death, (perhaps) may ensue thereon.

Wherefore, if you thinke good, I would allow it for well done, to take our waiting women, with all such things as are needfull for us, and (as this day) betake our selves to one place, to morrow to another, taking there such pleasure and recreation, as so sweete a season liberally bestoweth on us. In which manner we may remaine, till we see (if death otherwise prevent us not) what ende the gracious Heavens have reserved for us. I would have you also to consider, that it is no lesse seemely for us to part hence honestly, then a great number of other Women to remaine here immodestly.

The other Ladies and Gentlewomen, having heard Madam *Pampinea*, not onely commended her counsell, but desiring also to put it in execution; had already particularly consulted with themselves, by what means they might instantly depart from thence. Neverthelesse, Madam *Philomena*, who was very wise, spake thus.

Albeit faire Ladies, the case propounded by Madam *Pampinea* hath beene very wel delivered; yet (for all that) it is against reason for us to rush on, as we are over-ready to doe. Remember that we are all women, and no one among us is so childish, but may consider, that when wee shall be so

assembled together, without providence or conduct of some man, we can hardly governe our selves. We are fraile, offensive, suspicious, weake spirited, and fearefull: in regard of which imperfections, I greatly doubt (if we have no better direction then our owne) this society will sooner dissolve it selfe, and (perchance) with lesse honour to us, then if we never had begunne it. And therefore it shall be expedient for us, to provide before wee proceede any further. Madam *Elissa* hereon thus replied.

Most true it is, that men are the chiefe or head of women, and without their order, sildome times doe any matters of ours sort to commendable ende. But what meanes shal we make for men? we all know well enough, that the most part of our friends are dead, and such as are living, some be dispersed here, others there, into divers places and companies, where we have no knowledge of their being. And to accept of strangers, would seeme very inconvenient; wherefore as we have such care of our health, so should wee be as respective (withall) in ordering our intention: that wheresoever wee aime at our pleasure and contentment, reproofe and scandall may by no meanes pursue us.

While this discourse thus held among the Ladies, three young Gentlemen came forth of the Church (yet not so young, but the youngest had attained to five and twenty yeeres) in whom, neither malice of the time, loss of friends or kinred, nor any fearefull conceit in themselves, had the power to quench affection; but (perhaps) might a little coole it, in regard of the queazy season. One of them called himselfe *Pamphilus*, the second *Philostratus*, and the last *Dioneus*. Each of them was very affable and well conditioned, and walked abroad (for their greater comfort in such a time of tribulation) to trie if they could meete with their faire friends, who (happily) might all three be among these seaven, and the rest kinne unto them in one degree or other. No sooner were these Ladies espyed by them, but they met with them also in the same advantage; whereupon Madam *Pampinea* (amiably smiling) saide.

See how graciously Fortune is favourable to our beginning, by presenting our eyes with three so wise and worthy young Gentlemen, who will gladly be our guides and servants, if we doe not disdain them the office. Madam *Neiphila* beganne immediatly to blush, because one of them had a love in the company, and saide; Good Madam *Pampinea* take heed what you say, because (of mine owne knowledge) nothing can be spoken but good of them all; and I thinke them all to be absolutely sufficient, for a farre greater employment then is here intended: as being well worthy to keepe company, not onely with us, but them of more faire and precious esteeme then we are. But because it appeareth plainly enough, that they beare affection to some here among us: I feare, if wee should make the motion, that some dishonour or reproofe may ensue thereby, and yet without blame either in us or them. That is nothing at all, answered Madam *Philomena*, let mee live honestly, and my conscience not checke me with any crime; speake then who can to the contrary, God and truth shal enter armes for me. I wish that they were as willing to come, as all wee are to bid them welcome: for truly (as Madam *Pampinea* saide) wee may very well hope that Fortune will bee furtherous to our purposed journey.

The other Ladies hearing them speake in such manner, not onely were silent to themselves, but all with one accord and consent saide, that it were well done to call them, and to acquaint them with their intention, entreating their company in so pleasant a voyage. Whereupon, without any more words, Madam *Pampinea* mounting on her feete (because one of the three was her Kinsman) went towards them, as they stood respectively observing them; and (with a pleasing countenance) giving them a gracious salutation, declared to them their deliberation, desiring (in behalfe of all the rest) that with a brotherly and modest minde, they would vouchsafe to beare them company.

The Gentlemen imagined at the first apprehension, that this was spoken in mockage of them, but when they better perceived, that her words tended to solemne earnest; they made answer, that they were all heartily ready to doe them any service. And without any further delaying, before they parted thence, tooke order for their aptest furnishing with all convenient necessities, and sent word to the place of their first appointment. On the morrow, being Wednesday, about breake of day, the Ladies, with certaine of their attending Gentlewomen, and the three Gentlemen, having three servants to waite on them; left the City to beginne their journey, and having travelled about a leagues distance, arrived at the place of their first purpose of stay; which was seated on a little hill, distant (on all sides) from any high way, plentifully stored with faire spreading Trees, affording no meane delight to the eye. On the top of all stood a stately Pallace, having a large and spacious Court in the middest, round engirt with galleries, hals and chambers, every one separate alone by themselves, and beautified with pictures of admirable cunning. Nor was there any want of Gardens, Meadowes, and other pleasant walkes, with welles and springs of faire running waters, all encompassed with branching vines, fitter for curious and quaffing bibbers, then women sober and singularly modest.

This Pallace the company found fully fitted and prepared, the beddes in the Chambers made and daintily ordered, thickly strewed with variety of flowers, which could not but give them the greater contentment. *Dioneus*, who (above the other) was a pleasant young gallant, and full of infinite witty conceits, saide; Your wit (faire Ladies) hath better guided us hither, then our providence. I know not how you have determined to dispose of your cares; as for mine owne, I left them at the City gate, when I came thence with you: and therefore let your resolution be, to spend the time here in smiles and singing (I meane, as may fittest agree with your dignity) or else give me leave to goe seeke my sorrowes againe, and so to remaine discontented in our desolate City. Madam *Pampinea* having in like manner shaken off her sorrowes, delivering a modest and bashfull smile, replied in this manner.

*Dioneus*, well have you spoken, it is fit to live merrily, and no other occasion made us forsake the

sicke and sad Citie. But, because such things as are without meane or measure, are subject to no long continuance. I, who began the motion, whereby this society is thus assembled, and ayme at the long lasting thereof: doe hold it very convenient, that wee should all agree, to have one chiefe commaunder among us, in whom the care and providence should consist, for direction of our merriment, performing honour and obedience to the party, as to our Patrone and sole Governour. And because every one may feele the burthen of sollicitude, as also the pleasure of commaunding, and consequently have a sensible taste of both, whereby no envie may arise on any side: I could wish, that each one of us (for a day onely) should feele both the burthen and honour, and the person so to be advanced, shall receive it from the election of us all. As for such as are to succede, after him or her that hath had the dayes of dominion: the party thought fit for succession, must be named so soone as night approacheth. And being in this eminencie (according as he or she shall please) hee may order and dispose, how long the time of his rule shall last, as also of the place and manner, where best we may continue our delight.

These words were highly pleasing to them all, and, by generall voyce, Madame *Pampinea* was chosen Queene for the first day. Whereupon, Madame *Philomena* ranne presently to a Bay-tree, because she had often heard, what honour belonged to those branches, and how worthy of honour they were, that rightfully were crowned with them, plucking off divers branches, she made of them an apparant and honourable Chaplet, placing it (by generall consent) upon her head, and this, so long as their company continued, manifested to all the rest, the signall of dominion and Royall greatnesse.

After that Madame *Pampinea* was thus made Queene, she commanded publique silence, and causing the Gentlemens three servants, and the waiting women also (being foure in number) to be brought before her, thus shee began. Because I am to give the first example to you all, whereby (proceeding on from good to better) our company may live in order and pleasure, acceptable to all, and without shame to any: I create *Parmeno* (servant to *Dioneus*) Maister of the Houshold, hee taking the care and charge of all our trayne, and for whatsoever appertaineth to our Hall service. I appoint also that *Silisco* (servant to *Pamphilus*) shall be our Dispencer and Treasurer, performing that which *Parmeno* shall commaund him. And that *Tindaro* serve as Groome of the Chamber, to *Philostratus* his Maister, and the other two, when his fellowes (impeached by their offices) cannot be present. *Misia* my Chambermaid, and *Licisca* (belonging to *Philomena*) shall serve continually in the Kitchin, and diligently make ready such vyands, as shall be delivered them by *Parmeno*. *Chimera*, wayting-woman to *Lauretta*, and *Stratilia* (appertaining to *Fiammetta*) shall have the charge and government of the Ladies Chambers, and preparing all places where we shall be present. Moreover, we will and commaund every one of them (as they desire to deserve our grace) that wheresoever they goe or come, or whatsoever they heare or see: they especially respect to bring us tydings of them. After shee had summarily delivered them these orders, very much commended of every one; shee arose fairely, saying. Heere wee have Gardens, Orchards, Meadows, and other places of sufficient pleasure, where every one may sport & recreate themselves: but so soone as the ninth houre striketh, then all to meete here againe, to dine in the coole shade.

This jocund company having received licence from their Queene to disport themselves, the Gentlemen walked with the Ladies into a goodly Garden, making Chaplets and Nosegayes of divers flowers, and singing silently to themselves. When they had spent the time limitted by the Queene, they returned into the house, where they found that *Parmeno* had effectually executed his office. For, when they entred into the Hall, they saw the Tables covered with delicate white naperie, and the Glasses looking like silver, they were so transparantly cleare, all the roome beside streawed with floures of Juniper. When the Queene and all the rest had washed; according as *Parmeno* gave order, so every one was seated at the Table: the vyands (delicately drest) were served in, and excellent wines plentifully delivered, none attending but the three servants, and little or no loud table-talke passing among them.

Dinner being ended, and the tables withdrawne (all the Ladies, and the Gentlemen likewise, being skilfull both in singing and dauncing, and playing on instruments artificially) the Queene commaunded, that divers instruments should be brought, and (as she gave charge) *Dioneus* tooke a Lute, and *Fiammetta* a Violl *de gamba*, and began to play an excellent daunce. Whereupon the Queene, with the rest of the Ladies, and the other two young Gentlemen (having sent their attending servants to dinner) paced foorth a daunce very majestically. And when the daunce was ended, they sung sundry excellent Canzonets, out-wearing so the time, untill the Queene commaunded them all to rest, because the houre did necessarily require it. The Gentlemen having their Chambers farre severed from the Ladies, curiously strewed with flowers, and their beds adorned in exquisite manner, as those of the Ladies were not a jote inferiour to them: the silence of the night bestowed sweet rest on them all. In the morning, the Queene and all the rest being risen, accounting overmuch sleepe to be very hurtfull: they walked abroad into a goodly Meadowe, where the grasse grew verdantly, and the beames of the Sunne heated not over-violently, because the shades of faire spreading trees gave a temperate calmenesse, coole and gentle winds fanning their sweet breath pleasingly among them. All of them being there set downe in a round ring, and the Queene in the midst, as being the appointed place of eminencie, she spake in this manner.

You see (faire company) that the Sunne is highly mounted, the heate (else-where) too extreme for us, and therefore here is our fittest refuge, the aire being so coole, delicate, and acceptable, and our folly well worthie reprehension, if we should walke further, and speede worse. Heere are Tables, Cards, and Chesse, as your dispositions may be addicted. But if mine advice might passe for currant, I would admit none of those exercises, because they are too troublesome both to

them that play, and such as looke on. I could rather wish, that some quaint discourse might passe among us, a tale or fable related by some one, to urge the attention of all the rest. And so wearing out the warmth of the day, one pretty Novell wil draw on another, until the Sun be lower declined, and the heates extremity more diminished, to solace our selves in some other place, as to our minds shal seeme convenient. If therefore what I have sayde be acceptable to you (I purposing to follow in the same course of pleasure) let it appeare by your immediate answer; for, till the Evening, I think we can devise no exercise more commodious for us.

The Ladies & Gentlemen allowed of the motion, to spend the time in telling pleasant tales; whereupon the Queene saide: Seeing you have approved mine advice, I grant free permission for this first day, that every one shall relate, what to him or her is best pleasing. And turning her selfe to *Pamphilus* (who was seated on her right hand) gave him favour, with one of his Novells, to begin the recreation: which he not daring to deny, and perceiving generall attention prepared for him, thus he began.

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***Messire Chappelet du Prat, by making a false confession, beguyled an holy Religious man, and after dyed. And having (during his life time) bene a verie bad man, at his death was reputed to be a Saint, and called S. Chappelet.***

## **The first Novell.**

***Wherein is contained, how hard a thing it is, to distinguish goodnesse from hypocrisie; and how (under the shadow of holinesse) the wickednes of one man, may deceive many.***

It is a matter most convenient (deare Ladies) that a man ought to begin whatsoever he doth, in the great and glorious name of him, who was the Creator of all thinges. Wherefore, seeing that I am the man appointed, to begin this your invention of discoursing Novelties: I intend to begin also with one of his wonderfull workes. To the end, that this beeing heard, our hope may remaine on him, as the thing onely permanent, and his name for ever to be praised by us. Now, as there is nothing more certaine, but that even as temporall things are mortall and transitory, so are they both in and out of themselves, full of sorrow, paine, and anguish, and subjected to infinite dangers: So in the same manner, we live mingled among them, seeming as part of them, and cannot (without some error) continue or defend ourselves, if God by his especiall grace and favour, give us not strength and good understanding. Which power we may not beleewe, that either it descendeth to us, or liveth in us, by any merites of our owne; but of his onely most gracious benignity. Moved neverthesse, and entreated by the intercessions of them, who were (as we are) mortals; and having diligently observed his commandements, are now with him in eternall blessednes. To whom (as to advocates and procurators, informed by the experience of our frailty) wee are not to present our prayers in the presence of so great a Judge; but only to himselve, for the obtaining of all such things as his wisdom knoweth to be most expedient for us. And well may we credit, that his goodnesse is more fully enclined towards us, in his continuall bounty and liberality; then the subtilty of any mortal eye, can reach into the secret of so divine a thought: and sometimes therefore we may be beguiled in opinion, by electing such and such as our intercessors before his high Majesty, who perhaps are farre off from him, or driven into perpetuall exile, as unworthy to appeare in so glorious a presence. For he, from whom nothing can be hidden, more regardeth the sincerity of him that prayeth, then ignorant devotion, committed to the trust of a heedlesse intercessor; and such prayers have alwaies gracious acceptation in his sight. As manifestly will appeare, by the Novell which I intend to relate; manifestly (I say) not as in the judgement of God, but according to the apprehension of men.

There was one named, *Musciatto Francesi*, who from beeing a most rich and great merchant in *France*, was become a Knight, and preparing to go into *Tuscany*, with Monsieur *Charles without Land*, Brother to the King of *France* (who was desired and incited to come thither by Pope *Boniface*) found his affaires greatly intricated here and there (as oftentimes the matters of Merchants fall out to bee) and that very hardly hee should sodainly unintangle them, without referring the charge of them to divers persons. And for all he tooke indifferent good order, onely he remained doubtfull, whom he might sufficiently leave, to recover his debts among many *Burgundians*. And the rather was his care the more herein, because he knew the *Burgundians* to be people of badde nature, rioters, brablers, full of calumny, and without any faithfulness; so that he could not bethinke himselve of any man (how wicked soever he was) in whom he might repose trust to meete with their lewdnesse. Having a long while examined his thoughts upon this point, at last hee remembred one master *Chappelet du Prat*, who oftentimes had resorted to his house in *Paris*. And because he was a man of little stature, yet handsome enough, the French not knowing what this word *Chappelet* might mean, esteeming he should be called rather (in their tongue) *Chappell*; imagined, that in regard of his small stature, they termed him *Chappelet*, and not *Chappell*, and so by the name of *Chappelet* he was every where known, and by few or none acknowledged for *Chappell*.

This master *Chappelet*, was of so good and commendable life; that, being a Notarie, he held it in high disdain, that any of his Contractes (although he made but few) should be found without falshoode. And looke how many soever hee dealt withall, he would be urged and required thereto, offering them his paines and travaile for nothing, but to be requited otherwise then by money; which proved to bee his much larger recompensing, and returned to him the farre greater

benefit. Hee tooke the onely pleasure of the world, to beare false witness, if hee were thereto entreated, and (oftentimes) when hee was not requested at all. Likewise, because in those times, great trust and beleefe was given to an oath, he making no care or conscience to be perjured: greatly advantaged himselfe by Law suites, in regard that many matters relied upon his oath, and delivering the truth according to his knowledge.

He delighted (beyond measure) and addicted his best studies, to cause enmities & scandals between kindred and friends, or any other persons, agreeing well together; and the more mischief he could procure in this kind, so much the more pleasure and delight tooke he therein. If he were called to kil any one, or to do any other villanous deede, he never would make deniall, but go to it very willingly; and divers times it was wel known, that many were cruelly beaten, ye slaine by his hands. Hee was a most horrible blasphemour of God and his Saints, upon the very least occasion, as being more addicted to choller, then any other man could be. Never would he frequent the Church, but basely contemned it, with the Sacraments and religious rites therein administred, accounting them for vile and unprofitable things: but very voluntarily would visit Tavernes, and other places of dishonest accesse, which were continually pleasing unto him, to satisfie his lust and inordinate lubricitie. Hee would steale both in publike and private, even with such a conscience, as if it were given to him by nature so to do. He was a great glutton and a drunkarde, even till he was not able to take any more: being also a continuall gamester, and carrier of false Dice, to cheate with them the verie best Friendes he had.

But why do I waste time in such extent of words? When it may suffice to say, that never was there a worse man borne; whose wickednesse was for long time supported, by the favour, power, and Authoritie of Monsieur *Musciatto*, for whose sake many wrongs and injuries were patiently endured, as well by private persons (whom hee would abuse notoriously) as others of the Court, betweene whom he made no difference at all in his vile dealing. This Master *Chappelet*, being thus remembred by *Musciatto* (who very well knew his life and behaviour) he perfectly perswaded himselfe, that this was a man apt in all respects, to meete with the treachery of the Burgundians: whereupon, having sent for him, thus he beganne.

*Chappelet*, thou knowest how I am wholly to retreate my selfe from hence, and having some affaires among the Burgundians, men full of wickednesse and deceite; I can bethinke my selfe of no meeter a man then *Chappelet*, to recover such debts as are due to me among them. And because it falleth out so well, that thou art not now hindered by any other businesse; if thou wilt undergoe this office for me, I will procure thee favourable Letters from the Court, and give thee a reasonable portion in all thou recoverest. Master *Chappelet*, seeing himselfe idle, and greedy after worldly goods, considering *Monsieur Musciatto* (who had beene alwayes his best buckler) was now to depart from thence, without any dreaming on the matter, and constrained thereto (as it were) by necessity, set downe his resolution, and answered that hee would gladly doe it.

Having made their agreement together, and received from *Musciatto* his expresse procuration, as also the Kings gracious Letters; after that *Musciatto* was gone on his journey, Master *Chappelet* went to *Dijon*, [To Borgogna saith the Italian.] where he was unknowne (well neere) of any. And there (quite from his naturall disposition) he beganne benignely and graciously, in recovering the debts due; which course he tooke the rather, because they should have a further feeling of him in the ende. Being lodged in the house of two Florentine brethren, that lived on their monies usance; and (for *Monsieur Musciattoes* sake) using him with honour and respect: It fortun'd that he fell sicke, and the two brethren sent for Physicions to attend him, allowing their servants to be diligent about him, making no spare of any thing, which gave the best likelihood of restoring his health. But all their paines proved to no purpose, because he (honest man) being now growne aged, and having lived all his life time very disordredly, fell day by day (according to the Physicions judgement) from bad to worse, as no other way appeared but death, whereat the brethren greatly greeved.

Upon a day, neere to the Chamber where the sicke man lay, they entred into this communication. What shall we doe (quoth the one to the other) with this man? We are much hindered by him, for to send him away (sicke as he is) we shall be greatly blamed thereby, and it will be a manifest note of our weake wisdom: the people knowing that first of all we gave him entertainment, and have allowed him honest physical attendance, and he not having any way injured or offended us, to let him be suddenly expulsed our house (sicke to death as he is) it can be no way for our credit.

On the other side, we are to consider also, that he hath bin so badde a man, as he will not now make any confession thereof, neither receive the blessed Sacrament of the Church, and dying so without confession; there is no Church that wil accept his body, but it must be buried in prophane ground, like to a Dogge. And yet if he would confesse himselfe, his sinnes are so many and monstrous; as the like case also may happen, because there is not any Priest or Religious person, that can or will absolve him. And being not absolved, he must be cast into some ditch or pit, and then the people of the Towne, as well in regard of the account we carry heere, (which to them appeareth so little pleasing, as we are daily pursued with their worst words) as also coveting our spoile and overthrow; upon this accident will cry out and mutiny against us; *Beholde these Lombard dogs, which are not to be received into the Church, why should we suffer them to live heere among us?* In furious madnesse wil they come upon us, and our house, where (peradventure) not contented with robbing us of our goods, our lives will remaine in their mercy and danger; so that, in what sort soever it happen, this mans dying heere, must needs be banefull to us.

Master *Chappelet*, who (as we have formerly saide) was lodged neere to the place where they thus conferred, having a subtile attention (as oftentimes we see sicke persons to bee possessed



withall) heard all these speeches spoken of him, and causing them to be called unto him, thus hee spake.

I would not have you to be any way doubtfull of me; neither that you should receive the least damage by me: I have heard what you have said, and am certaine, that it will happen according to your words, if matters should fall out as you conceite; but I am minded to deale otherwise. I have committed so many offences against our Lord God, in the whole current of my life; that now I intend one action at the hour of my death, which I trust will make amends for all. Procure therefore, I pray you, that the most holy and religious man that is to be found (if there bee any one at all) may come unto me, and referre the case then to me, for I will deale in such sort for you and my selfe, that all shall be well, and you no way discontented.

The two Brethren, although they had no great hope in his speeches, went yet to a Monastery of Gray-Friars, and requested; that some one holy and learned man, might come to heare the confession of a *Lombard*, that lay verie weake and sicke in their house. And one was granted unto them, beeing an aged religious Frier, a great read master in the sacred Scriptures, a very venerable person, who beeing of good and sanctified life, all the Citizens held him in great respect & esteem, and on he went with them to their house. When he was come up into the Chamber where Master *Chappelet* lay, and being there seated downe by him; he beganne first to comfort him very lovingly, demanding also of him, howe many times he had bin at confession? Whereto master *Chappelet* (who never had bin shriven in all his life time) thus replied.

Holy Father, I alwayes used (as a common custome) to bee confessed once (at the least) every weeke, albeit sometimes much more often, but true it is, that being faln into this sicknesse, now eight dayes since; I have not bene confest, so violent hath bene the extremity of my weakenesse. My sonne (answered the good old man) thou hast done well, and so keep thee still hereafter in that minde: but I plainly perceive, seeing thou hast so often confessed thy selfe, that I shall take the lesse labour in urging questions to thee.

Master *Chappelet* replied: Say not so good Father, for albeit I have bene so oftentimes confessed, yet am I willing now to make a generall confession, even of all sinnes comming to my remembrance, from the very day of my birth, until this instant houre of my shrift. And therefore I intreate you (holy Father) to make a particular demand of every thing, even as if I had never bene confessed at al, and to make no respect of my sicknesse: for I had rather be offensive to mine owne flesh, then by favouring or allowing it ease, to hazard the perdition of my soule, which my Redeemer bought with so precious a price.

These words were highly pleasing to the holy Frier, and seemed to him as an argument of a good conscience: Wherefore, after hee had much commended this forwardnesse in him, he began to demand of him if he had never offended with any Woman? Whereunto master *Chappelet* (breathing foorth a great sigh) answered.

Holy Father, I am halfe ashamed to tell you the truth in this case, as fearing least I should sinne in vaine-glory. Whereto the Confessor replied: Speake boldly Sonne, and feare not; for in telling the truth, be it in confession or otherwise, a man can never sinne. Then sayde Maister *Chappelet*, Father, seeing you give me so good an assurance, I wil resolve you faithfully heerein. I am so true a Virgin-man in this matter, even as when I issued forth of my Mothers wombe. O Sonne (quoth the Frier) how happie and blessed of God art thou? Well hast thou lived, and therein hast not meanly merited: having hadde so much libertie to doo the contrary if thou wouldst, wherein very few of us can so answer for our selves.

Afterward, he demanded of him, how much displeasing to God hee had beene in the sinne of Gluttony? When (sighing againe greatly) he answered: Too much, and too often, good Father. For, over and beside the Fasts of our Lent season, which everie yeare ought to bee duly observed by devout people, I brought my selfe to such a customarie use, that I could fast three dayes in every Weeke, with Bread and Water. But indeede (holy Father) I confesse, that I have drunke water with such a pleasing appetite and delight (especially in praying, or walking on pilgrimages) even as greedy drunkards do, in drinking good Wine. And many times I have desired such Sallades of small hearbes, as Women gather abroad in the open fields, and feeding onely upon them, without coveting after any other kinde of sustenance; hath seemed much more pleasing to me, then I thought to agree with the nature of Fasting, especially, when as it swerveth from devotion, or is not done as it ought to bee.

Sonne, Sonne, replied the Confessour, these sinnes are naturall, and very light, and therefore I would not have thee to charge thy conscience with them, more then is needfull. It happeneth to every man (how holy soever he be) that after he hath fasted over-long, feeding will be welcome to him, and drinking good drinke after his travaile. O Sir (said Maister *Chappelet*) never tell me this to comfort me, for well you know, and I am not ignorant therein, that such things as are done for the service of God, ought all to be performed purely, and without any blemish of the minde; what otherwise is done, savoureth of sinne. The Frier being well contented with his words, said: It is not amisse that thou understandest it in this manner, and thy conscience thus purely cleared, is no little comfort to me. But tell me now concerning Avarice, hast thou sinned therein? by desiring more then was reasonable, or withholding from others, such things as thou oughtst not to detaine? whereto Maister *Chappelet* answered. Good Father, I would not have you to imagine, because you see me lodged here in the house of two usurers, that therefore I am of any such disposition. No truly Sir, I came hither to no other end, but onely to chastise and admonish them in friendly manner, to cleanse their mindes from such abhominable profit: And assuredly, I should have prevailed therein, had not this violently sicknesse hindered mine intention. But understand (holy Father) that my parents left me a rich man, and immediatly after my fathers death, the

greater part of his goods I gave away for Gods sake, and then, to sustaine mine owne life, and to helpe the poore members of Jesus Christ, I betooke my selfe to a meane estate of Merchandise, desiring none other then honest gaine thereby, and evermore whatsoever benefit came to me; I imparted halfe thereof to the poore, converting mine owne small portion about my necessary affaires, which that other part would scarcely serve to supply: yet alwayes God gave thereto such a mercifull blessing, that my businesse daily thrived more and more, arising still from good to better.

Well hast thou done therein good Sonne, said the Confessour: but how often times hast thou beene angry? Oh Sir (said Maister *Chappelet*) therein I assure yee, I have often transgressed. And what man is able to forbear it, beholding the dayly actions of men to be so dishonest? No care of keeping Gods commaundements, nor any feare of his dreadfull judgements. Many times in a day, I have rather wished my selfe dead then living, beholding youth pursuing idle vanities, to sweare and forswear themselves, tipling in Tavernes, and never haunting Churches; but rather affecting the worlds follies, then any such duties as they owe to God. Alas Sonne (quoth the Friar) this is a good and holy anger, and I can impose no penance on thee for it. But tell me, hath not rage or furie at any time so over-ruled thee, as to commit murther or manslaughter, or to speake evill of any man, or to doe any other such kinde of injurie? Oh Father (answered Maister *Chappelet*) you that seeme to be a man of God, how dare you use any such vile words? If I had had the very least thought, to doe any such act as you speake, doe you thinke that God would have suffered me to live? These are deedes of darknesse, fit for villaines and wicked livers; of which hellish crue, when at any time I have happened to meete with some one of them; I have said, Goe, God convert thee.

Worthy, and charitable words, replied the Friar; but tell me Sonne, Didst thou ever beare false witness against any man, or hast spoken falsly, or taken ought from any one, contrary to the will of the owner? Yes indeede Father, said Maister *Chappelet*, I have spoken ill of another, because I have sometime seene one of my neighbours, who with no meane shame of the world, would doe nothing else but beate his wife: and of him once I complained to the poore mans parents, saying, that he never did it, but when he was overcome with drinke. Those were no ill words, quoth the Friar; but I remember, you said that you were a Merchant: Did you ever deceive any, as some Merchants use to doe? Truly Father, answered Maister *Chappelet*, I thinke not any, except one man, who one day brought me money which he owed me, for a certaine piece of cloath I solde him, and I put it into a purse without accounting it: about a moneth afterward, I found that there were foure small pence more then was due to me. And never happening to meete with the man againe, after I had kept them the space of a whole yeare, I then gave them away to foure poore people for Gods sake.

A small matter, said the Friar, & truly payed back again to the owner, in bestowing them upon the poore. Many other questions hee demaunded of him, whereto still he answered in the same manner: but before he proceeded to absolution, Maister *Chappelet* spake thus. I have yet one sinne more, which I have not revealed to you: when being urged by the Friar to confesse it, he said. I remember, that I should afford one day in the weeke, to cleanse the house of my soule, for better entertainment to my Lord and Saviour, and yet I have done no such reverence to the Sunday or Sabaoth, as I ought to have done. A small fault Sonne, replied the Friar. O no (quoth Maister *Chappelet*) doe not terme it a small fault, because Sunday being a holy day, is highly to be revered: for, as on that day, our blessed Lord arose from death to life. But (quoth the Confessour) hast thou done nothing else on that day? Yes, said he, being forgetfull of my selfe, once I did spet in Gods Church. The Friar smiling, said: Alas Sonne, that is a matter of no moment, for wee that are Religious persons, doe use to spet there every day. The more is your shame, answered Maister *Chappelet*, for no place ought to be kept more pure and cleane then the sacred Temple, wherein our dayly sacrifices are offered up to God.

In this manner he held on an houre and more, uttering the like transgressions as these; and at last began to sigh very passionately, and to shed a few teares, as one that was skilfull enough in such dissembling pranks; whereto the Confessour being much mooved, said: Alas Sonne, what aylest thou? Oh Father (quoth *Chappelet*) there remaineth yet one sinne more upon my conscience, whereof I never at any time made confession, so shamefull it appeareth to me to disclose it; and I am partly perswaded, that God will never pardon me for that sinne. How now Sonne? said the Friar, never say so; for if all the sinnes that ever were committed by men, or shall be committed so long as the World endureth, were onely in one man, and he repenting them, and being so contrite for them, as I see thou art; the grace and mercy of God is so great, that upon penitent confession, he will freely pardon him, and therefore spare not to speak it boldly. Alas Father (said *Chappelet*, still in pretended weeping) this sinne of mine is so great, that I can hardly beleeve (if your earnest prayers doe not assist me) that ever I shall obtaine remission for it. Speake it Sonne, said the Friar, and feare not, I promise that I will pray to God for thee.

Master *Chappelet* still wept and sighed, and continued silent, notwithstanding all the Confessors comfortable perswasions; but after hee had helde him a long while in suspence, breathing forth a sighe, even as if his very heart would have broken, he saide; Holy Father, seeing you promise to pray to God for me, I will reveale it to you: Know then, that when I was a little boy, I did once curse my Mother; which he had no sooner spoken, but he wrung his hands, and grieved extraordinarily. Oh good Son, saide the Friar, doth that seeme so great a sinne to thee? Why, men doe daily blaspheme our Lord God, and yet neverthesse, upon their hearty repentance, he is alwayes ready to forgive them; and wilt not thou beleeve to obtaine remission, for a sinne so ignorantly committed? Weepe no more deare Sonne, but comfort thy selfe, and rest resolved, that if thou wert one of them, who nayled our blessed Saviour to his Crosse; yet being so truly

repentant, as I see thou art, he would freely forgive thee. Say you so Father? quoth *Chappelet*. What? mine owne deare Mother? that bare me in her wombe nine moneths, day and night, and afterwards fed me with her breasts a thousand times, can I be pardoned for cursing her? Oh no, it is too haynous a sinne, and except you pray to God very instantly for me, he will not forgive me.

When the religious man perceived, that nothing more was to be confessed by Master *Chappelet*; he gave him absolution, and his owne benediction beside, reputed him to be a most holy man, as verily beleaving all that he had said. And who would not have done the like, hearing a man to speake in that manner, and being upon the very point of death? Afterward, he saide unto him; Master *Chappelet*, by Gods grace you may be soone restored to health, but if it so come to passe, that God doe take your blessed and well disposed soule to his mercy, will it please you to have your body buried in our Convent? Whereto Master *Chappelet* answered; I thanke you Father for your good motion, and sorry should I be, if my friends did bury me any where else, because you have promised, to pray to God for me; and beside, I have alwayes carried a religious devotion to your Order. Wherefore, I beseech you, so soone as you are come home to your Convent, prevaile so much by your good meanes, that the holy Eucharist, consecrated this morning on your high Altar, may be brought unto me: for although I confesse my selfe utterly unworthy, yet I purpose (by your reverend permission) to receive it, as also your holy and latest unction; to this ende, that having lived a greivous sinner, I may yet (at the last) die a Christian. These words were pleasing to the good olde man, and he caused every thing to be performed, according as Master *Chappelet* had requested.

The two Brethren, who much doubted the dissembling of *Chappelet*, being both in a small partition, which sundered the sicke mans Chamber from theirs, heard and understood the passage of all, betweene him and the ghostly Father, being many times scarcely able to refrain from laughter, at the fraudulent course of his confession. And often they said within themselves; what manner of man is this, whom neither age, sicknesse, nor terror of death so neere approaching, and sensible to his owne soule, nor that which is much more, God, before whose judgement he knowes not how soone he shall appeare, or else be sent to a more fearefull place; none of these can alter his wicked disposition, but that he will needes die according as he hath lived? Notwithstanding, seeing he had so ordered the matter, that he had buriall freely allowed him, they cared for no more.

After that *Chappelet* had received the Communion, and the other ceremonies appointed for him; weakenesse encreasing on him more and more, the very same day of his goodly confession, he died (not long after) towards the evening. Whereupon the two Brethren tooke order, that all needefull things should be in a readinesse, to have him buried honourably; sending to acquaint the Fathers of the Convent therewith, that they might come to say their *Vigilles*, according to precedent custome, and then on the morrow to fetch the body. The honest Friar that had confessed him, hearing he was dead, went to the Prior of the Convent, and by sound of the house Bell, caused all the Brethren to assemble together, giving them credibly to understand, that Master *Chappelet* was a very holy man, as appeared by all the parts of his confession, and made no doubt, but that many miracles would be wrought by his sanctified body, perswading them to fetch it thither with all devoute solemnity and reverence; whereto the Prior, and all the credulous Brethren presently condiscended very gladly.

When night was come, they went all to visit the dead body of Master *Chappelet*, where they used an especiall and solemne *Vigill*; and on the morrow, apparrelled in their richest Coapes and Vestiments, with books in their hands, and the Crosse borne before them, singing in the forme of a very devoute procession, they brought the body pompeously into their Church, accompanied with all the people of the Towne, both men and women. The Father Confessor, ascending up into the Pulpit, preached wonderfull things of him, and the rare holinesse of his life; his fastes, his virginity, simplicity, innocency, and true sanctity, recounting also (among other especiall observations) what *Chappelet* had confessed, as this most great and greivous sinne, and how hardly he could be perswaded, that God would grant him pardon for it. Whereby he tooke occasion to reprove the people then present, saying; And you (accursed of God) for the verie least and trifling matter hapning, will not spare to blaspheme God, his blessed Mother, and the whole Court of heavenly Paradise: Oh, take example by this singular man, this Saint-like man, nay, a verie Saint indeede.

Many additions more he made, concerning his faithfulness, truth, & integrity; so that, by the vehement asseveration of his words (whereto all the people there present gave credible beleefe) he provoked them unto such zeale and earnest devotion; that the Sermon was no sooner ended, but (in mighty crowds and throngs) they pressed about the Biere, kissing his hands and feete, and all the garments about him were torne in peeces, as precious Reliques of so holy a person, and happy they thought themselves, that could get the smallest peece or shred or anie thing that came neere to his body, and thus they continued all the day, the body lying still open, to be visited in this manner.

When night was come, they buried him in a goodly Marble tombe, erected in a faire Chappell purposely; and for many dayes after following, it was most strange to see, how the people of the country came thither on heapes, with holy Candles and other offerings, with Images of waxe fastened to the Tombe, in signe of Sacred and solemne Vowes, to this new created Saint. And so farre was spread the fame and renowne of his sanctity, devotion, and integrity of life, maintained constantly by the Fathers of the Convent; that if any one fell sicke in neede, distresse, or adversity, they would make their Vowes to no other Saint but him: naming him (as yet to this day they do) Saint *Chappelet*, affirming upon their Oathes, that infinite miracles were there daily performed by him, and especially on such, as came in devotion to visit his shrine.

In this manner lived and died Master *Chappelet du Prat*, who before he became a Saint, was as you have heard: and I will not deny it to be impossible, but that he may be at rest among other blessed bodies. For, although he lived lewdly and wickedly, yet such might be his contrition in the latest extremitie, that (questionlesse) he might finde mercie. But, because such things remaine unknowne to us, and speaking by outward appearance, vulgar judgement will censure otherwise of him, and thinke him to be rather in perdition, then in so blessed a place as Paradise. But referring that to the Omnipotent appointment, whose clemencie hath alwayes beene so great to us, that he regards not our errors, but the integrity of our Faith, making (by meanes of our continuall Mediator) of an open enemy, a converted sonne and servant. And as I began in his name, so will I conclude, desiring that it may evermore be had in due reverence, and referre we our selves thereto in all our necessities, with this settled assurance, that he is alwayes readie to heare us. And so he ceased.

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***Abraham a Jew, being admonished or advised by a friend of his, named Jehannot de Chevigny, travailed from Paris unto Rome: And beholding there the wicked behaviour of men in the Church, returned backe to Paris again, where yet (neverthesse) he became a Christian.***

## **The Second Novell.**

***Wherein is contained and expressed, the liberality and goodnesse of God, extended to the Christian Faith.***

The Novell recited by *Pamphilus* was highly pleasing to the company, and much commended by the Ladies: and after it had beene diligently observed among them, the Queen commanded Madam *Neiphila* (who was seated neerest to *Pamphilus*) that, in relating another of hers, she should follow on in the pastime thus begun. She being no lesse gracious in countenance, then merrily disposed; made answer, that shee would obey her charge, and began in this manner.

*Pamphilus* hath declared to us by his Tale, how the goodnesse of God regardeth not our errors, when they proceede from things which wee cannot discern. And I intend to approve by mine, what argument of infallible truth, the same benignity delivereth of it selfe, by enduring patiently the faults of them, that (both in word and worke) should declare unfained testimony of such gracious goodnesse, and not to live so dissolutely as they doe. To the end, that others illumined by their light of life, may beleeve with the stronger constancy of minde.

As I have heeretofore heard (Gracious Ladies) there lived a wealthy Marchant in *Paris*, being a Mercer, or seller of Silkes, named *Jehannot de Chevigny*, a man of faithful, honest, and upright dealing; who held great affection and friendship with a very rich Jew, named *Abraham*, that was a Merchant also, and a man of very direct conversation. *Jehannot* well noting the honesty and loyall dealing of this Jew, began to have a Religious kind of compassion in his soule, much pittying, that a man so good in behaviour, so wise and discreete in all his actions, should be in danger of perdition thorow want of Faith. In which regard, lovingly he began to entreate him, that he would leave the errors of his Jewish beleefe, and follow the truth of Christianity, which he evidently saw (as being good and holy) daily to prosper and enlarge it selfe, whereas (on the contrary) his profession decreased, and grew to nothing.

The Jew made answer, that he beleaved nothing to be so good & holy, as the Jewish Religion, and having beene borne therein, therein also he purposed to live and dye, no matter whatsoever, being able to remove him from that resolution. For all this stiffe deniall, *Jehannot* would not so give him over; but pursued him still day by day, reitterating continually his former speeches to him: delivering infinite excellent and pregnant reasons, that Merchants themselves were not ignorant, how farre the Christian faith excelled the Jewish falshoods. And albeit the Jew was a very learned man in his owne law, yet notwithstanding, the intire amity hee bare to *Jehannot*, or (perhaps) his words fortified by the blessed Spirit, were so prevalent with him: that the Jew felt a pleasing apprehension in them, though his obstinacie stood (as yet) farre off from conversion. But as hee thus continued strong in opinion, so *Jehannot* left not hourelly to labour him: in so much that the Jew, being conquered by such earnest and continuall importunity, one day spake to *Jehannot* thus.

My worthy friend *Jehannot*, thou art extremely desirous, that I should convert to Christianity, and I am well contended to doe it, onely upon this condition. That first I will journey to Rome, to see him (whom thou sayest) is Gods generall vicar here on earth, and to consider on the course of his life and manners, and likewise of his Colledge of Cardinals. If he and they doe appeare such men to me, as thy speeches affirms them to be, and thereby I may comprehend, that thy faith and Religion is better then mine, as (with no meane paines) thou endeavourest to perswade me: I will become a Christian as thou art, but if I finde it otherwise, I will continue a Jew as I am.

When *Jehannot* heard these words, he became exceeding sorrowfull, saide within himselfe. I have lost all the paines, which I did thinke to be well employed, as hoping to have this man converted here: For, if he goe to the Court of Rome, and behold there the wickednes of the Priests lives; farewell all hope in me, of ever seeing him to become a Christian. But rather, were he already a Christian, without all question, he would turne Jew: And so (going neerer to *Abraham*) he said. Alas my loving friend, why shouldst thou undertake such a tedious travell, and so great a charge,

as thy journey from hence to Rome will cost thee? Consider, that to a rich man (as thou art) travaile by land or sea is full of infinite dangers. Doest thou not thinke, that here are Religious men enow, who will gladly bestowe Baptisme upon thee. To me therefore it plainely appeareth, that such a voyage is to no purpose. If thou standest upon any doubt or scruple, concerning the faith whereto I wish thee; where canst thou desire conference with greater Doctours, or men more learned in all respects, then this famous Citie doth afford thee, to resolve thee in any questionable case? Thou must thinke, that the Prelates are such there, as here thou seest them to be, and yet they must needs be in much better condition at Rome, because they are neere to the principall Pastour. And therefore, if thou wilt credit my counsell, reserve this journey to some time more convenient, when the Jubilee of generall pardon happeneth, and then (perchance) I will beare thee company, and goe along with thee as in vowed pilgrimage.

Whereto the Jew replied. I beleieve *Jehannot*, that all which thou hast said may be so. But, to make short with thee, I am fully determind (if thou wouldst have me a Christian, as thou instantly urgest me to be) to goe thither, for otherwise, I will continue as I am. *Jehannot* perceiving his settled purpose, said: Goe then in Gods name. But perswaded himselfe, that hee would never become a Christian, after hee had once seene the Court of Rome: neverthesse, he counted his labour not altogether lost, in regard he bestowed it to a good end, and honest intentions are to be commended.

The Jew mounted on horse-backe, and made no lingering in his journey to Rome, where being arrived, he was very honourably entertained by other Jewes dwelling in Rome. And during the time of his abiding there (without revealing to any one, the reason of his comming thither) very heedfully he observed, the manner of the Popes life, of the Cardinals, Prelates, and all the Courtiers. And being a man very discreete and judicious, he apparantly perceived, both by his owne eye, and further information of friends; that from the highest to the lowest (without any restraint, remorse of conscience, shame, or feare of punishment) all sinned in abominable luxurie, and not naturally onely, but in foule Sodomie, so that the credit of Strumpets and Boyes was not small, and yet might be too easily obtained. Moreover, drunkards, belly-Gods, and servants of the paunch, more then of any thing else (even like brutish beasts after their luxurie) were every where to be met withall. And, upon further observation, hee saw all men so covetous and greedy of coyne, that every thing was bought and solde for ready money, not onely the blood of men, but (in plaine termes) the faith of Christians, yea, and matters of divinest qualities, how, or to whomsoever appertaining, were it for sacrifices or benefices, whereof was made no meane Merchandize, and more Brokers were there to be found (then in *Paris* attending upon all Trades) of manifest Symonie, under the nice name of Negotiation, and for gluttony, not sustentation: even as if God had not knowne the signification of vocables, nor the intentions of wicked hearts, but would suffer himselfe to be deceived by the outward names of things, as wretched men commonly use to doe.

These things, and many more (fitter for silence, then publication) were so deeply displeasing to the Jew, being a most sober and modest man; that he had soone seene enough, resolving on his returne to *Paris*, which very speedily he performed. And when *Jehannot* heard of his arrivall, crediting much rather other newes from him, then ever to see him a converted Christian; he went to welcome him, and kindly they feasted one another. After some fewe dayes of resting, *Jehannot* demaunded of him; what he thought of our holy father the Pope and his Cardinals, and generally of all the other Courtiers? Whereto the Jew readily answered; It is strange *Jehannot*, that God should give them so much as he doth. For I will truly tell thee, that if I had beene able to consider all those things, which there I have both heard and seene: I could then have resolved my selfe, never to have found in any Priest, either sanctity, devotion, good worke, example of honest life, or any good thing else beside. But if a man desire to see luxury, avarice, gluttony, and such wicked things, yea, worse, if worse may be, and held in generall estimation of all men; let him but goe to *Rome*, which I thinke rather to be the forge of damnable actions, then any way leaning to grace or goodnesse. And, for ought I could perceive, me thinkes your chiefe Pastour, and (consequently) all the rest of his dependants, doe strive so much as they may (with all their engine arte and endeavour) to bring to nothing, or else to banish quite out of the world, Christian Religion, whereof they should be the support and foundation.

But because I perceive, that their wicked intent will never come to passe, but contrariwise, that your faith enlargeth itselfe, shining every day much more cleare and splendant: I gather thereby evidently, that the blessed Spirit is the true ground and defence thereof, as being more true and holy then any other. In which respect, whereas I stood stiffe and obstinate against the good admonitions, and never minded to become a Christian: now I freely open my heart unto thee, that nothing in the world can or shall hinder me, but I will be a Christian, as thou art. Let us therefore presently goe to the Church, and there (according to the true custome of your holy faith) helpe me to be baptized.

*Jehannot*, who expected a farre contrary conclusion, then this, hearing him speake it with such constancy; was the very gladdest man in the world, and went with him to the Church of *Nostre Dame* in *Paris*, where he requested the Priests there abiding, to bestow baptisme on *Abraham*, which they joyfully did, hearing him so earnestly to desire it. *Jehannot* was his Godfather, and named him *John*, and afterward, by learned Divines he was more fully instructed in the grounds of our faith; wherein he grew of greatly understanding, and led a very vertuous life.

## The third Novell.

***Whereby the Author, approving the Christian Faith, sheweth, how beneficial a sodaine and ingenious answer may fall out to bee, especially when a man finds himselfe in some evident danger.***

Madame *Neiphila* having ended her Discourse, which was well allowed of by all the company; it pleased the Queene, that Madam *Philomena* should next succede in order, who thus began.

The Tale delivered by *Neiphila*, maketh mee remember a doubtfull case, which sometime hapned to another Jew. And because that God, and the truth of his holy Faith, hath bene already very wel discoursed on: it shall not seeme unfitting (in my poore opinion) to descend now into the accidents of men. Wherefore, I will relate a matter unto you, which being attentively heard and considered; may make you much more circumspect, in answering to divers questions and demands, then (perhaps) otherwise you would be. Consider then (most woorthy assembly) that like as folly or dulnesse, many times hath overthrowne some men from place of eminencie, into most great and greevous miseries: even so, discreet sense and good understanding, hath delivered many out of irksome perils, and seated them in safest security. And to prove it true, that folly hath made many fall from high authority, into poore and despised calamity; may be avouched by infinite examples, which now were needelesse to remember: But, that good sense and able understanding, may prove to be the occasion of great desolation, without happy prevention, I will declare unto you in very few words, and make it good according to my promise.

*Saladine*, was a man so powerfull and valiant, as not onely his very valour made him Soldan of Babylon, but also gave him many signall victories, over Kings of the Sarrazens, and of Christians likewise. Having in divers Warres, and other magnificent employments of his owne, wasted all his treasure, and (by reason of some sodaine accident happening to him) standing in neede to use some great summe of money, yet not readily knowing where, or how to procure it; he remembred a rich Jew named *Melchisedech*, that lent out money to use or interest in the City of *Alexandria*. This man he imagined best able to furnish him, if he could be won to do it willingly: but he was knowne to be so gripple and miserable, that hardly any meanes would drawe him to it. In the end, constrained by necessity, and labouring his wits for some apt device whereby he might have it: he concluded, though hee might not compell him to do it, yet by a practise shadowed with good reason to ensnare him. And having sent for him entertained him very familiarly in his Court, and sitting downe by him, thus began.

Honest man, I have often heard it reported by many, that thou art very skilfull, and in cases concerning God, thou goest beyond all other of these times: wherefore, I would gladly be informed by thee, which of those three Lawes or Religions, thou takest to be truest; that of the Jew, the other of the Sarazen, or that of the Christian? The Jew, being a very wise man, plainly perceived, that *Saladine* sought to entrap him in his answer, and so to raise some quarrell against him. For, if he commended any one of those Lawes above the other, he knew that *Saladine* had what he aymed at. Wherefore, bethinking himselfe to shape such an answer, as might no way trouble or entangle him: summoning all his sences together, and considering, that dallying with the Soldane might redound to his no meane danger, thus he replied.

My Lord, the question propounded by you, is faire and worthy, & to answer mine opinion truly thereof, doth necessarily require some time of consideration, if it might stand with your liking to allow it: but if not, let me first make entrance to my reply, with a pretty tale, and well worth the hearing. I have oftentimes heard it reported, that (long since) there was a very wealthy man, who (among other precious Jewels of his owne) had a goodly Ring of great valew; the beauty and estimation whereof, made him earnestly desirous to leave it as a perpetuall memory and honour to his successors. Whereupon, he willed and ordained, that he among his male children, with whom this Ring (being left by the Father) should be found in custody after his death; hee and none other was to bee reputed his heire, and to be honoured and revered by all the rest, as being the prime and worthiest person. That Sonne, to whom this Ring was left by him, kept the same course to his posterity, dealing (in all respects) as his predecessor had done; so that (in short time) the Ring (from hand to hand) had many owners by Legacie.

At length, it came to the hand of one, who had three sonnes, all of them goodly and vertuous persons, and verie obedient to their Father: in which regard, he affected them all equally, without any difference or partiall respect. The custome of this ring being knowne to them, each one of them (coveting to beare esteeme above the other) desired (as hee could best make his meanes) his father, that in regard he was now grown very old, he would leave that Ring to him, whereby he should bee acknowledged for his heire. The good man, who loved no one of them more then the other, knew not how to make his choise, nor to which of them he should leave the Ring: yet having past his promise to them severally, he studied by what meanes to satisfie them all three. Wherefore, secretly having conferred with a curious and excellent Goldsmith, hee caused two other Rings to bee made, so really resembling the first made Ring, that himself (when he had them in his hand) could not distinguish which was the right one.

Lying upon his death-bed, and his Sonnes then plying him by their best opportunities, he gave to each of them a Ring. And they (after his death) presuming severally upon their right to the inheritance & honour, grew to great contradiction and square: each man producing then his Ring, which were so truly all alike in resemblance, as no one could know the right Ring from the

other. And therefore, suite in Law, to distinguish the true heire to his Father; continued long time, and so it dooth yet to this very day. In like manner my good Lord, concerning those three Lawes given by God the Father, to three such people as you have propounded: each of them do imagine that they have the heritage of God, and his true Law, and also duely to performe his Commandements; but which of them do so indeede, the question (as of the three Ringes) is yet remaining.

*Saladine* well perceyving, that the Jew was too cunning to be caught in his snare, and had answered so well, that to doe him further violence, would redound unto his perpetuall dishonour; resolved to reveale his neede and extremity, and try if he would therein friendly sted him. Having disclosed the matter, and how he purposed to have dealt with him, if he had not returned so wise an answer; the Jew lent him so great a sum of money as hee demanded, and *Saladine* repayed it againe to him justly, giving him other great gifts beside: respecting him as his especiall friend, and maintaining him in very honourable condition, neere unto his owne person.

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***A Monke, having committed an offence, deserving to be very grievously punished; freede himselfe from the paine to be inflicted on him, by wittily reprehending his Abbot, with the very same fault.***

## The fourth Novell.

***Wherein may be noted, that such men as will reprove those errors in others, which remaine in themselves, commonly are the Authors of their owne reprehension.***

So ceased Madam *Philomena*, after the conclusion of her Tale, when *Dioneus* sitting next unto her, (without tarrying for any other command from the Queene, knowing by the order formerly begunne, that he was to follow in the same course) spake in this manner.

Gracious Ladies, if I faile not in understanding your generall intention; we are purposely assembled here to tell Tales, and especially such as may please our selves. In which respect, because nothing should be done disorderly, I hold it lawfull for every one (as our Queene decreed before her dignity) to relate such a novelty, as (in their owne judgement) may cause most contentment. Wherefore having heard, that by the good admonitions of *Jehannot de Chevigny*, *Abraham* the Jew was advised to the salvation of his soule, and *Melchisedech* (by his witty understanding) defended his riches from the traines of *Saladine*: I now purpose to tell you in a few plaine words, (without feare of receiving any reprehension) how cunningly a Monke compassed his deliverance, from a punishment intended towards him.

There was in the Country of *Lunigiana* (which is not farre distant from our owne) a Monastery, which sometime was better furnished with holinesse and Religion, then nowadayes they are; wherein lived (among divers other) a young novice Monke, whose hot and lusty disposition (being in the vigour of his yeeres) was such, as neither fastes nor prayers had any great power over him. It chanced on a fasting day about high noone, when all the other Monkes were asleepe in their Dormitories or Dorters, this frolicke Friar was walking alone in their Church, which stood in a very solitary place, where ruminating on many matters by himselfe, hee espied a pretty handsome wench (some Husbandmans daughter in the Countrey, that had beene gathering rootes and hearbes in the field) uppon her knees before an Altar, whom he had no sooner seene, but immediately hee felt effeminate temptations, and such as ill fitted with his profession.

Lascivious desire, and no religious devotion, made him draw neere her, and whether under shrift (the onely cloake to compasse carnall affections) or some other as close conference, to as pernicious and vile a purpose, I know not: but so farre he prevailed upon her frailty, and such a bargain passed betweene them, that (from the Church) he wonne her to his Chamber, before any person could perceive it. Now, while this yong lusty Monke (transported with over-fond affection) was more carelesse of his dalliance, then he should have beene; the Lord Abbot, being newly arisen from sleepe, and walking softly about the Cloyster, came to the Monkes Dorter doore, where hearing what noyse was made between them, and a feminine voyce, more strange then hee was wont to heare; he layed his eare close to the Chamber doore, and plainly perceived, that a woman was within. Wherewith being much moved, he intended suddenly to make him open the doore; but (upon better consideration) hee conceived it farre more fitting for him, to returne backe to his owne chamber, and tary untill the Monke should come forth.

The Monke, though his delight with the Damosel was extraordinary, yet feare and suspicion followed upon it: for, in the very height of all his wantonnesse, he heard a soft treading about the doore. And prying thorow a small crevice in the same doore, perceived apparantly, that the Abbot himselfe stood listening there, and could not be ignorant, but that the Maide was with him in the Chamber. As after pleasure ensueth paine, so the veneriall Monke knew well enough (though wanton heate would not let him heede it before) that most greevous punishment must be inflicted on him; which made him sad beyond all measure. Neverthelesse, without disclosing his dismay to the young Maiden, he began to consider with himselfe on many meanes, whereby to find out one that might best fit his turne. And suddenly conceited an apt stratagem, which sorted to such effect as he would have it: whereupon seeming satisfied for that season, hee tolde the Damosell, that (being carefull of her credit) as he had brought her in unseen of any, so he would free her from thence again, desiring her to tarrie there (without making any noyse at all) until such time

as he returned to her.

Going forth of the Chamber, and locking it fast with the key, he went directly to the Lord Abbots lodging, and delivering him the saide key (as every Monke used to doe the like, when he went abroade out of the Convent) setting a good countenance on the matter, boldly saide; My Lord, I have not yet brought in all my part of the wood, which lieth ready cut downe in the Forrest; and having now convenient time to doe it, if you please to give me leave, I will goe and fetch it. The Abbot perswading himselfe, that he had not beene discovered by the Monke, and to be resolved more assuredly in the offence committed; being not a little jocund of so happy an accident, gladly tooke the key, and gave him leave to fetch the wood.

No sooner was he gone, but the Abbot beganne to consider with himselfe, what he were best to doe in this case, either (in the presence of all the other Monkes) to open the Chamber doore, that so the offence being knowne to them all, they might have no occasion of murmuring against him, when he proceeded in the Monkes punishment; or rather should first understand of the Damosell her selfe, how, and in what manner shee was brought thither. Furthermore, he considered, that shee might be a woman of respect, or some such mans daughter, as would not take it well, to have her disgraced before all the Monkes. Wherefore he concluded, first to see (himselfe) what shee was, and then (afterward) to resolve upon the rest. So going very softly to the Chamber, and entring in, locked the doore fast with the key, when the poore Damosell thinking it had beene the gallant young Monke; but finding it to be the Lord Abbot, shee fell on her knees weeping, as fearing now to receive publike shame, by being betrayed in this unkinde manner.

My Lord Abbot looking demurely on the Maide, and perceiving her to be faire, feate, and lovely; felt immediatly (although he was olde) no lesse spurring on to fleshly desires, then the young Monke before had done; whereupon he beganne to conferre thus privately with himselfe. Why should I not take pleasure, when I may freely have it? Cares and molestations I endure every day, but sildome find such delights prepared for me. This is a delicate sweete young Damosell, and here is no eye that can discover me. If I can enduce her to doe as I would have her, I know no reason why I should gaine-say it. No man can know it, or any tongue blaze it abroade; and sinne so concealed, is halfe pardoned. Such a faire fortune as this is, perhaps hereafter will never befall me; and therefore I hold it wisdome, to take such a benefit when a man may enjoy it.

Upon this immodest meditation, and his purpose quite altered which he came for; he went neerer to her, and very kindly began to comfort her, desiring her to forbear weeping, and (by further insinuating speeches) acquainted her with his amorous intention. The Maide, who was made neither of yron nor diamond, and seeking to prevent one shame by another, was easily wonne to the Abbots will, which caused him to embrace and kisse her often.

Our lusty young novice Monke, whom the Abbot imagined to be gone for wood, had hid himselfe aloft upon the roofe of the Dorter, where, when he saw the Abbot enter alone into the Chamber, hee lost a great part of his former feare, promising to himselfe a kinde of perswasion, that somewhat would ensue to his better comfort; but when he beheld him lockt into the Chamber, then his hope grew to undoubted certainty. A little chincke or crevice favoured him, whereat he could both heare and see, whatsoever was done or spoken by them: so, when the Abbot thought hee had staide long enough with the Damosell, leaving her still there, and locking the doore fast againe, hee returned thence to his owne Chamber.

Within some short while after, the Abbot knowing the Monke to be in the Convent, and supposing him to be lately returned with the wood, determined to reprove him sharply, and to have him closely imprisoned, that the Damosell might remaine solie to himselfe. And causing him to be called presently before him, with a very stearne and angry countenance giving him many harsh and bitter speeches, commanded, that he should be clapt in prison.

The Monke very readily answered, saying. My good Lord, I have not yet beene so long in the order of Saint *Benedict*, as to learne all the particularities thereto belonging. And beside Sir, you never shewed mee or any of my brethren, in what manner we young Monkes ought to use women, as you have otherwise done for our custome of prayer and fasting. But seeing you have so lately therein instructed mee, and by your owne example how to doe it: I heere solemnly promise you, if you please to pardon me but this one error, I will never faile therein againe, but dayly follow what I have seene you doe.

The Abbot, being a man of quicke apprehension, perceived instantly by this answere; that the Monke not onely knew as much as he did, but also had seene (what was intended) that hee should not. Wherefore, finding himselfe to be as faulty as the Monke, and that hee could not shame him, but worthily had deserved as much himselfe; pardoning him, and imposing silence on eithers offence: they conveyed the poore abused Damosell forth of their doores, she purposing (never after) to transgresse in the like manner.

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***The Lady Marquesse of Montferrat, with a Banquet of Hennes, and divers other gracious speeches beside, repressed the fond love of the King of France.***

## **The fift Novell.**

***Declaring, that wise and vertuous Ladies, ought to hold their chastitie in more esteeme, then the greatnesse and treasures of Princes: and that a discreete Lord should not offer***



### *modestie violence.*

The tale reported by *Dioneus*, at the first hearing of the Ladies, began to relish of some immodestie, as the bashfull blood mounting up into their faces, delivered by apparant testimonie. And beholding one another with scarce-pleasing lookes, during all the time it was in discoursing, no sooner had hee concluded: but with a fewe milde and gentle speeches, they gave him a modest reprehension, and meaning to let him know, that such tales ought not to be tolde among women. Afterward, the Queene commaunded Madame *Fiammetta*, (sitting on a banke of flowers before her) to take her turne as next in order: and she, smiling with such a virgin-blush, as very beautifully became her, began in this manner.

It is no little joy to me, that wee understand so well (by the discourses already past) what power consisteth in the delivery of wise and ready answers; And because it is a great part offence and judgement in men, to affect women of great birth and quality, then themselves, as also an admirable fore-sight in women, to keepe off from being surprized in love, by Lords going beyond them in degree: a matter offereth it selfe to my memory, well deserving my speech and your attention, how a Gentlewoman (both in word and deede) should defend her honour in that kind, when importunity laboureth to betray it.

The Marquesse of *Montferrat* was a worthy and valiant Knight, who being Captaine Generall for the Church, the necessary service required his company on the Seas, in a goodly Army of the Christians against the Turkes. Upon a day, in the Court of King *Philip*, surnamed the one eyed King (who likewise made preparation in *France*, for a royall assistance to that expedition) as many speeches were delivered, concerning the valour and manhood of this Marquesse: it fortun'd, that a Knight was then present, who knew him very familiarly, and hee gave an addition to the former commendation, that the whole world contained not a more equall couple in mariage, then the Marquesse & his Lady. For, as among all Knights, the Marquesse could hardly be paraleld for Armes and honour; even so his wife, in comparison of all other Ladies, was scarcely matchable for beauty and vertue. Which words were so waighty in the apprehension of King *Philip*, that suddainly (having as yet never seene her) he began to affect her very earnestly, concluding to embarque himselfe at *Gennes* or *Genoua*, there to set forward on the intended voyage, and journeying thither by land: hee would shape some honest excuse to see the Lady Marquesse, whose Lord being then from home, opinion perswaded him over-fondly, that he should easily obtaine the issue of his amorous desire.

When hee was come within a dayes journey, where the Lady Marquesse then lay; he sent her word, that she should expect his company on the morrow at dinner. The Lady, being singularly wise and judicious; answered the Messenger, that she reputed the Kings comming to her, as an extraordinary grace and favour, and that hee should be most heartily welcome. Afterward, entring into further consideration with her selfe, what the King might meane by this private visitation, knowing her husband to be from home, and it to be no meane barre to his apter entertainment: at last she discreetly conceited (and therein was not deceived) that babling report of her beauty and perfections, might thus occasion the Kings comming thither, his journey lying else a quite contrary way. Notwithstanding, being a Princely Lady, and so loyall a wife as ever lived, shee intended to give him her best entertainment: summoning the chieftest Gentlemen in the Country together, to take due order (by their advise) for giving the King a gracious welcome. But concerning the dinner, and diet for service to his table; that remained onely at her owne disposing.

Sending presently abroad, and buying all the Hennes that the Country afforded; shee commaunded her Cookes, that onely of them (without any other provision beside) they should prepare all the services that they could devise. On the morrow, the King came according to his promise, and was most honourable welcommed by the Lady, who seemed in his eye (farre beyond the Knights speeches of her) the fairest creature that ever he had seene before; whereat he mervailed not a little, extolling her perfections to be peerelesse, which much the more enflamed his affections, and (almost) made his desires impatient. The King being withdrawne into such Chambers, as orderly were prepared for him, and as beseemed so great a Prince: the houre of dinner drawing on, the King and the Lady Marquesse were seated at one Table, and his attendants placed at other tables, answerable to their degrees of honour.

Plenty of dishes being served in, and the rarest wines that the Countrey yeelded, the King had more minde to the faire Lady Marquesse, then any meate that stood on the Table. Neverthelesse, observing each service after other, and that all the Viands (though variously cooked, and in divers kindes) were nothing else but Hennes onely; he began to wonder, and so much the rather, because he knew the Countrey to be of such quality, that it affoorded all plenty both of Fowles and Venyson: beside, after the time of his comming was heard, they had respite enough, both for hawking and hunting; and therefore it encreased his marvell the more, that nothing was provided for him, but Hennes onely: wherein to be the better resolved, turning a merry countenance to the Lady, thus he spake. Madam, are Hennes onely bred in this Countrey, and no Cockes? The Lady Marquesse, very well understanding his demand, which fitted her with an apt opportunity, to thwart his idle hope, and defend her owne honour; boldly returned the King this answer. Not so my Lord, but women and wives, howsoever they differ in garments and graces one from another; yet notwithstanding, they are all heere as they be in other places.

When the King heard this reply, he knew well enough the occasion of his Henne dinner, as also, what vertue lay couched under her answer; perceiving apparantly, that wanton words would prove but in vaine, and such a woman was not easily to be seduced; wherefore, as hee grew enamored on her inconsiderately, so he found it best fitting for his honour, to quench this heate

with wisdom discreetly. And so, without any more words, or further hope of speeding in so unkingly a purpose, dinner being ended, by a sudden departing, he smoothly shadowed the cause of his coming, and thanking her for the honour shee had done him, commended her to her chaste disposition, and posted away with speede to *Gennes*.

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***An honest plaine meaning man, (simply and conscionably) reprehended the malignity, hypocrisie, and misdemeanour of many Religious persons.***

## **The sixth Novell.**

***Declaring, that in few, discrete, and well placed words, the covered craft of Churchmen may be justly reproved, and their hypocrisie honestly discovered.***

Madam *Æmilia* sitting next to the gentle Lady *Fiammetta*, perceiving the modest chastisement, which the vertuous Lady Marquesse had given to the King of *France*, was generally graced by the whole Assembly; began (after the Queene had thereto appointed her) in these words. Nor will I conceale the deserved reprehension, which an honest simple lay-man, gave to a covetous holy Father, in very few words; yet more to be commended, then derided.

Not long since (worthy Ladies) there dwelt in our owne native City, a Friar Minor, an Inquisitor after matters of Faith, who, although he laboured greatly to seeme a sanctified man, and an earnest affecter of Christian Religion, (as all of them appeare to be in outward shew;) yet he was a much better Inquisitor after them, that had their purses plenteously stored with money, then of such as were slenderly grounded in Faith. By which diligent continued care in him, he found out a man, more rich in purse, then understanding; and yet not so defective in matters of faith, as misguided by his owne simple speaking, and (perhaps) when his braine was well warmed with wine, words fell more foolishly from him, then in better judgement they could have done.

Being on a day in company, (very little differing in quality from himselfe) he chanced to say; that he had beene at such good wine, as God himselfe did never drinke better. Which words (by some Sicophant then in presence) being carried to this curious Inquisitor, and he well knowing, that the mans faculties were great, and his bagges swolne up full with no meane abundance: *cum gladiis & fustibus*; With Booke, Bell, and Candle, he rayed an hoast of execrations against him, and the Sumner cited him with a solemne Processe to appeare before him, understanding sufficiently, that this course would sooner fetch money from him, then amend any misbeliefe in the man; for no further reformation did he seeke after.

The man coming before him, he demanded, if the accusation intimated against him, was true or no? Whereto the honest man answered, that he could not denie the speaking of such words, and declared in what manner they were uttered. Presently the Inquisitor, most devoutly addicted to Saint *John* with the golden beard, saide; What? Doest thou make our Lord a drinker, and a curious quaffer of wines, as if he were a glutton, belly-god, or a Taverne haunter, as thou, and other drunkards are. Being an hypocrite, as thou art, thou thinkest this to be but a light matter, because it may seeme so in thine owne opinion: but I tell thee plainly, that it deserveth fire and faggot, if I should proceede in Justice to inflict it on thee: with these, and other such like threatening words, as also a very stearn and angry countenance, he made the man believe himselfe to be an Epicure, and that hee denied the eternity of the soule; whereby he fell into such a trembling feare, as doubting indeed, least he should be burned, that, to be more mercifully dealt withall, he rounded him in the eare, and (by secret means) so annointed his hands with Saint *Johns* golden grease, (a very singular remedy against the disease pestilentiall in covetous Priests, especially Friars Minors, that dare touch no money) as the case became very quickly altered.

This soveraigne unction was of such vertue (though *Galen* speakes not a word thereof among all his chiefest medicines) and so farre prevailed; that the terrible threatening words of fire and fagot, became meerely frozen up, and gracious language blew a more gentle and calmer ayre; the Inquisitor delivering him an hallowed Crucifixe, creating him a Souldier of the Crosse (because he had payed Crosses good store for it) and even as if he were to travell under that Standard to the holy Land; so did hee appoint him a home-paying pennance, namely, to visit him thrice every weeke in his Chamber, and to annoint his hands with the selfe-same yellow unguent, and afterward, to heare a Masse of the holy Crosse, visiting him also at dinner time, which being ended, to doe nothing all the rest of the day, but according as he directed him.

The simple man, yet not so simple, but seeing that this weekely greasing the Inquisitors hands, would (in time) graspe away all his gold; grew weary of this annointing, and beganne to consider with himselfe, how to stay the course of this chargeable penance: And coming one morning, (according to his injunction) to heare Masse, in the Gospell he observed these wordes; *You shall receive an hundred for one, and so possesse eternall life*; which saying he kept perfectly in his memory, and, as hee was commanded, at dinner time, he came to the Inquisitor, finding him (among his fellowes) seated at the Table. The Inquisitor presently demanded of him, whether he had heard Masse that morning, or no? Yes Sir, replied the man very readily. Hast thou heard any thing therein (quoth the Inquisitor) whereof thou art doubtfull, or desirest to be further informed? Surely Sir, answered the plaine meaning man, I make no doubt of any thing I have heard, but doe beleieve all constantly; onely one thing troubleth me much, and maketh me very

compassionate of you, and of all these holy Fathers your brethren, perceiving in what wofull and wretched estate you will be, when you shall come into another World. What words are these, quoth the Inquisitor? And why art thou moved to such compassion of us? O good Sir, saide the man, doe you remember the words in the Gospell this morning? you shall receive an hundred for one. That is very true, replied the Inquisitor, but what moveth thee to urge those words?

I will tell you Sir, answered the plaine fellow, so it might please you to be not offended. Since the time of my resorting hither, I have daily seene many poore people at your doore, and (out of your abundance) when you and your brethren have fed sufficiently, every one hath had a good messe of pottage: now Sir, if for every dishfull given, you are sure to receive an hundred againe, you will all be meerey drowned in pottage. Although the rest (sitting at the Table with the Inquisitor) laughed heartily at this jest; yet he found himselfe toucht in another nature, having (hypocritically) received for one poore offence, above three hundred peeces of gold, and not a mite to be restored againe. But fearing to be further disclosed, yet threatning him with another Processe in Law, for abusing the words of the Gospell; he was content to dismisse him for altogether, without any more golden greasing in the hand.

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***Bergamino, by telling a Tale of a skilfull man, named Primasso, and of an Abbot of Clugni; honestly checked a new kinde of covetousnesse, in Master Can de la Scala.***

## **The seaventh Novell.**

***Approving, that it is much unfitting for a Prince, or great person, to be covetous; but rather to be liberall to all men.***

The curteous demeanor of Madam *Emilia*, and the quaintnesse of her discourse, caused both the Queene, and the rest of the company, to commend the invention of carrying the Crosse, and the golden oyntment appointed for pennance. Afterward, *Philostratus*, who was in order to speake next, began in this manner.

It is a commendable thing (faire Ladies) to hit a But that never stirreth out of his place: but it is a matter much more admirable, to see a thing (suddenly appearing, and sildome or never frequented before) to be as suddenly hit by an ordinary Archer. The vicious and polluted lives of Priests, yeeldeth matter of it selfe in many things, deserving speech and reprehension, as a true But of wickednesse, and well worthy to be sharply shot at. And therefore, though that honest meaning man did wisely, in touching Master Inquisitor to the quicke, with the hypocriticall charity of Monkes and Friars, in giving such things to the poore, as were more meete for swine, or to be worse throwne away; yet I hold him more to be commended, who (by occasion of a former tale, and which I purpose to relate) pleasantly reprov'd Master *Can de la Scala*, a Magnifico and mightie Lord, for a sudden and unaccustomed covetousnesse appearing in him, figuring by other men, that which he intended to say of him, in manner following.

Master *Can de la Scala*, as fame ranne abroade of him in all places, was (beyond the infinite favours of Fortune towards him) one of the most notable and magnificent Lords that ever lived in *Italy*, since the dayes of *Fredericke* the second Emperour. He determining to procure a very solemne assembly at *Verona*, and many people being met there from divers places, especially Gentlemen of all degrees; suddenly (upon what occasion I know not) his minde altered, and hee would not goe forward with his intention. Most of them hee partly recompenced which were come thither, and they dismissed to depart at their pleasure, one onely man remained unrespected, or in any kinde sort sent away, whose name was *Bergamino*, a man very pleasantly disposed, and so wittily ready in speaking and answering, as none could easily credit it, but such as heard him; and although his recompence seemed over long delayed, yet hee made no doubt of a beneficiall ending.

By some enemies of his, Master *Can de la Scala* was incensed, that whatsoever he gave or bestowed on him; was as ill employed and utterly lost, as if it were throwne into the fire, and therefore he neither did or spake any thing to him. Some fewe dayes being passed over, and *Bergamino* perceiving, that hee was neither called, nor any account made of, notwithstanding many manly good parts in him; observing beside, that hee found a shrewd consumption in his purse, his Inne, horses, and servants being chargeable to him: he began to grow extremely melancholly, and yet hee attended in expectation day by day, as thinking it farre unfitting for him, to depart before he was bidden farewell.

Having brought with him thither three goodly rich garments, which had beene given him by sundry Lords, for his more sightly appearance at this great meeting: the importunate Host being greedy of payment, first he delivered him one of them, and yet not halfe the score being wiped off, the second must needs follow, and beside, except he meant to leave his lodging, hee must live upon the third so long as it would last, till hee saw what end his hopes would sort to. It fortun'd, during the time of living thus upon his latest refuge, that he met with Maister *Can* one day at dinner, where he presented himselfe before him, with a discontented countenance: which Master *Can* well observing, more to distaste him, then take delight in any thing that could come from him, he said. *Bergamino*, how chearest thou? Thou art very melancholly, I pray thee tell us why? *Bergamino* suddenly, without any premeditation, yet seeming as if he had long considered thereon, reported this Tale.

Sir, I have heard of a certaine man, named *Primasso*, one skilfully learned in the Grammar, and (beyond all other) a very witty and ready versifier: in regard whereof, he was so much admired, and farre renowned, that such as never saw him, but onely heard of him, could easily say, this is *Primasso*. It came to passe, that being once at *Paris*, in poore estate, as commonly hee could light on no better fortune (because vertue is slenderly rewarded, by such as have the greatest possessions) he heard much fame of the Abbot of *Clugni*, a man reputed (next to the Pope) to be the richest Prelate of the Church. Of him he heard wonderfull and magnificent matters, that he alwayes kept an open and hospitable Court, and never made refusall of any (from whence so ever hee came or went) but they did eate and drinke freely there; provided, that they came when the Abbot was set at the Table. *Primasso* hearing this, and being an earnest desirer, to see magnificent and vertuous men; he resolved to goe see this rare bounty of the Abbot, demanding how far he dwelt from *Paris*. Being answered, about some three leagues thence; *Primasso* made account, that if he went on betimes in the morning, he should easily reach thither before the houre for dinner.

Being instructed in the way, and not finding any to walke along with him; fearing, if he went without some furnishment, and should stay long there for his dinner, he might (perhaps) complaine of hunger: he therefore caried three loaves of bread with him, knowing that he could meete with water every where, albeit he used to drinke but little. Having aptly convayed his bread about him, he went on his journey, and arrived at the Lord Abbots Court, an indifferent while before dinner time: wherefore, entering into the great Hall, and so from place to place, beholding the great multitude of Tables, bountifull preparation in the Kitchin, and what admirable provision there was for dinner; he said to himselfe, Truly this man is more magnificent, then Fame hath made him, because shee speakes too sparingly of him.

While thus he went about, considering on all these things, he saw the Maister of the Abbots household (because then it was the houre of dinner) commaund water to be brought for washing hands, and every one sitting downe at the Table: it fell to the lot of *Primasso*, to sit directly against the doore, whereat the Abbot must enter into the Hall. The custome in this Court was such, that no foode should be served to any, of the Tables, untill the Lord Abbot was himselfe first sette: whereupon, every thing being fitte and readie, the Maister of the household, went to tell his Lord, that nothing now wanted but his presence onely.

The Abbot comming from his Chamber to enter the Hall, looking about him, as hee was wont to doe; the first man hee saw was *Primasso*, who being but in homely habite, and he having not seene him before to his remembrance; a present bad conceite possessed his braine, that he never saw an unworthier person, saying within himselfe: See how I give my goods away to be devoured. So returning backe to his Chamber againe, commaunded the doore to be made fast, demanding of every man neere about him, if they knew the base Knave that sate before his entrance into the Hall, and all his servants answered no. *Primasso* being extremely hungry, with travailing on foote so farre, and never used to fast so long; expecting still when meate would be served in, and that the Abbot came not at all: drew out one of his loaves which hee brought with him, and very heartily fell to feeding.

My Lord Abbot, after he had stayed within an indifferent while, sent forth one of his men, to see if the poore fellow was gone, or no. The servant told him, that he still stayed there, and fed upon dry bread, which it seemed he had brought thither with him. Let him feede on his owne (replied the Abbot) for he shall taste of none of mine this day. Gladly wold the Abbot, that *Primasso* should have gone thence of himselfe, and yet held it scarsely honest in his Lordship, to dismisse him by his owne command. *Primasso* having eaten one of his Loaves, and yet the Abbot was not come; began to feede upon the second: the Abbot still sending to expect his absence, and answered as he was before. At length, the Abbot not comming, and *Primasso* having eaten up his second loafe, hunger compeld him to begin with the third.

When these newes were carried to the Abbot, sodainly he brake forth and saide. What new kinde of needy tricke hath my braine begotte this day? Why do I grow disdainfull against any man whatsoever? I have long time allowed my meate to be eaten by all commers that did please to visit me, without exception against any person, Gentleman, Yeoman, poore or rich, Marchant or Minstrill, honest man or knave, never refraining my presence in the Hall, by basely contemning one poore man. Beleeve me, covetousnesse of one mans meate, doth ill agree with mine estate and calling. What though he appeareth a wretched fellow to mee? He may be of greater merit then I can imagine, and deserve more honour then I am able to give him.

Having thus discoursed with himselfe, he would needs understande of whence and what he was, and finding him to be *Primasso*, come onely to see the magnificence which he had reported of him, knowing also (by the generall fame noysed every where of him) that he was reputed to bee a learned, honest, and ingenious man: he grew greatly ashamed of his own folly, and being desirous to make him an amends, strove many waies how to do him honour. When dinner was ended, the Abbot bestowed honourable garments on him, such as beseemed his degree and merit, and putting good store of money in his purse, as also giving him a good horse to ride on, left it at his owne free election, whether hee would stay there still with him, or depart at his pleasure. Wherewith *Primasso* being highly contented, yeelding him the heartiest thanks he could devise to doe, returned to *Paris* on horse-back, albeit he came poorly thether on foot.

Master *Can de la Scala*, who was a man of good understanding, perceyved immediately (without any further interpretation) what *Bergamino* meant by this morall, and smiling on him, saide: *Bergamino*, thou hast honestly expressed thy vertue and necessities, and justly reprooved mine avarice, niggardnesse, and base folly. And trust me *Bergamino*, I never felt such a fit of covetousnesse come upon me, as this which I have dishonestly declared to thee: and which I will

now banish from me, with the same correction as thou hast taught mee. So, having payed the Host all his charges, redeeming also his robes or garments, mounting him on a good Gelding, and putting plenty of Crownes in his purse, hee referd it to his owne choise to depart, or dwell there still with him.

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***Guillaume Boursier, with a few quaint and familiar words, checkt the miserable covetousnesse of Signior Herminio de Grimaldi.***

## **The eight Novell.**

***Which plainly declareth, that a covetous Gentleman, is not worthy of any honour or respect.***

Madam *Lauretta*, sitting next to *Philostratus*, when she had heard the witty conceite of *Bergamino*; knowing, that shee was to say somewhat, without injunction or command, pleasantly thus began.

This last discourse (faire and vertuous company) induceth mee to tell you, how an honest Courtier reprehended in like manner (and nothing unprofitably) base covetousnesse in a Merchant of extraordinary wealth. Which Tale, although (in effect) it may seeme to resemble the former; yet perhaps, it will prove no lesse pleasing to you, in regard it sorted to as good an end.

It is no long time since, that there lived in *Genes* or *Geneway*, a Gentleman named Signior *Herminio de Grimaldi*, who (as every one wel knew) was more rich in inheritances, and ready summes of currant mony, then any other knowne Citizen in *Italy*. And as hee surpassed other men in wealth, so did he likewise excell them in wretched Avarice, being so miserably greedy and covetous, as no man in the world could be more wicked that way; because, not onely he kept his purse lockt up from pleasuring any, but denied needful things to himself, enduring many miseries & distresses, onely to avoide expences, contrary to the *Genewayes* generall custome, who always delighted to be decently cloathed, and to have their dyet of the best. By reason of which most miserable basenesse, they tooke from him the sir-name of *Grimaldi*, whereof hee was in right descended: and called him master *Herminio* the covetous Mizer, a nickname very notably agreeing with his gripple nature.

It came to passe, that in this time of his spending nothing, but multiplying daily by infinite meanes, that a civill honest Gentleman (a Courtier, of ready wit, and discursive in Languages) came to *Geneway*, being named *Guillaume Boursier*. A man very farre differing from divers Courtiers in these dayes, who for soothing shamefull and gracelesse manners, in such as allow them maintenance, are called and reputed to bee Gentlemen, yea especiall favourites: whereas much more worthily, they should be accounted as knaves and villaines, being borne and bred in all filthinesse, and skilfull in every kinde of basest behaviour, not fit to come in Princes Courts. For, whereas in passed times, they spent their dayes and paines in making peace, when Gentlemen were at warre or dissention, or treating on honest marriages, betweene friends and familiars, & (with loving speeches) would recreate disturbed mindes, desiring none but commendable exercises in Court, and sharply reprooving (like fathers) disordred life, or ill actions in any, albeit with recompence little, or none at all: these upstarts now adayes, employ all their paines in detractions, sowing questions and quarrels betweene one another, making no spare of lyes & falshoods. Nay which is worse, they will do this in the presence of any man, upbraiding him with injuries, shames, and scandals (true or not true) upon the very least occasion. And by false and deceitfull flatteries and villanies of their own inventing, they make Gentlemen to become as vile as themselves. For which detestable qualities, they are better beloved and respected of theyr misdemeanour'd Lords, and recompenced in more bountifull manner, then men of vertuous carriage and desert. Which is an argument sufficient, that goodnesse is gone up to heaven, and hath quite forsaken these loathed lower Regions, where men are drowned in the mud of all abhominable vices.

But returning where I left (being led out of my way by a just and religious anger against such deformity) this Gentleman, Master *Guillaume Boursier*, was willingly seene, and gladly welcommed by all the best men in *Geneway*. Having remayned some few dayes in the City, & (among other matters) heard much talke of the miserable covetousnes of master *Herminio*, he grew verie desirous to have a sight of him. Master *Herminio* had already understood, that this Gentleman, Master *Guillaume Boursier*, was vertuously disposed, and (how covetously soever he was inclined) having in him some sparkes of noble nature; gave him very good words, and gracious entertainment, discoursing with him on divers occasions.

In company of other *Genewayes* with him, he brought him to a new erected house of his, a building of great cost and beauty, where, after he had shewen him all the variable rarities, he beganne thus. Master *Guillaume*, no doubt but you have heard and seene many things, and you can instruct me in some quaint conceit or devise, to be fairely figured in painting, at the entrance into the great Hall of my House. Master *Guillaume* hearing him speake so simply, returned him this answere; Sir, I cannot advise you in any thing, so rare or unseen as you talke of: but how to sneeze (after a new manner) upon a full and overcloyed stomacke, to avoide base humours that stupifie the braine, or other matters of the like quality. But if you would be taught a good one indeede, and had a disposition to see it fairely effected; I could instruct you in an excellent

Embleme, wherewith (as yet) you never came acquainted.

Master *Herminio* hearing him say so, and expecting no such answere as he had saide; Good Master *Guillaume*, tell me what it is, and on my faith I will have it fairely painted. Whereto Master *Guillaume* suddenly replied: Doe nothing but this Sir; Paint over the Portall at your Halles entrance, the lively picture of Liberality, to bid all your friends better welcome, then hitherto they have beene. When Master *Herminio* heard these words, he became possessed with such a sudden shame, that his complexion changed from the former palenesse, and answered thus. Master *Guillaume*, I will have your advice so truly figured over my gate, and shee shall give so good welcome to all my guests, that both you, and all these Gentlemen shall say; I have both seene her, and am become reasonably acquainted with her. From that time forward, the words of Master *Guillaume* were so effectually with Signior *Herminio*, that he became the most bountifull and best house-keeper, which lived in his time in *Geneway*; no man more honouring and friendly welcoming both strangers and Citizens, then he continually used to doe.

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***The King of Cyprus was wittily reprehended, by the words of a Gentlewoman of Gascoignie, and became vertuously altered from his vicious disposition.***

## **The ninth Novell.**

***Giving all men to understand, that Justice is necessary in a King, above all things else whatsoever.***

The last command of the Queene, remained upon Madam *Elissa*, or *Eliza*, who without any delaying, thus beganne. Young Ladies, it hath often beene seene, that much paine hath beene bestowed, and many reprehensions spent in vaine, till a word happening at adventure, and perhaps not purposely determined, hath effectually done the deede: as appeareth by the Tale of Madam *Lauretta*, and another of mine owne, wherewith I intend briefly to acquaint you, approving, that when good words are discreetly observed, they are of soveraigne power and vertue.

In the dayes of the first King of *Cyprus*, after the Conquest made in the holy Land by *Godfrey of Bullen*, it fortun'd, that a Gentlewoman of *Gascoignie*, travelling in pilgrimage, to visit the sacred Sepulcher in *Jerusalem*, returning home againe, arrived at *Cyprus*, where shee was villanously abused by certaine base wretches. Complaining thereof, without any comfort or redresse, shee intended to make her moane to the King of the Countrey. Whereupon it was tolde her, that therein shee should but loose her labour, because hee was so womanish, and faint-hearted; that not onely he refused to punish with justice the offences of others, but also suffered shamefull injuries done to himselfe. And therefore, such as were displeas'd by his negligence, might easily discharge their spleene against him, and doe him what dishonour they would.

When the Gentlewoman heard this, despairing of any consolation, or revenge for her wrongs, shee resolv'd to checke the Kings deniall of justice, and comming before him weeping, spake in this manner. Sir, I presume not into your presence, as hoping to have redresse by you, for divers dishonourable injuries done unto me; but, as a full satisfaction for them, doe but teach me how you suffer such vile abuses, as daily are offer'd to your selfe. To the ende, that being therein instructed by you, I may the more patiently beare mine owne; which (as God knoweth) I would bestow on you very gladly, because you know so well how to endure them.

The King, who (till then) had beene very bad, dull, and slothfull, even as sleeping out his time of government; beganne to revenge the wrongs done to this Gentlewoman very severely, and (thenceforward) became a most sharpe Justicer, for the least offence offer'd against the honour of his Crowne, or to any of his subjects beside.

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***Master Albert of Bullen, honestly made a Lady to blush, that thought to have done as much to him, because shee perceived him, to be amorously affected towards her.***

## **The tenth Novell.**

***Wherein is declared, that honest love agreeth with people of all ages.***

After that Madam *Eliza* sate silent, the last charge and labour of the like employment, remained to the Queene her selfe; whereupon shee beganne thus to speake: Honest and vertuous young Ladies, like as the Starres (when the Ayre is faire and cleere) are the adorning and beauty of Heaven, and flowers (while the Spring time lasteth) doe graciously embellish the Meadows; even so sweete speeches and pleasing conferences, to passe the time with commendable discourses, are the best habit of the minde, and an outward beauty to the body: which ornament of words, when they appeare to be short and sweete, are much more seemely in women, then in men; because long and tedious talking (when it may be done in lesser time) is a greater blemish in women, then in men.

Among us women, this day, I thinke few or none have therein offended, but as readily have understood short and pithy speeches, as they have beene quicke and quaintly delivered. But when answering suteth not with understanding, it is generally a shame in us, and all such as live; because our moderne times have converted that vertue, which was within them who lived before us, into garments of the bodie, and shew whose habites were noted to bee most gaudie, fullest of imbroyderies, and fantastick fashions: she was reputed to have most matter in her, and therefore to be more honoured and esteemed. Never considering, that whosoever loadeth the backe of an Asse, or puts upon him the richest braverie; he becommeth not thereby a jote the wiser, or merriteth any more honour then an Asse should have. I am ashamed to speake it, because in detecting other, I may (perhaps) as justly taxe my selfe.

Such imbroydered bodies, tricked and trimmed in such boasting bravery, are they any thing else but as Marble Statues, dumbe, dull, and utterly insensible? Or if (perchaunce) they make an answere, when some question is demaunded of them; it were much better for them to be silent. For defence of honest devise and conference among men and women, they would have the world to thinke, that it proceedeth but from simplicity and precise opinion, covering their owne folly with the name of honesty: as if there were no other honest woman, but shee that conferres onely with her Chamber-maide, Laundresse, or Kitchin-woman, as if nature had allowed them (in their owne idle conceite) no other kinde of talking.

Most true it is, that as there is a respect to be used in the action of other things; so, time and place are necessarily to be considered, and also whom we converse withall; because sometimes it happeneth, that a man or woman, intending (by a word of jest and merriment) to make another body blush or be ashamed: not knowing what strength of wit remaineth in the opposite, doe convert the same disgrace upon themselves. Therefore, that we may the more advisedly stand upon our owne guard, and to prevent the common proverbe, *That Women (in all things) make choyse of the worst*: I desire that this dayes last tale, which is to come from my selfe, may make us all wise. To the end, that as in gentlesse of minde we conferre with other; so by excellency in good manners, we may shew our selves not inferiour to them.

It is not many yeares since (worthy assembly) that in *Bulloigne* there dwelt a learned Physitian, a man famous for skill, and farre renowned, whose name was Master *Albert*, and being growne aged, to the estimate of threescore and tenne yeares: hee had yet such a sprightly disposition, that though naturall heate and vigour had quite shaken hands with him, yet amorous flames and desires had not wholly forsaken him. Having seene (at a Banquet) a very beautifull woman, being then in the estate of widdowhood, named (as some say) Madame *Margaret de Chisolieri*, shee appeared so pleasing in his eye; that his sences became no lesse disturbed, then as if he had beene of farre younger temper, and no night could any quietnesse possesse his soule, except (the day before) he had seene the sweet countenance of this lovely widdow. In regard whereof, his dayly passage was by her doore, one while on horsebacke, and then againe on foote; as best might declare his plaine purpose to see her.

Both shee and other Gentlewomen, perceiving the occasion of his passing and repassing; would privately jest thereat together, to see a man of such yeares and discretion, to be amorously addicted, or over-swayed by effeminate passions. For they were partly perswaded, that such wanton Ague fits of Love, were fit for none but youthfull apprehensions, as best agreeing with their chearefull complexion. Master *Albert* continuing his dayly walkes by the widdowes lodging, it chanced upon a Festivall day, that shee (accompanied with divers other women of great account) being sitting at her doore; espied Master *Albert* (farre off) comming thitherward, and a resolved determination among themselves was set downe, to allow him favourable entertainment, and to jest (in some merry manner) at his loving folly, as afterward they did indeede.

No sooner was he come neere, but they all arose, and courteously invited him to enter with them, conducting him into a goodly Garden, where readily was prepared choyse of delicate wines and banquetting. At length, among other pleasant and delightfull discourses, they demanded of him: how it was possible for him, to be amorously affected towards so beautifull a woman, both knowing and seeing, how earnestly she was sollicitated by many gracious, gallant, and youthfull spirits, aptly suting with her yeares and desires? Master *Albert* perceiving, that they had drawne him in among them, onely to scoffe and make a mockery of him; set a merry countenance on the matter, and honestly thus answered.

Beleeve mee Gentlewoman (speaking to the widdowe her selfe) it should not appeare strange to any of wisdom and discretion, that I am amorously enclined, and especially to you, because you are well worthy of it. And although those powers, which naturally appertaine to the exercises of Love, are bereft and gone from aged people; yet goodwill thereto cannot be taken from them, neither judgement to know such as deserve to be affected: for, by how much they exceede youth in knowledge and experience, by so much the more hath nature made them meet for respect and reverence. The hope which incited me (being aged) to love you, that are affected of so many youthfull Gallants, grew thus. I have often chanced into divers places, where I have seene Ladies and Gentlewomen, being disposed to a Collation or rere-banquet after dinner, to feede on Lupines, and young Onions or Leekes, and although it may be so, that there is little or no goodnesse at all in them; yet the heads of them are least hurtfull, and most pleasing in the mouth. And you Gentlewomen generally (guided by unreasonable appetite) will hold the heads of them in your hands, and feede upon the blades or stalkes; which not onely are not good for any thing, but also are of very bad savour. And what know I (Lady) whether among the choise of friends, it may fit your fancy to doe the like? For, if you did so, it were no fault of mine to be chosen of you, but thereby were all the rest of your suters the sooner answered.

The widdowed Gentlewoman, and all the rest in her company, being bashfully ashamed of her owne and their folly, presently said. Master *Albert*, you have both well and worthily chastised our over-bold presumption, and beleeeve mee Sir, I repute your love and kindnesse of no meane merit, comming from a man so wise and vertuous: And therefore (mine honour reserved) commaund my uttermost, as alwayes ready to do you any honest service. Master *Albert*, arising from his seat, thanking the faire widdow for her gentle offer; tooke leave of her and all the company, and she blushing, as all the rest were therein not much behinde her, thinking to checke him, became chidden her selfe, whereby (if wee be wise) let us all take warning.

The Sunne was now somewhat farre declined, and the heates extremity well worne away, when the Tales of the seaven Ladies and three Gentlemen were thus finished, whereupon their Queene pleasantly said. For this day (faire company) there remaineth nothing more to be done under my regiment, but onely to bestow a new Queene upon you, who (according to her judgement) must take her turne, and dispose what next is to be done, for continuing our time in honest pleasure. And although the day should endure till darke night, in regard, that when some time is taken before, the better preparation may be made for occasions to follow, to the end also, that whatsoever the new Queene shall please to appoint, may be the better fitted for the morrow: I am of opinion, that at the same houre as we now cease, the following dayes shall severally begin. And therefore, in reverence to him that giveth life to all things, and in hope of comfort by our second day; Madame *Philomena*, a most wise young Lady, shall governe as Queene this our Kingdome.

So soone as she had thus spoken, arising from her seate of dignity, and taking the Lawrell Crowne from off her owne head; she reverently placed it upon Madame *Philomenaes*, she first of all humbly saluting her, and then all the rest, openly confessing her to be their Queene, made gracious offer to obey whatsoever she commaunded. *Philomena*, her cheekes delivering a scarlet tincture, to see her selfe thus honoured as their Queene, and well remembering the words, so lately uttered by Madame *Pampinea*; that dulnesse or neglect might not be noted in her, tooke cheerefull courage to her, and first of all, she confirmed the officers, which *Pampinea* had appointed the day before, then shee ordained for the morrowes provision, as also for the supper so neere approaching, before they departed away from thence, and then thus began.

Lovely Companions, although that Madam *Pampinea*, more in her owne courtesie, then any matter of merit remaining in mee, hath made me your Queene: I am not determined, to alter the forme of our intended life, nor to be guided by mine owne judgement, but to associate the same with your assistance. And because you may know what I intend to do, and so (consequently) adde or diminish at your pleasure; in verie few words, you shall plainly understand my meaning. If you have well considered on the course, which this day hath bene kept by Madam *Pampinea*, me thinkes it hath bene very pleasing and commendable; in which regard, untill by over-tedious continuation, or other occasions of irkesome offence, it shall seeme injurious, I am of the minde, not to alter it. Holding on the order then as we have begun to do, we will depart from hence to recreate our selves awhile, and when the Sun groweth towards setting, we will sup in the fresh and open ayre: afterward, with Canzonets and other pastimes, we will out-weare the houres till bed time. To morrow morning, in the fresh and gentle breath thereof, we will rise & walke to such places, as every one shall finde fittest for them, even as already this day we have done; untill due time shall summon us hither againe, to continue our discursive Tales, wherein (me thinkes) consisteth both pleasure and profit, especially by discrete observation.

Very true it is, that some things which Madam *Pampinea* coulde not accomplish, by reason of her so small time of authority, I will beginne to undergo, to wit, in restraining some matters whereon we are to speake, that better premeditation may passe upon them. For, when respite and a little leysure goeth before them, each discourse will savour of the more formality; and if it might so please you, thus would I direct the order. As since the beginning of the world, all men have bene guided (by Fortune) thorow divers accidents and occasions: so beyond all hope & expectation, the issue and successe hath bin good and succesfull, and accordingly should every one of our arguments be chosen.

The Ladies, and the yong Gentlemen likewise, commended her advice, and promised to imitate it; onely *Dioneus* excepted, who when every one was silent, spake thus. Madam, I say as all the rest have done, that the order by you appointed, is most pleasing and worthy to bee allowed. But I intreate one speciall favour for my selfe, and to have it confirmed to me, so long as our company continueth; namely, that I may not be constrained to this Law of direction, but to tell my Tale at liberty, after mine owne minde, and according to the freedome first instituted. And because no one shall imagine, that I urge this grace of you, as being unfurnished of discourses in this kinde, I am well contented to be the last in every dayes exercise.

The Queene, knowing him to be a man full of mirth and matter, began to consider very advisedly, that he would not have mooved this request, but onely to the end, that if the company grew wearied by any of the Tales re-counted, hee would shut uppe the dayes disport with some mirthfull accident. Wherefore willingly, and with consent of al the rest he had his suite granted. So, arising all, they walked to a Christall river, descending downe a little hill into a vally, graciously shaded with goodly Trees; where washing both their hands and feete, much pretty pleasure passed among them; till supper time drawing nere, made them returne home to the Palace. When supper was ended, and bookes and instruments being laide before them, the Queene commanded a dance, & that Madam *Æmilia*, assisted by Madam *Lauretta* and *Dioneus*, shold sing a sweet ditty. At which command, *Lauretta* undertooke the dance, and led it, *Æmilia* singing this song ensuing.



*The Song.*

*So much delight my beauty yeelds to mee,  
That any other Love,  
To wish or prove;  
Can never sute it selfe with my desire.*

*Therein I see, upon good observation,  
What sweete content due understanding lends:  
Olde or new thoughts cannot in any fashion  
Rob me of that, which mine owne soule commends.  
What object then,  
(mongst infinites of men)  
Can I ever finde  
to dispossesse my minde,  
And plant therein another new desire?  
So much delight, &c.*

*But were it so, the blisse that I would chuse,  
Is, by continuall sight to comfort me:  
So rare a presence never to refuse,  
Which mortall tongue or thought, what ere it be;  
Must still conceale,  
not able to reveale,  
Such a sacred sweete,  
for none other meete,  
But hearts enflamed with the same desire.  
So much delight, &c.*

The Song being ended, the Chorus whereof was answered by them all, it passed with generall applause: and after a few other daunces, the night being well run on, the Queene gave ending to this first dayes Recreation. So, lights being brought, they departed to their severall Lodgings, to take their rest till the next morning.

***The End of the first Day.***

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## **The Second Day.**

***Wherein, all the Discourses are under the government of Madam Philomena:  
Concerning such men or women, as (in divers accidents) have beene much molested by  
Fortune, and yet afterward, contrary to their hope and expectation, have had a happy  
and successfull deliverance.***

Already had the bright Sunne renewed the day every where with his splendant beames, and the Birds sate merrily singing on the blooming branches, yeelding testimony thereof to the eares of all hearers; when the seven Ladies, and the three Gentlemen (after they were risen) entered the Gardens, and there spent some time in walking, as also making of Nose-gayes and Chaplets of Flowers. And even as they had done the day before, so did they now follow the same course; for, after they had dined, in a coole and pleasing aire they fell to dancing, and then went to sleepe awhile, from which being awaked, they tooke their places (according as it pleased the Queene to appoint) in the same faire Meadow about her. And she, being a goodly creature, and highly pleasing to beholde, having put on her Crowne of Laurell, and giving a gracious countenance to the whole company; commanded Madam *Neiphila* that her Tale should begin this daies delight. Whereupon she, without returning any excuse or deniall, began in this manner.

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***Martellino counterfetting to be lame of his members, caused himselfe to be set on the  
body of Saint Arriguo, where he made shew of his sudden recovery; but when his  
dissimulation was discovered, he was well beaten, being afterward taken prisoner, and  
in great danger of being hanged and strangled by the necke, and yet he escaped in the  
ende.***

## **The first Novell.**

***Wherein is signified, how easie a thing it is, for wicked men to deceive the world, under  
the shadow and colour of miracles: and that such trechery (oftentimes) redoundeth to  
the harme of the deviser.***

Faire Ladies, it hath happened many times, that hee who striveth to scorne and floute other men,

and especially in occasions deserving to be respected, proveth to mocke himselfe with the selfesame matter, yea, and to his no meane danger beside. As you shall perceiue by a Tale, which I intend to tell you, obeying therein the command of our Queene, and according to the subject by her enjoyned. In which discourse, you may first observe, what great mischance happened to one of our Citizens; and yet afterward, how (beyond all hope) he happily escaped.

Not long since there lived in the City of *Trevers*, an *Almaine* or *Germaine*, named *Arrigo*, [Or *Arrigo*.] who being a poore man, served as a Porter, or burden-bearer for money, when any man pleased to employ him. And yet, notwithstanding his poore and meane condition, he was generally reputed, to be of good and sanctified life. In which regard (whether it were true or no, I know not) it happened, that when he died (at least as the men of *Trevers* themselves affirmed) in the very instant houre of his departing, all the Belles in the great Church of *Trevers*, (not being pulled by the helpe of any hand) beganne to ring: which being accounted for a miracle, every one saide; that this *Arrigo* had been, and was a Saint. And presently all the people of the City ran to the house where the dead body lay, and carried it (as a sanctified body) into the great Church, where people, halt, lame, and blinde, or troubled with any other diseases, were brought about it, even as if every one should forth-with be holpen, onely by their touching the bodie.

It came to passe, that in so great a concourse of people, as resorted thither from all parts; three of our Cittizens went to *Trevers*, one of them being named *Stechio*, the second *Martellino*, and the third *Marquiso*, all being men of such condition, as frequented Princes Courts, to give them delight by pleasant & counterfeited qualities. None of these men having ever beene at *Trevers* before, seeing how the people crowded thorow the streetes, wondred greatly thereat: but when they knew the reason, why the throngs ranne on heapes in such sort together, they grew as desirous to see the Shrine, as any of the rest. Having ordered all affaires at their lodging, *Marquiso* saide; It is fit for us to see this Saint, but I know not how we shall attaine thereto, because (as I have heard) the place is guarded by Germane Souldiers, and other warlike men, commanded thither by the Governours of this City, least any outrage should be there committed: And beside, the Church is so full of people, as wee shall never compasse to get neere. *Martellino* being also as forward in desire to see it, presently replied: All this difficulty cannot dismay me, but I will goe to the very body of the Saint it selfe. But how? quoth *Marquiso*. I will tell thee, answered *Martellino*. I purpose to goe in the disguise of an impotent lame person, supported on the one side by thy selfe, and on the other by *Stechio*, as if I were not able to walke of my selfe: And you two thus sustaining me, desiring to come neere the Saint to cure me; every one will make way, and freely give you leave to goe on.

This devise was very pleasing to *Marquiso* and *Stechio*, so that (without any further delaying) they all three left their lodging, and resorting into a secret corner aside, *Martellino* so writhed and mishaped his hands, fingers, and armes, his legges, mouth, eyes, and whole countenance, that it was a dreadfull sight to looke upon him, and whosoever beheld him, would verily have imagined, that hee was utterly lame of his limbes, and greatly deformed in his body. *Marquiso* and *Stechio*, seeing all sorted so well as they could wish, tooke and led him towards the Church, making very pitious moane, and humbly desiring (for Gods sake) of every one that they met, to grant them free passage, whereto they charitably condescended.

Thus leading him on, crying still; Beware there before, and give way for Gods sake, they arrived at the body of Saint *Arrigo*, that (by his helpe) he might be healed. And while all eyes were diligently observing, what miracle would be wrought on *Martellino*, hee having sitten a small space upon the Saints bodie, and being sufficiently skilfull in counterfeiting; beganne first to extend forth one of his fingers, next his hand, then his arme, and so (by degrees) the rest of his body. Which when the people saw, they made such a wonderfull noyse in praise of Saint *Arrigo*, even as if it had thundered in the Church.

Now it chanced by ill fortune, that there stood a *Florentine* neere to the body, who knew *Martellino* very perfectly; but appearing so monstrously misshapen, when he was brought into the Church, hee could take no knowledge of him. But when he saw him stand up and walke, hee knew him then to be the man indeede; whereupon he saide. How commeth it to passe, that this fellow should be so miraculously cured, that never truly was any way impotent? Certaine men of the City hearing these words, entred into further questioning with him, demanding, how he knew that the man had no such imperfection? Well enough (answered the *Florentine*) I know him to be as direct in his limbes and body, as you; I, or any of us all are: but indeede, he knowes better how to dissemble counterfet trickes, then any man else that ever I saw.

When they heard this, they discoursed no further with the *Florentine*, but pressed on mainly to the place where *Martellino* stood, crying out aloude. Lay holde on this Traytor, a mocker of God, and his holy Saints, that had no lamenesse in his limbes; but to make a mocke of our Saint and us, came hither in false and counterfet manner. So laying hands uppon him, they threw him against the ground, haling him by the haire on his head, and tearing the garments from his backe, spurning him with their feete, and beating him with their fists, that many were much ashamed to see it.

Poore *Martellino* was in a pittifull case, crying out for mercy, but no man would heare him; for, the more he cried, the more still they did beat him, as meaning to leave no life in him, which *Stechio* and *Marquiso* seeing, considered with themselves, that they were likewise in a desperate case; and therefore, fearing to be as much misused, they cryed out among the rest; Kill the counterfet knave, lay on loade, and spare him not; neverthesse, they tooke care how to get him out of the peoples handes, as doubting, least they would kill him indeede, by their extreame violence.

Sodainly, *Marquiso* bethought him how to do it, and proceeded thus. All the Sergeants for Justice standing at the Church doore, hee ran with all possible speede to the *Potestates* Lieutenant, and said unto him. Good my Lord Justice, helpe me in an hard case; yonder is a villaine that hath cut my purse, I desire he may bee brought before you, that I may have my money againe. He hearing this, sent for a dozen of the Sergeants, who went to apprehend unhappy *Martellino*, and recover him from the peoples fury, leading him on with them to the Palace, no meane crowds thronging after him, when they heard that he was accused to bee a Cut-purse. Now durst they meddle no more with him, but assisted the Officers; some of them charging him in like manner, that he had cut their purses also.

Upon these clamours and complaints, the *Potestates* Lieutenant (being a man of rude quality) tooke him sodainly aside, and examined him of the crimes wherewith he was charged. But *Martellino*, as making no account of these accusations, laughed, and returned scoffing answers. Whereat the Judge, waxing much displeas'd, delivered him over to the Strappado, and stood by himselfe, to have him confesse the crimes imposed on him, and then to hang him afterward. Beeing let downe to the ground, the Judge still demaunded of him, whether the accusations against him were true, or no? Affirming, that it nothing avayled him to deny it: whereupon hee thus spake to the Judge. My Lord, I am heere ready before you, to confesse the truth; but I pray you, demaund of all them that accuse me, when and where I did cut their purses, & then I will tell you that, which (as yet) I have not done, otherwise I purpose to make you no more answers.

Well (quoth the Judge) thou requirest but reason; & calling divers of the accusers, one of them saide, that he lost his purse eight dayes before; another saide six, another foure, and some saide the very same day. Which *Martellino* hearing, replyed. My Lord, they al lie in their throats, as I will plainly prove before you. I would to God I had never set foote within this City, as it is not many houres since my first entrance, and presently after mine arrivall, I went (in an evill houre I may say for me) to see the Saints body, where I was thus beaten as you may beholde. That all this is true which I say unto you, the Seigneuries Officer that keeps your Booke of presentations, will testifie for me, as also the Host where I am lodged. Wherefore good my Lord, if you finde all no otherwise, then as I have said, I humbly entreate you, that upon these bad mens reportes and false informations, I may not be thus tormented, and put in perill of my life.

While matters proceeded in this manner, *Marquiso* and *Stechio*, understanding how roughly the *Potestates* Lieutenant dealt with *Martellino* and that he had already given him the Strappado; were in heavy perplexity, saying to themselves; we have carried this businesse very badly, redeeming him out of the Frying-pan, and flinging him into the Fire. Whereupon, trudging about from place to place, & meeting at length with their Host, they told him truly how all had happened, whereat hee could not refraine from laughing. Afterward, he went with them to one Master *Alexander Agolante*, who dwelt in *Trevers*, and was in great credite with the Cities cheefe Magistrate, to whom hee related the whole Discourse; all three earnestly entreating him, to commisserate the case of poore *Martellino*.

Master *Alexander*, after he had laughed heartily at this hotte peece of service, went with him to the Lord of *Trevers*; prevailing so well with him, that he sent to have *Martellino* brought before him. The Messengers that went for him, found him standing in his shirt before the Judge, very shrewdly shaken with the Strappado, trembling and quaking pittifully. For the Judge would not heare any thing in his excuse; but hating him (perhaps) because hee was a Florentine: flatly determined to have him hangde by the necke, and would not deliver him to the Lorde, untill in meere despight he was compeld to do it.

The Lord of *Trevers*, when *Martellino* came before him, and had acquainted him truly with every particular: Master *Alexander* requested, that he might be dispatched thence for *Florence*, because he thought the halter to be about his necke, and that there was no other helpe but hanging. The Lord, smiling (a long while) at the accident, & causing *Martellino* to be handsomely apparelled, delivering them also his Passe, they escaped out of further danger, and tarried no where, till they came unto *Florence*.

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***Rinaldo de Este, after he was robbed by Theeves, arrived at Chasteau Guillaume, where he was friendly lodged by a faire widdow, and recompenced likewise for all his losses; returning afterward safe and well home into his owne house.***

## **The second Novell.**

***Whereby wee may learne, that such things as sometime seeme hurtfull to us, may turne to our benefit and commodity.***

Much merriment was among the Ladies, hearing this Tale of *Martellinos* misfortunes, so familiarly reported by Madam *Neiphila*, and of the men, it was best respected by *Philostratus*, who sitting neerest unto *Neiphila*, the Queene commanded his Tale to be the next, when presently he began to speake thus.

Gracious Ladies, I am to speake of universall occasions, mingled with some misfortunes in part, and partly with matters leaning to love: as many times may happen to such people, that trace the dangerous pathes of amorous desires, or have not learned perfectly, to say S. *Julians pater*

*noster*, having good beds of their owne, yet (casually) meete with worser lodging.

In the time of *Azzo*, Marquisse of *Ferrara*, there was a Marchant named *Rinaldo de Este*, who being one day at *Bologna*, about some especiall businesse of his owne; his occasions there ended, and riding from thence towards *Verona*, he fell in company with other Horsemen, seeming to be Merchants like himselfe; but indeede were Theeves, men of most badde life and conversation; yet he having no such mistrust of them, rode on, conferring with them very familiarly. They perceiving him to be a Merchant, and likely to have some store of money about him, concluded betweene themselves to rob him, so soone as they found apt place and opportunity. But because he should conceive no such suspition, they rode on like modest men, talking honestly & friendly with him, of good parts and disposition appearing in him, offering him all humble and gracious service, accounting themselves happy by his companie, as hee returned the same courtesie to them, because he was alone, and but one servant with him.

Falling from one discourse to another, they began to talke of such prayers, as men (in journey) use to salute God withall; and one of the Theeves (they being three in number), spake thus to *Rinaldo*. Sir, let it be no offence to you, that I desire to know, what prayer you most use when thus you travell on the way? Whereto *Rinaldo* replied in this manner. To tell you true Sir, I am a man grosse enough in such Divine matters, as meddling more with Marchandize, then I do with Bookes. Neverthesse, at all times when I am thus in journey, in the morning before I depart my Chamber, I say a *Pater noster* and an *Ave Maria*, for the souls of the father and mother of Saint *Julian*, and after that, I pray God and S. *Julian* to send me a good lodging at night. And let me tell you Sir, that very oftentimes heeretofore, I have met with many great dangers upon the way, from all which I still escaped, and evermore (when night drewe on) I came to an exceeding good Lodging. Which makes mee firmly beleieve, that Saint *Julian* (in honour of whom I speake it) hath begd of God such great grace for me; and mee thinkes, that if any day I should faile of this prayer in the morning: I cannot travaile securely, nor come to a good lodging. No doubt then Sir (quoth the other) but you have saide that prayer this morning? I would be sorry else, saide *Rinaldo*, such an especiall matter is not to be neglected.

He and the rest, who had already determined how to handle him before they parted, saide within themselves: Looke thou hast said thy praier, for when we have thy money, Saint *Julian* and thou shift for thy lodging. Afterward, the same man thus againe conferd with him. As you Sir, so I have ridden many journies, and yet I never used any such praier, although I have heard it very much commended, and my lodging hath prooved never the worsen. Perhaps this verie night will therein resolve us both, whether of us two shall be the best lodged; you that have sayde the prayer, or I that never used it at all. But I must not deny, that in sted thereof, I have made use of some verses, as *Dirupisti*, or the *Jutemerata*, or *Deprofundis*, which are (as my Grandmother hath often told mee) of very great vertue and efficacy.

Continuing thus in talke of divers things, winning way, and beguiling the time, still waiting when their purpose should sort to effect: it fortun'd, that the Theeves seeing they were come neere to a Towne, called *Chasteau Guillaume*, by the foord of a River, the houre somewhat late, the place solitarie, and thickly shaded with trees, they made their assault; and having robd him, left him there on foote, stript into his shirt, saying to him. Goe now and see, whether thy Saint *Julian* will allow thee this night a good lodging, or no, for our owne we are sufficiently provided; so passing the River, away they rode. *Rinaldoes* servant, seeing his Master so sharply assayled, like a wicked villaine, would not assist him in any sort: but giving his horse the spurres, never left gallowping, untill hee came to *Chasteau Guillaume*, where hee entred upon the point of night, providing himselfe of a lodging, but not caring what became of his Master.

*Rinaldo* remaining there in his shirt, bare-foote and bare-legged, the weather extremely colde, and snowing incessantly, not knowing what to doe, darke night drawing on, and looking round about him, for some place where to abide that night, to the end he might not dye with colde: he found no helpe at all there for him, in regard that (no long while before) the late warre had burnt and wasted all, and not so much as the least Cottage left. Compelled by the coldes violence, his teeth quaking, and all his body trembling, hee trotted on towards *Chasteau Guillaume*, not knowing, whether his man was gone thither or no, or to what place else: but perswaded himselfe, that if he could get entrance, there was no feare of finding succour. But before he came within halfe a mile of the Towne, the night grew extreemely darke, and arriving there so late, hee found the gates fast lockt, and the Bridges drawne up, so that no entrance might be admitted.

Grieving greatly hereat, and being much discomforted, rufully hee went spying about the walls, for some place wherein to shrowd himselfe, at least, to keepe the snow from falling upon him. By good hap, hee espied an house upon the wall of the Towne, which had a terrace jutting out as a penthouse, under which he purposed to stand all the night, and then to get him gone in the morning. At length, hee found a doore in the wall, but very fast shut, and some small store of strawe lying by it, which he gathered together, and sitting downe thereon very pensively; made many sad complaints to Saint *Julian*, saying: This was not according to the trust he reposed in her. But Saint *Julian*, taking compassion upon him, without any over-long tarying; provided him of a good lodging, as you shall heare how.

In this towne of *Chasteau Guillaume*, lived a young Lady, who was a widdow, so beautifull and comely of her person, as sildome was seene a more lovely creature. The Marquisse *Azzo* most dearely affected her, and (as his choyssest Jewell of delight) gave her that house to live in, under the terrace whereof poore *Rinaldo* made his shelter. It chaunced the day before, that the Marquisse was come thither, according to his frequent custome, to weare away that night in her company, she having secretly prepared a Bath for him, and a costly supper beside. All things being ready, and nothing wanting but the Marquisse his presence: suddenly a Post brought him

such Letters, which commanded him instantly to horsebacke, and word hee sent to the Lady, to spare him for that night, because urgent occasions called him thence, and hee rode away immediately.

Much discontented was the Lady at this unexpected accident, and not knowing now how to spend the time, resolved to use the Bath which hee had made for the Marquesse, and (after supper) betake her selfe to rest, and so she entred into the Bath. Close to the doore where poore *Rinaldo* sate, stode the Bath, by which meanes, shee being therein, heard all his quivering moanes, and complaints, seeming to be such, as the Swanne singing before her death: whereupon, shee called her Chamber-maide, saying to her. Goe up above, and looke over the terrace on the wall downe to this doore, and see who is there, and what hee doth. The Chamber-maide went up aloft, and by a little glimmering in the ayre, she saw a man sitting in his shirt, bare on feete and legges, trembling in manner before rehearsed. Shee demanding, of whence, and what hee was; *Rinaldoes* teeth so trembled in his head, as very hardly could hee forme any words, but (so well as he could) tolde her what hee was, and how hee came thither: most pittifully entreating her, that if shee could afford him any helpe, not to suffer him starve there to death with colde.

The Chamber-maide, being much moved to compassion, returned to her Lady, and tolde her all; she likewise pittying his distresse, and remembring shee had the key of that doore, whereby the Marquesse both entred and returned, when he intended not to be seene of any, said to her Maide. Goe, and open the doore softly for him; we have a good supper, and none to helpe to eate it, and if he be a man likely, we can allow him one nights lodging too. The Chamber-maide, commending her Lady for this charitable kindnesse, opened the doore, and seeing hee appeared as halfe frozen, shee said unto him. Make hast good man, get thee into this Bath, which yet is good and warme, for my Lady her selfe came but newly out of it. Whereto very gladly he condescended, as not tarrying to be bidden twice; finding himselfe so singularly comforted with the heate thereof, even as if hee had beene restored from death to life. Then the Lady sent him garments, which lately were her deceased husbands, and fitted him so aptly in all respects, as if purposely they had beene made for him.

Attending in further expectation, to know what else the Lady would commaund him; hee began to remember God and Saint *Julian*, hartily thanking her, for delivering him from so bad a night as was threatned towards him, and bringing him to so good entertainment. After all this, the Lady causing a faire fire to be made in the nearest Chamber beneath, went and sate by it her selfe, demanding how the honest man fared. Madame, answered the Chamber-maide, now that he is in your deceased Lords garments, he appeareth to be a very goodly Gentleman, and (questionlesse) is of respective birth and breeding, well deserving this gracious favour which you have afforded him. Goe then (quoth the Lady) and conduct him hither, to sit by this fire, and sup here with mee, for I feare he hath had but a sorrie supper. When *Rinaldo* was entred into the Chamber, and beheld her to be such a beautifull Lady, accounting his fortune to exceede all comparison, hee did her most humble reverence, expressing so much thankfulnessse as possibly hee could, for this her extraordinary grace and favour.

The Lady fixing a stedfast eye upon him, well liking his gentle language and behaviour, perceiving also, how fitly her deceased husbands apparell was formed to his person, and resembling him in all familiar respects, he appeared (in her judgement) farre beyond the Chambermaidens commendations of him; so praying him to sit downe by her before the fire, shee questioned with him, concerning this unhappy nights accident befallne him, wherein he fully resolved her, and shee was the more perswaded, by reason of his servants comming into the Towne before night, assuring him, that he should be found for him early in the morning.

Supper being served in to the Table, and hee seated according as the Lady commanded, shee began to observe him very considerately; for he was a goodly man, compleate in all perfections of person, a delicate pleasing countenance, a quicke alluring eye, fixed and constant, not wantonly gadding, in the joviall youthfulnessse of his time, and truest temper for amorous apprehension; all these were as battering engines against a Bulwarke of no strong resistance, and wrought strangely upon her flexible affections. And though hee fed heartily, as occasion constrained, yet her thoughts had entertained a new kinde of diet, digested onely by the eye; yet so cunningly concealed, that no motive to immodesty could be discerned. Her mercy thus extended to him in misery, drew on (by Table discourse) his birth, education, parents, friends, and alies; his wealthy possessions by Merchandize, and a sound stability in his estate, but above all (and best of all) the single and sole condition of a batcheler; an apt and easie steele to strike fire, especially upon such quicke taking tinder, and in a time favoured by Fortune.

No imbarment remained, but remembrance of the Marquesse, and that being summond to her more advised consideration, her youth and beauty stood up as conscious accusers, for blemishing her honour and faire repute, with lewd and luxurious life; farre unfit for a Lady of her degree, and well worthy of generall condemnation. What should I further say? upon a short conference with her Chambermaide, repentance for sinne past, and solemne promise of a constant conversion, thus shee delivered her minde to *Rinaldo*.

Sir, as you have related your fortunes to me, by this your casuall happening hither, if you can like the motion so well as shee that makes it, my deceased Lord and husband living so perfectly in your person; this house, and all mine, is yours; and of a widow I will become your wife, except (unmanly) you denie me. *Rinaldo* hearing these words, and proceeding from a Lady of such absolute perfections, presuming upon so proud an offer, and condemning himselfe of folly if he should refuse it, thus replied. Madam, considering that I stand bound for ever hereafter, to confesse that you are the gracious preserver of my life, and I no way able to returne requitall; if you please so to shadow mine insufficiency, and to accept me and my fairest fortunes to doe you

service: let me die before a thought of deniall, or any way to yeeld you the least discontentment.

Here wanted but a Priest to joyne their hands, as mutuall affection already had done their hearts, which being sealed with infinite kisses; the Chamber-maide called up Friar *Roger* her Confessor, and wedding and bedding were both effected before the bright morning. In briefe, the Marquesse having heard of the marriage, did not mislike it, but confirmed it by great and honourable gifts; and having sent for his dishonest servant, he dispatched him (after sound reprehension) to *Ferrara*, with Letters to *Rinaldoes* Father and friends, of all the accidents that had befallne him. Moreover, the very same morning, the three theeves, that had robbed, and so ill entreated *Rinaldo*, for another facte by them the same night committed; were taken, and brought to the Towne of *Chasteau Guillaume*, where they were hanged for their offences, and *Rinaldo* with his wife rode to *Ferrara*.

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***Three young Gentlemen, being brethren, and having spent all their Lands and possessions vainely, became poore. A Nephew of theirs (falling almost into as desperate a condition) became acquainted with an Abbot, whom he afterward found to be the King of Englands Daughter, and made him her Husband in marriage, recompensing all his Uncles losses, and seating them againe in good estate.***

## **The third Novell.**

***Wherein is declared the dangers of Prodigalitie, and the manifold mutabilities of Fortune.***

The fortunes of *Rinaldo de Este*, being heard by the Ladies and Gentlemen, they admired his happinesse, and commended his devotion to Saint *Julian*, who (in such extreame necessity) sent him so good succour. Nor was the Lady to be blamed, for leaving base liberty, and converting to the chaste embraces of the marriage bed, the dignity of womens honour, and eternall disgrace living otherwise. While thus they descanted on the happy night betweene her and *Rinaldo*, Madam *Pampinea* sitting next to *Philostratus*, considering, that her discourse must follow in order, and thinking on what shee was to say; the Queene had no sooner sent out her command, but shee being no lesse faire then forward, beganne in this manner.

Ladies of great respect, the more we conferre on the accidents of Fortune, so much the more remaineth to consider on her mutabilities, wherein there is no need of wonder, if discreetly we observe, that all such things as we fondly tearme to be our owne, are in her power, and so (consequently) change from one to another, without any stay or arrest (according to her concealed judgement) or settled order (at least) that can bee knowne to us. Now, although these things appeare thus daily to us, even apparantly in all occasions, and as hath beene discerned by some of our precedent discourses; yet notwithstanding, seeing it pleaseth the Queene, that our arguments should ayme at these ends, I will adde to the former tales another of my owne, perhaps not unprofitable for the hearers, nor displeasing in observation.

Sometime heeretofore, there dwelt in our Citie, a Knight named Signior *Thebaldo*, who (according as some report) issued from the Family of *Lamberti*, but others derive him of the *Agolanti*; guiding (perhaps) their opinion heerein, more from the traine of children, belonging to the saide *Thebaldo* (evermore equall to that of the *Agolanti*) then any other matter else. But setting aside, from which of these two houses he came, I say, that in his time he was a very welthy Knight, & had three Sonnes; the first being named *Lamberto*, the second *Thebaldo*, & the third *Agolanto*, all goodly and gracefull youths: howbeit, the eldest had not compleated eighteene yeares, when Signior *Thebaldo* the father deceased, who left them all his goods and inheritances. And they, seeing them selves rich in readie monies and revennewes, without any other government then their owne voluntary disposition, kept no restraint upon their expences, but maintained many servants, and store of unvalebable horses, beside Hawkes and Hounds, with open house for all commers; and not onely all delights else fit for Gentlemen, but what vanities beside best agreed with their wanton and youthfull appetites.

Not long had they run on this race, but the treasures lefte them by their Father, began greatly to diminish; and their revennewes suffised not, to support such lavish expences as they had begun: but they fell to engaging and pawning their inheritances, selling one to day, and another to morrow, so that they saw themselves quickly come to nothing, and then poverty opened their eyes, which prodigality had before closed up. Heereupon, *Lamberto* (on a day) calling his Brethren to him, shewed them what the honours of their Father had beene, to what height his wealth amounted, and now to what an ebbe of poverty it was falne, onely thorow their inordinate expences. Wherefore hee counselled them, (as best he could) before further misery insulted over them; to make sale of the small remainder that was left, and then to betake themselves unto some other abiding, where fairer Fortune might chance to shine upon them.

This advice prevailed with them; and so, without taking leave of any body, or other solemnity then closest secrecy, they departed from *Florence*, not tarrying in any place untill they were arrived in *England*. Comming to the City of London, and taking there a small house upon yearly rent, living on so little charge as possible might be, they began to lend out money at use: wherein Fortune was so favourable to them, that (in few yeares) they had gathered a great summe of mony: by means whereof it came to passe, that one while one of them, and afterward another,

returned backe againe to *Florence*: where, with those summes, a great part of their inheritances were redeemed, and many other bought beside. Linking themselves in marriage, and yet continuing their usances in England; they sent a Nephew of theirs thither, named *Alessandro*, a yong man, and of faire demeanor, to maintaine their stocke in employment: while they three remained still at *Florence*, and growing forgetful of their former misery, fell againe into as unreasonable expences as ever, never respecting their household charges, because they had good credite among the Merchants, and the monies still sent from *Alessandro*, supported their expences divers yeares.

The dealings of *Alessandro* in England grew very great, for hee lent out much money to many Gentlemen, Lords, and Barons of the Land, upon engagement of their Manours, Castles, and other revenuues: from whence he derived immeasurable benefite. While the three Brethren held on in their lavish expences, borrowing moneys when they wanted untill their supplyes came from England, whereon (indeede) was their onely dependance: it fortun'd, that (contrary to the opinion of al men) warre happened betweene the King of England, and one of his sonnes, which occasioned much trouble in the whole Countrey, by taking part on either side, some with the Sonne, and other with the Father. In regard whereof, those Castles and places pawn'd to *Alessandro*, were sodainely seized from him, nothing then remaining that returned him any profit. But living in hope day by day, that peace would be concluded betweene the Father and the Sonne, he never doubted, but all things then should be restored to him, both the principall and interest, & therefore he would not depart out of the Country.

The three Brethren at *Florence*, bounding within no limites their disordered spending, borrowed daily more and more. And after some few yeares, the Creditors seeing no effect of their hopes to come from them, all credit being lost with them, and no repayment of promised dues; they were imprisoned, their landes and all they had, not suffising to pay the moiety of debts, but their bodies remained in prison for the rest, theyr Wives and yong children being sent thence, some to one village, some to another, so that nothing now was to be expected, but poverty & misery of life forever.

As for honest *Alessandro*, who had awaited long time for peace in England, perceyving there was no likelihood of it; and considering also, that (beside his tarrying there in vaine to recover his dues) he was in danger of his life; without any further deferring, hee set away for *Italy*. It came to passe, that as he issued foorth of *Bruges*, hee saw a yong Abbot also journeying thence, being cloathed in white, accompanied with divers Monkes, and a great traine before, conducting the needefull carriage. Two ancient Knights, Kinsmen to the King, followed after, with whom *Alessandro* acquainted himselfe, as having formerly known them, and was kindly accepted into their company. *Alessandro* riding along with them, courteously requested to know, what those Monks were that rode before, and such a traine attending on them? Whereto one of the Knights thus answered.

He that rideth before, is a yong Gentleman, and our Kinsman, who is newly elected Abbot of one of the best Abbeyes in England; & because he is more yong in yeares, then the decrees for such a dignity doe allow, we travaile with him to *Rome*, to entreat our Holy Father, that his youth may be dispensed withall, and he confirmed in the sayd dignity; but hee is not to speake a word to any person. On rode this new Abbot, sometimes before his traine, and other whiles after, as we see great Lords use to do, when they ride upon the High-wayes.

It chanced on a day, that *Alessandro* rode somewhat neere to the Abbot, who stedfastly beholding him, perceived that he was a verie comely young man, so affable, lovely, and gracious, that even in this first encounter, he hadde never seene any man before, that better pleased him. Calling him a little closer, he began to conferre familiarly with him, demanding what he was, whence he came, and whether he travelled. *Alessandro* imparted freely to him all his affaires, in every thing satisfying his demands, and offering (although his power was small) to doe him all the service he could.

When the Abbot had heard his gentle answers, so wisely & discreetly delivered, considering also (more particularly) his commendable carriage; he tooke him to be (at the least) a well-borne Gentleman, and far differing from his owne logger-headed traine. Wherefore, taking compassion on his great misfortunes, he comforted him very kindly, wishing him to live alwayes in good hope. For, if hee were vertuous and honest, he should surely attaine to the seate from whence Fortune had throwne him, or rather much higher. Entreating him also, that seeing he journied towards *Tuscany*, as he himselfe did the like, to continue still (if he pleased) in his company. *Alessandro* most humbly thanked him for such gracious comfort; protesting, that he would be alwaies ready, to doe whatsoever he commanded.

The Abbot riding on, with newer crochets in his braine, then hee had before the sight of *Alessandro*; it fortun'd, that after divers dayes of travaile, they came to a small countrey Village, which affoorded little store of lodging, and yet the Abbot would needs lye there. *Alessandro*, being well acquainted with the Host of the house, willed him, to provide for the Abbot and his people, and then to lodge him where hee thought meetest. Now, before the Abbots comming thither, the Harbinger that marshalled all such matters, had provided for his traine in the Village, some in one place, and others elsewhere, in the best manner that the Towne could yeelde. But when the Abbot had supt, a great part of the night being spent, and every one else at his rest; *Alessandro* demaunded of the Host, what provision he had made for him; and how hee should be lodged that night?

In good sadnesse Sir (quoth the Host) you see that my house is full of Guests, so that I and my people, must gladly sleepe on the tables & benches: Neverthesse, next adjoining to my Lord

Abbots Chamber, there are certaine Corn-lofts, whether I can closely bring you, and making shift there with a slender Pallet-bed, it may serve for one night, insted of a better. But mine Host (quoth *Alessandro*) how can I passe thorow my Lords Chamber, which is so little, as it would not allowe Lodging for any of his Monkes? If I had remembred so much (said the Host) before the Curtaines were drawne, I could have lodgd his Monkes in those Corn-lofts, and then both you and I might have slept where now they do. But feare you not, my Lords Curtaines are close drawne, hee sleepe (no doubt) soundly, and I can conveigh you thither quietly enough, without the least disturbance to him, and a Pallet-bed shal be fitted there for you. *Alessandro* perceyving, that all this might bee easilie done, and no disease offered to the Abbot, accepted it willingly, & went thither without any noyse at all.

My Lord Abbot, whose thoughtes were so busied about amorous desires, that no sleepe at all could enter his eyes; heard all this talke betweene the Host and *Alessandro*, and also where hee was appointed to lodge, wherefore he sayd to himselfe. Seeing Fortune hath fitted me with a propitious time, to compasse the happines of my hearts desire; I know no reason why I should refuse it. Perhaps, I shall never have the like offer againe, or ever be enabled with such an opportunity. So, being fully determined to prosecute his intention, and perswading himselfe also, that the silence of night had bestowed sleepe on all the rest; with a lowe and trembling voyce, he called *Alessandro*, advising him to come and lye downe by him, which (after some few faint excuses) he did, and putting off his cloaths, lay downe by the Abbot, being not a little proude of so gracious a favour.

The Abbot, laying his arme over the others body, began to imbrace and hugge him; even as amorous friends (provoked by earnest affection) use to do. Whereat *Alessandro* very much marvayling, and being an *Italian* himselfe, fearing least this folly in the Abbot, would convert to foule and dishonest action, shrunk modestly from him. Which the Abbot perceyving, and doubting, least *Alessandro* would depart and leave him, pleasantly smiling, and with bashfull behaviour, baring his stomack, he tooke *Alessandroes* hand, and laying it thereon, saide; *Alessandro*, let all bad thoughts of bestiall abuse be farre off from thee, and feele here, to resolve thee from all such feare. *Alessandro* feeling the Abbots brest, found there two pretty little mountainets, round, plumpe, and smooth, appearing as if they had beene of polished Ivory; whereby he perceived, that the Abbot was a woman: which, setting an edge on his youthfull desires, made him fall to embracing, and immediately he offered to kisse her; but shee somewhat rudely repulsing him, as halfe offended, saide.

*Alessandro*, forbear such boldnesse, upon thy lives perill, and before thou further presume to touch me, understand what I shall tell thee. I am (as thou perceivest) no man, but a woman; and departing a Virgin from my Fathers House, am travelling towards the Popes holinesse, to the end that he should bestow me in mariage. But the other day, when first I beheld thee, whether it proceeded from thy happinesse in fortune, or the fatall houre of my owne infelicity for ever, I know not; I conceived such an effectuall kinde of liking towards thee, as never did woman love a man more truly, then I doe thee, having sworne within my soule to make thee my Husband before any other; and if thou wilt not accept mee as thy wife, set a locke upon thy lippes concerning what thou hast heard, and depart hence to thine owne bed againe.

No doubt, but that these were strange newes to *Alessandro*, and seemed meerely as a miracle to him. What shee was, he knew not, but in regard of her traine and company, hee reputed her to be both noble and rich, as also shee was wonderfull faire and beautifull. His owne fortunes stood out of future expectation by his kinsmens overthrow, and his great losses in *England*; wherefore, upon an opportunity so fairely offered, hee held it no wisdom to returne refusall, but accepted her gracious motion, and referred all to her disposing. Shee arising out of her bed, called him to a little Table standing by, where hung a faire Crucifix upon the wall; before which, and calling him to witnesse, that suffered such bitter and cruell torments on his Crosse, putting a Ring upon his finger, there she faithfully espoused him, refusing all the World, to be onely his: which being on either side confirmed solemnely, by an holy vow, and chaste kisses; shee commanded him backe to his Chamber, and shee returned to her bed againe, sufficiently satisfied with her Loves acceptation, and so they journied on till they came to *Rome*.

When they had rested themselves there for some few dayes, the supposed Abbot, with the two Knights, and none else in company but *Alessandro*, went before the Pope, and having done him such reverence as beseemed, the Abbot began to speake in this manner.

Holy Father (as you know much better then any other) every one that desireth to live well and vertuously, ought to shunne (so farre as in them lieth) all occasions that may induce to the contrary. To the ende therefore, that I (who desire nothing more) then to live within the compasse of a vertuous conversation, may perfect my hopes in this behalfe: I have fled from my Fathers Court, and am come hither in this habite as you see, to crave therein your holy and fatherly furtherance. I am daughter to the King of *England*, and have sufficiently furnished my selfe with some of his treasures, that your holinesse may bestow me in mariage; because mine unkind Father, never regarding my youth and beauty (inferiour to few in my native Country) would marry me to the King of *North-wales*, an aged, impotent, and sickly man. Yet let me tell your sanctity, that his age and weakenesse hath not so much occasioned my flight, as feare of mine owne youth and frailty; when being married to him, instead of loyall and unstained life, lewd and dishonest desires might make me to wander, by breaking the divine Lawes of wedlocke, and abusing the royall blood of my Father.

As I travailed hither with this vertuous intention, our Lord, who onely knoweth perfectly, what is best fitting for all his creatures; presented mine eyes (no doubt in his meere mercy and goodnesse) with a man meete to be my husband, which (pointing to *Alessandro*) is this young



Gentleman standing by me, whose honest, vertuous, and civill demeanour, deserveth a Lady of farre greater worth, although (perhaps) nobility in blood be denied him, and may make him seeme not so excellent, as one derived from Royall discent. Holy and religious vowes have past betweene us both, and the Ring on his finger, is the firme pledge of my faith and constancie; never to accept any other man in marriage, but him onely, although my Father, or any else doe dislike it. Wherefore (holy Father) the principall cause of my comming hither, being already effectually concluded on, I desire to compleat the rest of my pilgrimage, by visiting the sanctified places in this City, whereof there are great plenty; And also, that sacred marriage, being contracted in the presence of God onely, betweene *Alessandro* and my selfe, may by you be publicly confirmed, and in an open congregation. For, seeing God hath so appointed it, and our soules have so solemnly vowed it, that no disaster whatsoever can alter it: you being Gods vicar here on earth, I hope will not gaine-say, but confirme it with your fatherly benediction, that wee may live in Gods feare, and dye in his favour.

Perswade your selves (faire Ladies) that *Alessandro* was in no meane admiration, when hee heard, that his wife was daughter to the King of *England*; unspeakeable joy (questionlesse) wholly overcame him: but the two Knights were not a little troubled and offended, at such a strange and unexpected accident, yea, so violent were their passions, that had they beene any where else, then in the Popes presence, *Alessandro* had felt their fury, and (perhaps) the Princesse her selfe too. On the other side, the Pope was much amazed, at the habite she went disguised in, and likewise at the election of her husband; but, perceiving there was no resistance to be made against it, hee yeilded the more willingly to satisfie her desire. And therefore, having first comforted the two Knights, and made peace betweene them, the Princesse and *Alessandro*; he gave order for the rest that was to be done.

When the appointed day for the solemnity was come, hee caused the Princesse (cloathed in most rich and royall garments) to appeare before all the Cardinals, and many other great persons then in presence, who were come to this worthy Feast, which hee had caused purposely to be prepared, where she seemed so faire & goodly a Lady, that every eye was highly delighted to behold her, commending her with no mean admiration. In like manner was *Alessandro* greatly honoured by the two Knights, being most sumptuous in appearance, and not like a man that had lent money to usury, but rather of very royall quality; the Pope himselfe celebrating the marriage betweene them, which being finished, with the most magnificent pompe that could be devised, hee gave them his benediction, and licenced their departure thence.

*Alessandro*, his Princesse and her traine thus leaving *Rome*, they would needes visite *Florence*, where the newes of this accident was (long before) noysed, and they received by the Citizens in royall manner. There did shee deliver the three brethren out of prison, having first payed all their debts, and reseated them againe (with their wives) in their former inheritances and possessions. Afterward, departing from *Florence*, and *Agolanto*, one of the Uncles travailing with them to *Paris*; they were there also most honourably entertained by the King of *France*. From whence the two Knights went before for *England*, and prevailed so succesfully with the King; that hee received his daughter into grace and favour, as also his Sonne in law her husband, to whom hee gave the order of Knighthoode, and (for his greater dignitie) created him Earle of *Cornewall*.

And such was the noble Spirit of *Alessandro*, that he pacified the troubles betweene the King and his sonne, whereon ensued great comfort to the Kingdome, winning the love and favour of all the people; and *Agolanto* (by the meanes of *Alessandro*) recovered all that was due to him and his brethren in *England*, returning richly home to *Florence*, Counte *Alessandro* (his kinsman) having first dubd him Knight. Longtime hee lived in peace and tranquility, with the faire Princesse his wife, proving to be so absolute in wisdom, and so famous a Souldier; that (as some report) by assistance of his Father in law, hee conquered the Realme of *Ireland*, and was crowned King thereof.

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***Landolpho Ruffolo, falling into poverty, became a Pirate on the Seas, and being taken by the Geneweyes, hardly escaped drowning: Which yet (nevertheless) he did, upon a little Chest or Coffe, full of very rich Jewels, being caried thereon to Corfu, where he was well entertained by a good woman; And afterward, returned richly home to his owne house.***

## **The fourth Novell.**

***Whereby may be discerned, into how many dangers a man may fall, through a covetous desire to enrich himselfe.***

Madame *Lauretta*, sitting next to Madame *Pampinea*, and seeing how triumphantly shee had finished her discourse; without attending any thing else, spake thus. Gracious Ladies, wee shall never behold (in mine opinion) a greater act of Fortune, then to see a man so suddainly exalted, even from the lowest depth of poverty, to a Royall estate of dignity; as the discourse of Madame *Pampinea* hath made good, by the happy advancement of *Alessandro*. And because it appeareth necessary, that whosoever discourseth on the subject proposed, should no way varie from the very same termes; I shall not shame to tell a tale, which, though it containe farre greater mishaps then the former, may sort to as happy an issue, albeit not so noble and magnificent. In which

respect, it may (perhaps) merit the lesse attention: but howsoever that fault shall be found in you, I meane to discharge mine owne duty.

Opinion hath made it famous for long time, that the Sea-coast of *Rhegium* to *Gaieta*, is the onely delectable part of all *Italy*, wherein, somewhat neere to *Salerno*, is a shore looking upon the Sea, which the inhabitants there dwelling, doe call the coast of *Malfy*, full of small Townes, Gardens, Springs and wealthy men, trading in as many kindes of Merchandizes, as any other people that I know. Among which Townes, there is one, named *Ravello*, wherein (as yet to this day there are rich people) there was (not long since) a very wealthy man, named *Landolpho Ruffolo*, who being not contented with his riches, but coveting to multiply them double and trebble, fell in danger, to loose both himselfe and wealth together.

This man (as other Merchants are wont to doe) after hee had considered on his affaires, bought him a very goodly Ship, lading it with divers sorts of Merchandizes, all belonging to himselfe onely, and making his voyage to the Isle of *Cyprus*. Where he found, over and beside the Merchandizes he had brought thither, many Ships more there arrived, and all laden with the selfe same commodities, in regard whereof, it was needefull for him, not onely to make a good Mart of his goods; but also was further constrained (if hee meant to vent his commodities) to sell them away (almost) for nothing, endangering his utter destruction and overthrow. Whereupon, grieving exceedingly at so great a losse, not knowing what to doe, and seeing, that from very abundant wealth, hee was likely to fall into as low poverty: hee resolved to dye, or to recompence his losses upon others, because he would not returne home poore, having departed thence so rich.

Meeting with a Merchant, that bought his great Ship of him; with the money made thereof, and also of his other Merchandizes, hee purchased another, being a lighter vessell, apt and proper for the use of a Pirate, arming and furnishing it in ample manner, for roving and robbing upon the Seas. Thus hee began to make other mens goods his owne, especially from the Turkes he tooke much wealth, Fortune being alwayes therein so favourable to him, that hee could never compasse the like by trading. So that, within the space of one yeare, hee had robd and taken so many Gallies from the Turke; that he found himselfe well recovered, not onely of all his losses by Merchandize, but likewise his wealth was wholly redoubled. Finding his losses to be very liberally requited, and having now sufficient, it were folly to hazard a second fall; wherefore, conferring with his owne thoughts, and finding that he had enough, and needed not to covet after more: he fully concluded, now to returne home to his owne house againe, and live upon his goods thus gotten.

Continuing still in feare, of the losses he had sustained by traffique, & minding, never more to imploy his mony that way, but to keep this light vessel, which had holpen him to all his wealth: he commanded his men to put forth their Oares, and shape their course for his owne dwelling. Being aloft in the higher Seas, darke night over-taking them, and a mighty winde suddainly comming upon them: it not onely was contrary to their course, but held on with such impetuous violence; that the small vessell, being unable to endure it, made to land-ward speedily, and in expectation of a more friendly wind, entred a little port of the Sea, directing up into a small Island, and there safely sheltred it selfe. Into the same port which *Landolpho* had thus taken for his refuge, entred (soone after) two great Carrackes of *Genewayes* lately come from *Constantinople*. When the men in them had espied the small Barke, and lockt uppe her passage from getting foorth; understanding the Owners name, and that report had famed him to be very rich, they determined (as men evermore addicted naturally, to covet after money and spoile) to make it their owne as a prize at Sea.

Landing some store of their men, well armed with Crosse-bowes and other weapons, they tooke possession of such a place, where none durst issue forth of the small Barke, but endangered his life with their Darts & Arrowes. Entering aboard the Barke, and making it their owne by full possession, all the men they threw over-boord, without sparing any but *Landolpho* himselfe, whom they mounted into one of the Carrackes, leaving him nothing but a poore shirt of Maile on his backe, and having rifled the Barke of all her riches, sunke it into the bottome of the sea. The day following, the rough windes being calmed, the Carrackes set saile againe, having a prosperous passage all the day long; but upon the entrance of darke night, the windes blew more tempestuously then before, and sweld the Sea in such rude stormes, that the two Carracks were sundered each from other, and by violence of the tempest it came to passe, that the Carracke wherein lay poore miserable *Landolpho* (beneath the Isle of *Cephalonia*) ran against a rocke, and even as a glasse against a wall, so split the Carracke in peeces, the goods and merchandizes floating on the Sea, Chests, Coffers, Beds, and such like other things, as often hapneth in such lamentable accidents.

Now, notwithstanding the nights obscurity, and impetuous violence of the billowes; such as could swimme, made shift to save their lives by swimming. Others caught hold on such things, as by Fortunes favour floated neerest to them, among whom, distressed *Landolpho*, desirous to save his life, if possibly it might be, espied a Chest or Coffer before him, ordained (no doubt) to be the meanes of his safety from drowning. Now although the day before, he had wished for death infinite times, rather then to returne home in such wretched poverty; yet, seeing how other men strove for safety of their lives by any helpe, were it never so little, he tooke advantage of this favour offred him, and the rather in a necessitie so urgent. Keeping fast upon the Coffer so well as he could, and being driven by the winds & waves, one while this way, and anon quite contrarie, he made shift for himselfe till day appeared; when looking every way about him, seeing nothing but clouds, the seas and the Coffer, which one while shrunke from under him, and another while supported him, according as the windes and billowes carried it: all that day and

night thus he floated up and downe, drinking more then willingly hee would, but almost hunger-starved thorow want of foode. The next morning, either by the appointment of heaven, or power of the Windes, *Landolpho* who was (well-neere) become a Spundge, holding his armes strongly about the Chest, as wee have seene some doe, who (dreading drowning) take hold on any the very smallest helpe; drew neere unto the shore of the Iland *Corfu*, where (by good fortune) a poore woman was scowring dishes with the salt water and sand, to make them (house-wife like) neate and cleane.

When shee saw the Chest drawing neere her, and not discerning the shape of any man, shee grew fearefull, and retyring from it, cried out aloude. He had no power of speaking to her, neither did his sight doe him the smallest service; but even as the waves and windes pleased, the Chest was driven still neerer to the Land, and then the woman perceived that it had the forme of a Cofer, and looking more advisedly, beheld two armes extended over it, and afterward, shee espied the face of a man, not being able to judge, whether he were alive, or no. Moved by charitable and womanly compassion, shee stept in among the billowes, and getting fast holde on the haire of his head, drew both the Chest and him to the Land, and calling forth her Daughter to helpe her, with much adoe shee unfolded his armes from the Chest, setting it up on her Daughters head, and then betweene them, *Landolpho* was led into the Towne, and there conveyed into a warme Stove, where quickly he recovered (by her pains) his strength benumbed with extreame cold.

Good wines and comfortable broathes shee cherished him withall, that his sences being indifferently restored, hee knew the place where he was; but not in what manner he was brought thither, till the good woman shewed him the Cofer that had kept him floating upon the waves, and (next under God) had saved his life. The Chest seemed of such slender weight, that nothing of any value could be expected in it, either to recompence the womans great paines and kindnesse bestowne on him, or any matter of his owne benefit. Neverthelesse, the woman being absent, he opened the Chest, and found innumerable precious stones therein, some costly and curiously set in gold, and others not fixed in any mettall. Having knowledge of their great worth and value (being a Merchant, and skild in such matters) he became much comforted, praysing God for this good successe, and such an admirable meanes of deliverance from danger.

Then considering with himselfe, that (in a short time) hee had beene twice well buffeted and beaten by Fortune, and fearing, least a third mishap might follow in like manner; hee consulted with his thoughts, how he might safest order the businesse, and bring so rich a booty (without perill) to his owne home. Wherefore, wrapping up the Jewels in very unsightly cloutes, that no suspition at all should be conceived of them, hee saide to the good woman, that the Chest would not doe him any further service; but if shee pleased to lende him a small sacke or bagge, shee might keepe the Cofer, for in her house it would divers way stead her. The woman gladly did as he desired, and *Landolpho* returning her infinite thanks, for the loving kindnesse shee had afforded him, throwing the sacke on his necke, passed by a Barke to *Brundusiam*, and from thence to *Tranium*, where Merchants in the City bestowed good garments on him, hee acquainting them with his disasterous fortunes, but not a word concerning his last good successe.

Being come home in safety to *Ravello*, hee fell on his knees, and thanked God for all his mercies towards him. Then opening the sacke, and viewing the Jewels at more leysure then formerly he had done, he found them to be of so great estimation, that selling them but at ordinary and reasonable rates, he was three times richer, then when hee departed first from his house. And having vented them all, he sent a great sum of money to the good woman at *Corfu*, that had rescued him out of the Sea, and saved his life in a danger so dreadfull: The like hee did to *Tranium*, to the Merchants that had newly clothed him; living richly upon the remainder, and never adventuring more to the Sea, but ended his dayes in wealth and honour.

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***Andrea de Piero, travelling from Perouse to Naples to buy Horses, was (in the space of one night) surprised by three admirable accidents, out of all which hee fortunately escaped, and, with a rich Ring, returned home to his owne house.***

## **The fift Novell.**

***Comprehending, how needfull a thing it is, for a man that travelleth in affaires of the World, to be provident and well advised, and carefully to keepe himselfe from the crafty and deceitfull allurements of Strumpets.***

The precious Stones and Jewels found by *Landolpho*, maketh mee to remember (said Madam *Fiammetta*, who was next to deliver her discourse) a Tale, containing no lesse perils, then that reported by Madam *Lauretta*: but somewhat different from it, because the one happened in sundry yeeres, and this other had no longer time, then the compasse of one poore night, as instantly I will relate unto you.

As I have heard reported by many, there sometime lived in *Perouse* or *Perugia*, a young man, named *Andrea de Piero*, whose profession was to trade about Horses, in the nature of a Horse-courser, or Horse-master, who hearing of a good Faire or Market (for his purpose) at *Naples*, did put five hundred Crownes of gold in his purse, and journeyed thither in the company of other

Horse-courers, arriving there on a Sunday in the evening. According to instructions given him by his Host, he went the next day into the Horse-market, where he saw very many Horses that he liked, cheapening their prices as he went up and downe, but could fall to no agreement; yet to manifest that he came purposely to buy, and not as a cheapener onely, often times (like a shalw-brainde trader in the world) he shewed his purse of gold before all passengers, never respecting who, or what they were that observed his follie.

It came to passe, that a young *Sicillian* wench (very beautifull, but at commaund of whosoever would, and for small hire) passing then by, and (without his perceiving) seeing such store of gold in his purse; presently she said to her selfe: why should not all those crownes be mine, when the foole that owes them, can keepe them no closer? And so she went on. With this young wanton there was (at the same time) an olde woman (as commonly such stuffe is alwayes so attended) seeming to be *Sicillian* also, who so soone as shee saw *Andrea*, knew him, and, leaving her youthfull commodity, ranne to him, and embraced him very kindly. Which when the younger Lasse perceived, without proceeding any further, she stayed, to see what would ensue thereon. *Andrea* conferring with the olde Bawde, and knowing her (but not for any such creature) declared himselfe very affable to her; she making him promise, that shee would come and drinke with him at his lodging. So, breaking off further Speeches for that time, shee returned to her young *Cammerado*; and *Andrea* went about buying his horses, still cheapning good store, but did not buy any all that morning.

The Punke that had taken notice of *Andreaes* purse, upon the olde womans comming backe to her (having formerly studied, how shee might get all the gold, or the greater part thereof) cunningly questioned with her, what the man was, whence hee came, and the occasion of his businesse there? wherein she fully informed her particularly, and in as ample manner as himselfe could have done: That shee had long time dwelt in *Sicily* with his Father, and afterward at *Perouse*; recounting also, at what time she came thence, and the cause which now had drawne him to *Naples*. The witty young housewife, being thorowly instructed, concerning the Parents and kindred of *Andrea*, their names, quality, and all other circumstances thereto leading; began to frame the foundation of her purpose thereupon, setting her resolution downe constantly, that the purse and gold was (already) more then halfe her owne.

Being come home to her owne house, away shee sent the olde Pandresse about other businesse, which might hold her time long enough of employment, and hinder her returning to *Andrea* according to promise, purposing, not to trust her in this serious piece of service. Calling a young crafty Girle to her, whom she had well tutoured in the like ambassages, when evening drew on, she sent her to *Andreas* lodging, where (by good fortune) she found him sitting alone at the dore, and demanding of him, if he knew an honest Gentleman lodging there, whose name was *Signior Andrea de Piero*; he made her answeare, that himselfe was the man. Then taking him aside, shee said. Sir, there is a worthy Gentlewoman of this Citie, that would gladly speake with you, if you pleased to vouchsafe her so much favour.

*Andrea*, hearing such a kinde of salutation, and from a Gentlewoman, named of worth; began to grow proud in his owne imaginations, and to make no meane estimation of himselfe: As (undoubtedly) that he was an handsome proper man, and of such carriage and perfections, as had attracted the amorous eye of this Gentlewoman, and induced her to like and love him beyond all other, *Naples* not contayning a man of better merit. Whereupon he answered the Mayde, that he was ready to attend her Mistresse, desiring to know, when it should be, and where the Gentlewoman would speake with him? So soone as you please Sir, replied the Damosell, for she tarieth your comming in her owne house.

Instantly *Andrea* (without leaving any direction of his departure in his lodging, or when he intended to returne againe) said to the Girle: Goe before, and I will follow. This little Chamber-commodity, conducted him to her Mistresses dwelling, which was in a streete named *Malpertuis*, a title manifesting sufficiently the streetes honesty: but hee, having no such knowledge thereof, neither suspecting any harme at all, but that he went to a most honest house, and to a Gentlewoman of good respect; entred boldly, the Mayde going in before, and guiding him up a faire payre of stayres, which he having more then halfe ascended, the cunning young Queane gave a call to her Mistresse, saying; *Signior Andrea* is come already, whereupon, she appeared at the stayres-head, as if she had stayed there purposely to entertaine him. She was young, very beautifull, comely of person, and rich in adornements, which *Andrea* well observing, & seeing her descend two or three steps, with open armes to embrace him, catching fast hold about his neck; he stood as a man confounded with admiration, and she contained a cunning kinde of silence, even as if she were unable to utter one word, seeming hindered by extremity of joy at his presence, and to make him effectually admire her extraordinary kindnesse, having teares plenteously at commaund, intermixed with sighes and broken speeches, at last, thus she spake.

*Signior Andrea*, you are the most welcom friend to me in all the world; sealing this salutation with infinite sweet kisses and embraces: whereat (in wonderfull amazement) he being strangely transported, replied; Madame, you honour me beyond all compasse of merit. Then, taking him by the hand, shee guided him thorow a goodly Hall, into her owne Chamber, which was delicately embalmed with Roses, Orange-flowres, and all other pleasing smelles, and a costly bed in the midst, curtained round about, very artificiall Pictures beautifying the walles, with many other embellishments, such as those Countries are liberally stored withall. He being meerely a novice in these kinds of wanton carriages of the World, and free from any base or degenerate conceit; firmly perswaded himselfe, that (questionlesse) shee was a Lady of no meane esteeme, and he more then happy, to be thus respected and honoured by her. They both being seated on a curious Chest at the Beds feete, teares cunningly trickling downe her cheekes, and sighes intermedled

with inward sobbings, breathed forth in sad, but very seemly manner; thus shee beganne.

I am sure *Andrea*, that you greatly marvell at me, in gracing you with this solemne and kinde entertainment, and why I should so melt my selfe in sighes and teares, at a man that hath no knowledge of me, or (perhaps) sildome or never heard any Speeches of me: but you shall instantly receive from mee matter to augment your greater marvell, meeting heere with your owne sister, beyond all hope or expectation in either of us both. But seeing that Heaven hath beene so gracious to me, to let mee see one of my brethren before I die (though gladly I would have seene them all) which is some addition of comfort to me, and that which (happily) thou hast never heard before, in plaine and truest manner, I will reveale unto thee.

*Piero*, my Father and thine, dwelt long time (as thou canst not chuse but to have understood) in *Palermo*, where, through the bounty, and other gracious good parts remaining in him, he was much renowned; and (to this day) is no doubt remembred, by many of his loving friends and well-willers. Among them that most intimately affected *Piero*, my mother (who was a Gentlewoman, and at that time a widow) did dearest of all other love him; so that forgetting the feare of her Father, brethren, yea, and her owne honour, they became so privately acquainted, that I was begotten, and am here now such as thou seest me. Afterward, occasions so befalling our Father, to abandon *Palermo*, and returne to *Perouse*, he left my mother and me his little daughter, never after (for ought that I could learne) once remembring either her or me: so that (if he had not beene my Father) I could have much condemned him, in regard of his ingratitude to my Mother, and love which hee ought to have shewne me as his childe, being borne of no Chamber-maide, neither of a City sinner; albeit I must needes say, that shee was blame-worthy, without any further knowledge of him (moved onely thereto by most loyal affection) to commit both her selfe, and all the wealth shee had, into his hands: but things ill done, and so long time since, are more easily controled, then amended.

Being left so young at *Palermo*, and growing (well neere) to the stature as now you see me; my mother, being wealthy, gave mee in marriage to one of the *Gergentes* Family, a Gentleman, and of great revenewes, who in his love to me and my mother, went and dwelt at *Palermo*: where falling into the *Guelphes* faction, and making one in the enterprize with *Charles* our King; it came to passe, that they were discovered to *Fredericke* King of *Arragon*, before their intent could be put in execution, whereupon, we were enforced to flie from *Sicilie*, even when my hope stood fairely to have beene the greatest Lady in all the Iland. Packing up then such few things as wee could take with us, few I may well call them, in regard of our wealthy possessions, both in Pallaces, Houses, and Lands, all which we were constrained to forgoe: we made our recourse to this City, where wee found King *Charles* so benigne and gracious to us, that recompensing the greater part of our losses, he bestowed Lands and Houses on us here, beside a continuall large pension to my husband your brother in Law, as hereafter himselfe shall better acquaint you withall. Thus came I hither, and thus remaine here, where I am able to welcome my brother *Andrea*, thankes more to Fortune, then any friendlinesse in him: with which words she embraced and kissed him many times, sighing and weeping as shee did before.

*Andrea* hearing this fable so artificially delivered, composed from point to point, with such likely protestations, without faltring or failing in any one words utterance; and remembring perfectly for truth, that his Father had formerly dwelt at *Palermo*; knowing also (by some sensible feeling in himselfe) the custome of young people, who are easily conquered by affection in their youthfull heate; seeing beside the teares, trembling speeches, and earnest embracings of this cunning commodity: he tooke all to be faithfully true by her thus spoken, and upon her silence, thus he replied. Lady, let it not seeme strange to you, that your words have raised marvell in me, because (indeede) I had no knowledge of you, even no more then as if I had never seene you, never also having heard my Father to speake either of you or your Mother (for some considerations best knowne to himselfe) or if at any time he used such language, either my youth then, or defective memory since, hath utterly lost it. But truly, it is no little joy and comfort to me, to finde a sister here, where I had no such hope or expectation, and where also my selfe am a meere stranger. For to speake my mind freely of you, and the perfections gracefully appearing in you, I know not any man, of how great repute or quality soever, but you may well beseeme his acceptance, much rather then mine, that am but a meane Merchant. But faire sister, I desire to be resolved in one thing, to wit, by what meanes you had understanding of my being in this City? whereto readily shee returned him this answer.

Brother, a poore woman of this City, whom I employ sometimes in houshold occasions, came to me this morning, and (having seene you) tolde me, that shee dwelt a long while with our Father, both at *Palermo*, and *Perouse*. And because I held it much better beseeming my condition, to have you visit me in mine owne dwelling, then I to come see you at a common Inne; I made the bolder to send for you hither. After which words, in very orderly manner, shee enquired of his chieftest kindred and friends, calling them readily by their proper names, according to her former instructions. Whereto *Andrea* still made her answer, confirming thereby his believe of her the more strongly, and crediting whatsoever shee saide, farre better then before.

Their conference having long time continued, and the heate of the day being somewhat extraordinary, shee called for *Greeke* wine, and banquetting stufte, drinking to *Andrea*; and he pledging her very contentedly. After which, he would have returned to his lodging, because it drew neere supper time; which by no meanes shee would permit, but seeming more then halfe displeased, shee saide. Now I plainly perceive brother, how little account you make of me, considering, you are with your owne Sister, who (you say) you never saw before, and in her owne House, whether you should alwayes resort when you come to this City; and would you now refuse her, to goe and sup at a common Inne. Beleeve me brother, you shall sup with me, for although

my Husband is now from home, to my no little discontentment: yet you shall find brother, that his wife can bid you welcome, and make you good cheere beside.

Now was *Andrea* so confounded with this extremity of courtesie, that he knew not what to say, but onely thus replied. I love you as a Sister ought to be loved, and accept of your exceeding kindnesse: but if I returne not to my lodging, I shall wrong mine Host and his guests too much, because they will not sup untill I come. For that (quoth shee) we have a present remedy, one of my servants shal goe and give warning, whereby they shall not tarry your comming. Albeit, you might doe me a great kindnesse, to send for your friends to sup with us here, where I assure ye they shall finde that your Sister (for your sake) will bid them welcome, and after supper, you may all walke together to your Inne. *Andrea* answered, that he had no such friends there, as should be so burthenous to her: but seeing shee urged him so farre, he would stay to sup with her, and referred himselfe solely to her disposition.

Ceremonious shew was made, of sending a servant to the Inne, for not expecting *Andreas* presence at Supper, though no such matter was performed; but, after divers other discourings, the table being covered, and variety of costly viands placed thereon, downe they sate to feeding, with plenty of curious Wines liberally walking about, so that it was darke night before they arose from the table. *Andrea* then offering to take his leave, she would (by no meanes) suffer it, but tolde him that *Naples* was a Citie of such strict Lawes and Ordinances, as admitted no night-walkers, although they were Natives, much lesse strangers, but punished them with great severity. And therefore, as she had formerly sent word to his Inne, that they should not expect his comming to supper, the like had she done concerning his bed, intending to give her Brother *Andrea* one nights lodging, which as easily she could affoord him, as she hadde done a Supper. All which this new-caught Woodcocke verily crediting, and that he was in company of his owne Sister *Fiordeliza* (for so did she cunningly stile her selfe, and in which beleefe hee was meerely deluded) he accepted the more gladly her gentle offer, and concluded to stay there all that night.

After supper, their conference lasted very long, purposely dilated out in length, that a great part of the night might therein be wasted: when, leaving *Andrea* to his Chamber, and a Lad to attend, that he shold lacke nothing; she with her women went to their lodgings, and thus our brother and supposed Sister were parted. The season then being somewhat hot and soultry, *Andrea* put off his hose and doublet, and beeing in his shirt alone, layed them underneath the beds boulder, as seeming carefull of his money. But finding a provocation to the house of Office, he demanded of the Lad, where hee might find it; who shewed him a little doore in a corner of the Chamber, appointing him to enter there. Safely enough he went in, but chanced to tread upon a board, which was fastened at neither ende to the joynts whereon it lay, being a pit-fall made of purpose, to entrap any such coxecombe, as would be trained to so base a place of lodging, so that both he and the board fell downe together into the draught; yet such being his good fortune, to receive no harme in the fall (although it was of extraordinary height) onely the filth of the place, (it being over full) had fowly myred him.

Now for your better understanding the quality of the place, and what ensued thereupon, it is not unnecessary to describe it, according to a common use observed in those parts. There was a narrow passage or entrie, as often we see reserved betweene two houses, for eithers benefit to such a needfull place; and boards loosely lay upon the joynts, which such as were acquainted withall, could easily avoide any perill, in passing to or from the stoole. But our so newly created brother, not dreaming to find a queane to his Sister, receiving so foule a fall into the vaulte, and knowing not how to helpe himselfe, being sorrowfull beyond measure; cryed out to the boy for light and aide, who intended not to give him any. For the crafty wag, (a meete attendant for so honest a Mistresse) no sooner heard him to be fallen, but presently he ranne to enforme her thereof, and shee as speedily returned to the Chamber, where finding his cloathes under the beds head, shee needed no instruction for search in his pockets. But having found the gold, which *Andrea* indiscreetely carried alwayes about him, as thinking it could no where else be so safe: This was all shee aymed at, and for which shee had ensnared him, faigning her selfe to be of *Palermo*, and Daughter to *Piero* of *Perouse*, so that not regarding him any longer, but making fast the house of Office doore, there shee left him in that miserable taking.

Poore *Andrea* perceiving, that his calles could get no answer from the Lad; cryed out louder, but all to no purpose: when seeing into his owne simplicity, and understanding his error, though somewhat too late, hee made such meanes constrainedly, that he got over a wall, which severed that foule sinke from the Worlds eye; and being in the open streete, went to the doore of the House, which then he knew too well to his cost, making loude exclames with rapping and knocking, but all as fruitlesse as before. Sorrowing exceedingly, and manifestly beholding his misfortune; Alas (quoth he) how soone have I lost a Sister, and five hundred Crownes besides? with many other words, loude calles, and beatings upon the doore without intermission, the neighbours finding themselves diseased, and unable to endure such ceaselesse vexation, rose from their beds, and called to him, desiring him to be gone and let them rest. A maide also of the same House, looking forth at the window, and seeming as newly raised from sleepe, called to him, saying; What noyse is that beneath? Why Virgin (answered *Andrea*) know you not me? I am *Andrea de Piero*, Brother to your Mistresse *Fiordeliza*. Thou art a drunken knave, replied the Maide, more full of drinke then wit, goe sleepe, goe sleepe, and come againe to morrow: for I know no *Andrea de Piero*, neither hath my Mistresse any such Brother, get thee gone good man, and suffer us to sleepe I pray thee. How now (quoth *Andrea*) doest thou not understand what I say? Thou knowest that I supt with thy Mistresse this night; but if our *Sicilian* kindred be so soone forgot, I pray thee give me my cloathes which I left in my Chamber, and then very gladly will I get mee gone. Hereat the Maide laughing out aloude, saide; Surely the man is mad, or

walketh the streetes in a dreame; and so clasping fast the window, away shee went and left him.

Now could *Andrea* assure himselfe, that his gold and cloathes were past recovery, which moving him to the more impatience, his former intercessions became converted into fury, and what hee could not compasse by faire entreats, he entended to winne by outrage and violence, so that taking up a great stone in his hand, hee layed upon the doore very powerfull strokes. The neighbours hearing this molestation still, admitting them not the least respite of rest, reputing him for a troublesome fellow, and that he used those counterfet words, onely to disturbe the Mistresse of the House, and all that dwelled neere about her; looking againe out at their windowes, they altogether began to rate and reprove him, even like so many bawling Curres, barking at a strange dog passing thorow the streete. This is shameful villany (quoth one) and not to be suffered, that honest women should be thus molested in their houses, with foolish idle words, and at such an unseasonable time of the night. For Gods sake (good man) be gone, and let us sleepe; if thou have any thing to say to the Gentlewoman of the House, come to morrow in the day time, and no doubt but shee will make thee sufficient answer.

*Andrea* being somewhat pacified with these speeches, a shag-hairde swash-buckler, a grim-visagde Ruffian (as sildome bawdy houses are without such swaggering Champions) not seene or heard by *Andrea*, all the while of his being in the house rapping out two or three terrible oathes, opened a casement, and with a stearne dreadfull voyce, demaunded who durst keepe that noyse beneath? *Andrea* fearefully looking up, and (by a little glimmering of the Moone) seeing such a rough fellow, with a blacke beard, strowting like the quilles of a Porcupine, and patches on his face, for hurts received in no honest quarels, yawning also and stretching, as angry to have his sleepe disturbed: trembling and quaking, answered; I am the Gentlewomans brother of the house. The Ruffian interrupting him, and speaking more fiercely then before; sealing his words with horrible oathes, said. Sirra, Rascall, I know not of whence or what thou art, but if I come downe to thee, I will so bombast thy prating coxcombe, as thou was never better beaten in all thy life, like a drunken slave and beast as thou art, that all this night wilt not let us sleepe; and so hee clapt to the window againe.

The neighbours, well acquainted with this Ruffians rude conditions, speaking in gentle manner to *Andrea*, said. Shift for thy selfe (good man) in time, and tarrie not for his comming downe to thee; except thou art wearie of thy life, be gone therefore, and say thou hast a friendly warning. These words dismayng *Andrea*, but much more the stearne oathes and ugly sight of the Ruffian, incited also by the neighbours counsell, whom he imagined to advise him in charitable manner: it caused him to depart thence, taking the way homeward to his Inne, in no meane affliction and torment of minde, for the monstrous abuse offered him, and losse of his money. Well he remembered the passages, whereby (the day before) the young Girle had guided him, but the loathsome smell about him, was so extreamey offensive to himselfe: that, desiring to wash him at the Sea side, he strayed too farre wide on the contrary hand, wandring up the streete called *Ruga Gatellana*.

Proceeding on still, even to the highest part of the Citie, hee espied a Lanthorne and light, as also a man carrying it, and another man with him in company, both of them comming towards him. Now, because he suspected them two of the watch, or some persons that would apprehend him: he stept aside to shunne them, and entred into an olde house hard by at hand. The other mens intention was to the very same place, and going in, without any knowledge of *Andreaes* being there, one of them layd downe divers instruments of yron, which he had brought thither on his backe, and had much talke with his fellow concerning those engines. At last one of them said, I smell the most abhominable stinke, that ever I felt in all my life. So, lifting up his Lanthorne, he espied poore pittifull *Andrea*, closely couched behinde the wall. Which sight somewhat affrighting him, he yet boldly demaunded, what and who hee was: whereto *Andrea* answered nothing, but lay still and held his peace. Neerer they drew towards him with their light, demaunding how hee came thither, and in that filthy manner.

Constraint having now no other evasion, but that (of necessity) all must out: hee related to them the whole adventure, in the same sort as it had befallne him. They greatly pittying his misfortune, one of them said to the other. Questionlesse, this villanie was done in the house of *Scarabone Buttafuoco*; And then turning to *Andrea*, proceeded thus. In good faith poore man, albeit thou hast lost thy money, yet art thou highly beholding to Fortune, for falling (though in a foule place) yet in succesfull manner, and entring no more backe into the house. For, beleeve mee friend, if thou hadst not falne, but quietly gone to sleepe in the house; that sleepe had beene thy last in this world, and with thy money, thou hadst lost thy life likewise. But teares and lamentations are now helplesse, because, as easily mayest thou plucke the Starres from the firmament, as get againe the least doyt of thy losse. And for that shag-haired Slave in the house, he will be thy deaths-man, if he but understand, that thou makest any enquiry after thy money. When he had thus admonished him, he began also in this manner to comfort him. Honest fellow, we cannot but pittie thy present condition, wherefore, if thou wilt friendly associate us, in a businesse which wee are instantly going to effect: thy losse hath not beene so great, but on our words wee will warrant thee, that thine immediate gaine shall farre exceede it. What will not a man (in desperate extremity) both well like and allow of, especially, when it carrieth apparance of present comfort? So fared it with *Andrea*, hee perswaded himselfe, worse then had already happened, could not befall him; and therefore he would gladly adventure with them.

The selfe same day preceding this disastrous night to *Andrea*, in the chiefe Church of the Citie, had beene buried the Archbishop of *Naples*, named *Signior Philippo Minutolo*, in his richest pontificall robes and ornaments, and a Ruby on his finger, valued to be worth five hundred duckets of gold: this dead body they purposed to rob and rifle, acquainting *Andrea* with their whole intent, whose necessity (coupled with a covetous desire) made him more forward then well

advised, to joyne with them in this sacriligious enterprise. On they went towards the great Church, *Andreaes* unsavourie perfume much displeasing them, whereupon the one said to his fellow. Can we devise no ease for this foule and noysome inconvenience? the very smell of him will be a meanes to betray us. There is a Well-pit hard by, answered the other, with a pulley and bucket descending downe into it, and there we may wash him from this filthinesse. To the Well-pit they came, where they found the rope and pulley hanging ready, but the bucket (for safety) was taken away: whereon they concluded, to fasten the rope about him, and so let him downe into the Well-pit, and when he had washed himselfe, hee should wagge the rope, and then they would draw him up againe, which accordingly they forth-with performed.

Now it came to passe, that while hee was thus washing himselfe in the Well-pit, the watch of the Citie walking the round, and finding it to be a very hote and sweltring night; they grew dry and thirsty, and therefore went to the Well to drinke. The other two men, perceiving the Watch so neere upon them: left *Andrea* in the Pit to shift for himselfe, running away to shelter themselves. Their flight was not discovered by the Watch, but they comming to the Well-pit, *Andrea* remained still in the bottome, and having cleansed himselfe so well as hee could, sate wagging the rope, expecting when hee should be haled up. This dumbe signe the Watch discerned not, but sitting downe by the Wells side, they layde downe their Billes and other weapons, tugging to draw up the rope, thinking the Bucket was fastened thereto, and full of water. *Andrea* being haled up to the Pits brim, left holding the rope any longer, catching fast hold with his hands for his better safety: and the Watch at the sight heereof being greatly affrighted, as thinking that they had dragd up a Spirit; not daring to speake one word, ranne away with all the hast they could make.

*Andrea* hereat was not a little amazed, so that if he had not taken very good hold on the brim: he might have falne to the bottome, and doubtlesse there his life had perished. Being come forth of the Well, and treading on Billes and Halbards, which he well knew that his companions had not brought thither with them; his mervaile so much the more encreased, ignorance and feare still seizing on him, with silent bemoaning his many misfortunes, away thence he wandred, but hee wist not whither. As he went on, he met his two fellowes, who purposely returned to drag him out of the Well, and seeing their intent already performed, desired to know who had done it: wherein *Andrea* could not resolve them, rehearsing what hee could, and what weapons hee found lying about the Well. Whereat they smiled, as knowing, that the Watch had haled him up, for feare of whom they left him, and so declared to him the reason of their returne.

Leaving off all further talke, because now it was about midnight, they went to the great Church, where finding their entrance to be easie: they approached neere the Tombe, which was very great, being all of Marble, and the cover-stone weighty, yet with crowes of yron and other helps, they raised it so high, that a man might without perill passe into it. Now began they to question one another, which of the three should enter into the Tombe. Not I, said the first; so said the second: No, nor I, answered *Andrea*. Which when the other two heard, they caught fast hold of him, saying. Wilt not thou goe into the Tombe? Be advised what thou sayest, for, if thou wilt not goe in: we will so beat thee with one of these yron crowes, that thou shalt never goe out of this Church alive.

Thus poore *Andrea* is still made a property, and Fortune (this fatall night) will have no other foole but he, as delighting in his hourly disasters. Feare of their fury makes him obedient, into the grave he goes, and being within, thus consults with himselfe. These cunning companions suppose me to be simple, & make me enter the Tombe, having an absolute intention to deceive me. For, when I have given them all the riches that I finde here, and am ready to come forth for mine equall portion: away will they runne for their owne safety, and leaving me here, not onely shall I loose my right among them, but must remaine to what danger may follow after. Having thus meditated, he resolved to make sure of his owne share first, and remembring the rich Ring, whereof they had tolde him: forthwith hee tooke it from the Archbishops finger, finding it indifferently fitte for his owne. Afterward, hee tooke the Crosse, Miter, rich garments, Gloves and all, leaving him nothing but his shirt, giving them all these severall parcels; protesting, that there was nothing else. Still they pressed upon him, affirming that there was a Ring beside, urging him to search diligently for it; yet still he answered, that hee could not finde it, and for their longer tarying with him, seemed as if he serched very carefully, but all appeared to no purpose.

The other two fellowes, as cunning in craft as the third could be, still willed him to search, and watching their aptest opportunity: tooke away the props that supported the Tombe-stone, and running thence with their got booty, left poore *Andrea* mewed up in the grave. Which when he perceived, and saw this misery to exceede all the rest, it is farre easier for you to guesse at his greefe, then I am any way able to expresse it. His head, shoulders, yea all his utmost strength he employeth, to remove that over-heavy hinderer of his liberty: but all his labour beeing spent in vaine, sorrow threw him in a swoond upon the Byshoppes dead body, where if both of them might at that instant have bene observed, the Arch-byshops dead body, and *Andrea* in greefe dying, very hardly had bene distinguished. But his senses regaining their former offices, among his silent complaints, consideration presented him with choyse of these two unavoydable extremities. Dye starving must he in the tombe, with putrifaction of the dead body; or if any man came to open the Grave, then must he be apprehended as a sacrilegious Theefe, and so be hanged, according to the lawes in that case provided.

As he continued in these strange afflictions of minde, sodainely hee heard a noise in the Church of divers men, who (as he imagined) came about the like businesse, as hee and his fellowes had undertaken before; wherein he was not a jot deceived, albeit his feare the more augmented. Having opened the Tombe, and supported the stone, they varied also among themselves for entrance, and an indiffrent while contended about it. At length, a Priest being one in the



company, boldly said. Why how now you white-liver'd Rascals? What are you affraid of? Do you thinke he will eate you? Dead men cannot bite, and therefore I my selfe will go in. Having thus spoken, he prepared his entrance to the Tombe in such order, that he thrust in his feete before, for his easier descending downe into it.

*Andrea* sitting upright in the Tombe, and desiring to make use of this happy opportunity, caught the Priest fast by one of his legges, making shew as if he meant to dragge him downe. Which when the Priest felt, he cryed out aloud, getting out with all the hast he could make, and all his companions, being well neere frighted out of their wits, ranne away amaine, as if they had bene followed by a thousand divels. *Andrea* little dreaming on such fortunate successe, made meanes to get out of the grave, and afterward forth of the Church, at the very same place where he entred.

Now began day-light to appeare, when hee, having the rich Ring on his finger, wandred on hee knew not whether: till comming to the Sea-side, he found the way directing to his Inne, where all his company were with his Host, who had bene very carefull for him. Having related his manifold mischances, his Hoste friendly advised him with speede to get him out of *Naples*. As instantly he did, returning home to *Perouse*, having adventured his five hundred Crownes on a Ring, where-with hee purposed to have bought Horses, according to the intent of his journey thither.

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***Madame Beritola Caracalla, was found in an Island with two Goates, having lost her two Sonnes, and thence travailed into Lunigiana: where one of her Sonnes became servant to the Lord thereof, and was found somewhat over-familiar with his Masters daughter, who therefore caused him to bee imprisoned. Afterward, when the Country of Sicily rebelled against K. Charles, the aforesaid Sonne chanced to be knowne by his Mother, and was married to his Masters daughter. And his Brother being found likewise; they both returned to great estate and credit.***

## The sixth Novell.

***Heerein all men are admonished, never to distrust the powerfull hand of Heaven, when Fortune seemeth to be most adverse against them.***

The Ladies and Gentlemen also, having smiled sufficiently at the severall accidents which did befall the poore Traveller *Andrea*, reported at large by Madame *Fiammetta*, the Lady *Æmillia*, seeing her tale to be fully concluded, began (by commandement of the Queene) to speake in this manner.

The diversitie of changes and alterations in Fortune as they are great, so must they needs be greivous; and as often as we take occasion to talk of them, as often do they awake and quicken our understandings, avouching, that it is no easie matter to depend upon her flatteries. And I am of opinion, that to heare them recounted, ought not any way to offend us, be it of men wretched or fortunate; because, as they enstruct the one with good advise, so they animate the other with comfort. And therefore, although great occasions have beene already related, yet I purpose to tell a Tale, no lesse true then lamentable; which albeit it sorted to a succesfull ending, yet notwithstanding, such and so many were the bitter thwartings, as hardly can I beleieve, that ever any sorrow was more joyfully sweetened.

You must understand then (most gracious Ladies) that after the death of *Fredericke* the second Emperour, one named *Manfred*, was crowned King of *Sicilie*, about whom lived in great account and authority, a *Neapolitane* Gentleman, called *Henriet Capece*, who had to Wife a beautifull Gentlewoman, and a *Neapolitane* also, named Madam *Beritola Caracalla*. This *Henriet* held the government of the Kingdome of *Sicilie*, and understanding, that King *Charles* the first, had wonne the battle of *Beneventum*, and slaine King *Manfred*; the whole Kingdome revolting also to his devotion, and little trust to be reposed in the *Sicillians*, or he willing to subject himselfe to his Lords enemy; provided for his secret flight from thence. But this being discovered to the *Sicillians*, he and many more, who had beene loyall servants to King *Manfred*, were suddenly taken and imprisoned by King *Charles*, and the sole possession of the Iland confirmed to him.

Madam *Beritola* not knowing (in so sudden and strange an alteration of State affaires) what was become of her Husband, fearing also greatly before, those inconveniences which afterward followed; being overcome with many passionate considerations, having left and forsaken all her goods, going aboard a small Barke with a Sonne of hers, aged about some eight yeeres, named *Geoffrey*, and growne great with childe with another; shee fled thence to *Lipary*, where shee was brought to bed of another Sonne, whom shee named (answerable both to his and her hard fortune) *The poore expelled*.

Having provided her selfe of a Nurse, they altogether went aboard againe, setting sayle for *Naples* to visit her Parents; but it chanced quite contrary to her expectation, because by stormie windes and weather, the vessell being bound for *Naples*, was hurried to the Ile of *Ponzo*, where entring into a small Port of the Sea, they concluded to make their abode, till a time more furtherous should favour their voyage.

As the rest, so did Madam *Beritola* goe on shore in the Iland, where having found a separate and solitary place, fit for her silent and sad meditations, secretly by her selfe, shee sorrowed for the

absence of her husband. Resorting daily to this her sad exercise, and continuing there her complaints, unseene by any of the Marriners, or whosoever else: there arrived suddenly a Galley of Pyrates, who seizing on the small Barke, carried it and all the rest in it away with them. When *Beritola* had finished her wofull complaints, as daily shee was accustomed to doe, shee returned backe to her children againe; but finding no person there remaining, whereat she wondered not a little: immediately (suspecting what had happened indeede) she lent her lookes on the Sea, and saw the Galley, which as yet had not gone farre, drawing the smaller vessell after her. Heereby plainly she perceyved, that now she had lost her children, as formerly shee had done her husband; being left there poore, forsaken, and miserable, not knowing when, where, or how to finde any of them againe, and calling for her husband and children, shee fell downe in a swoond upon the shore.

Now was not any body neere, with coole water or any other remedy, to helpe the recovery of her lost powers; wherefore her spirites might the more freely wander at their own pleasure: but after they were returned backe againe, and had won their wonted offices in her body, drowned in teares, and wringing her hands, shee did nothing but call for her children and husband, straying all about, in hope to finde them, seeking in Caves, Dennes, and every where else, that presented the verie least glimpse of comfort. But when she saw all her paines sort to no purpose, and darke night drawing swiftly on, hope and dismay raising infinit perturbations, made her yet to be somewhat respective of her selfe, & therefore departing from the sea-shore, she returned to the solitary place, where she used to sigh and mourne alone by her selfe.

The night being over-past with infinite feares and affrights, & bright day saluting the world againe, with the expence of nine hours and more, she fell to her former fruitlesse travailes. Being somewhat sharply bitten with hunger, because the former day and night shee hadde not tasted any food: she made therefore a benefit of necessity, and fed on the green hearbes so well as she could, not without many piercing afflictions, what should become of her in this extraordinary misery. As shee walked in these pensive meditations, she saw a Goate enter into a Cave, and (within a while after) come forth againe, wandering along thorow the woods. Whereupon she stayed, and entred where she saw the beast issue forth, where she found two yong Kids, yeaned (as it seemed) the selfesame day, which sight was very pleasing to her, and nothing (in that distresse) could more content her.

As yet she had milke freshly running in both her brests, by reason of her so late delivery in child-bed; wherefore shee lay downe unto the two yong Kids, and taking them tenderly in her armes, suffered each of them to sucke a teate, whereof they made not any refusall, but tooke them as lovingly as their dammes, and from that time forward, they made no distinguishing betweene their damme and her. Thus this unfortunate Lady, having found some company in this solitary desert, fed on hearbes & roots, drinking faire running water, and weeping silently to her selfe, so often as she remembred her husband, children, and former dayes past in much better manner. Here shee resolved now to live and dye, being at last deprived both of the damme and yonger Kids also, by theyr wandering further into the neere adjoining Woods, according to their Naturall inclinations; whereby the poore distressed Lady became more savage and wilde in her daily conditions, then otherwise shee would have bene.

After many monthes were over-passed, at the very same place where she tooke landing; by chance, there arrived another small vessell of certaine *Pisans*, which remained there divers dayes. In this Bark was a Gentleman, named *Conrado de Marchesi Malespini*, with his holy and vertuous wife, who were returned backe from a Pilgrimage, having visited all the sanctified places, that then were in the Kingdome of *Apulia*, & now were bound homeward to their owne abiding. This Gentleman, for the expelling of melancholy perturbations, one especiall day amongst other, with his wife, servants, and waiting hounds, wandered up into the Iland, not far from the place of Madam *Beritolaes* desert dwelling. The hounds questing after game, at last happened on the two Kiddes where they were feeding, and (by this time) had attained to indifferent growth: and finding themselves thus pursued by the hounds, fled to no other part of the wood, then to the Cave where *Beritola* remained, and seeming as if they sought to be rescued only by her, she sodainly caught up a staffe, and forced the hounds thence to flight.

By this time, *Conrado* and his wife, who had followed closely after the hounds, was come thither, and seeing what had hapned, looking on the Lady, who was become blacke, swarthy, meager, and hairy, they wondered not a little at her, and she a great deale more at them. When (upon her request) *Conrado* had checkt back his hounds, they prevailed so much by earnest intreaties, to know what she was, and the reason of her living there; that she intirely related her quality, unfortunate accidents, and strange determination for living there. Which when the Gentleman had heard, who very well knew her husband, compassion forced teares from his eyes, and earnestly he laboured by kinde perswasions, to alter so cruel a deliberation; making an honourable offer, for conducting her home to his owne dwelling, where shee should remaine with him in noble respect, as if she were his owne sister, without parting from him, till Fortune should smile as fairely on her, as ever she had done before.

When these gentle offers could not prevaile with her, the Gentleman left his wife in her company, saying, that he would go fetch some foode for her; and because her garments were all rent and torne, hee woulde bring her other of his wives, not doubting but to winne her thence with them. His wife abode there with *Beritola*, very much bemoaning her great disasters, and when both viands and garments were brought: by extremity of intercession, they caused her to put them on, and also to feede with them, albeit she protested, that shee would not part thence into any place, where any knowledge should be taken of her. In the end, they perswaded her, to go with them into *Lunigiana*, carrying also with her the two yong Goats and their damme, which were then in

the Cave altogether, prettily playing before *Beritola*, to the great admiration of *Conrado* and his wife, as also the servants attending on them.

When the windes and weather grew favourable for them, Madam *Beritola* went aboard with *Conrado* and his wife, being followed by the two young Goates and their Damme; and because her name should bee knowne to none but *Conrado*, and his wife onely, shee would be stiled no otherwise, but the Goatherdesse. Merrily, yet gently blew the gale, which brought them to enter the River of *Macra*, where going on shore, and into their owne Castell, *Beritola* kept company with the wife of *Conrado*, but in a mourning habite, and a wayting Gentlewoman of hers, honest, humble, and very dutifull, the Goates alwayes familiarly keeping them company.

Returne wee now to the Pyrates, which at *Ponzo* seized on the small Barke, wherein Madam *Beritola* was brought thither, and carried thence away, without any sight or knowledge of her. With such other spoiles as they had taken, they shaped their course for *Geneway*, and there (by consent of the Patrones of the Galley) made a division of their booties. It came to passe, that (among other things) the Nurse that attended on *Beritola*, and the two Children with her, fell to the share of one *Messer Gasparino d'Oria*, who sent them together to his owne House, there to be employed in service as servants. The Nurse weeping beyond measure for the losse of her Lady, and bemoaning her owne miserable fortune, whereinto shee was now fallen with the two young Laddes; after long lamenting, which shee found utterly fruitlesse and to none effect, though she was used as a servant with them, and being but a very poore woman, yet was shee wise and discreetly advised. Wherefore, comforting both her selfe, and them so well as she could, and considering the depth of their disaster; shee conceited thus, that if the Children should be knowne, it might redounde to their greater danger, and shee be no way advantaged thereby.

Hereupon, hoping that Fortune (early or late) would alter her stearne malice, and that they might (if they lived) regaine once more their former condition: shee would not disclose them to any one whatsoever, till shee should see the time aptly disposed for it. Being thus determined, to all such as questioned her concerning them, she answered that they were her owne Children, naming the eldest not *Geoffrey*, but *Jehannot de Procida*. [Or Grannotto da Prochyta.] As for the youngest, shee cared not greatly for changing his name, and therefore wisely enformed *Geoffrey*, upon what reason shee had altered his name, and what danger he might fall into, if he should otherwise be discovered; being not satisfied with thus telling him once, but remembering him thereof very often, which the gentle youth (being so well instructed by the wise and carefull Nurse) did very warily observe.

The two young Laddes, very poorely garmented, but much worse hosed and shodde, continued thus in the house of *Gasparino*, where both they and the Nurse were long time employed, about very base and drudging Offices, which yet they endured with admirable patience. But *Jehannot*, aged already about sixteene yeeres, having a loftier spirit, then belonged to a slavish servant, despising the basenesse of his servile condition; departed from the drudgery of *Messer Gasparino*, and going aboard the Gallies, which were bound for *Alexandria*, fortun'd into many places, yet none of them affording him any advancement. In the ende, about three or foure yeares after his departure from *Gasparino*, being now a brave young man, and of very goodly forme: he understood, that his Father (whom he supposed to be dead) was as yet living; but in captivity, and prisoner to King *Charles*. Wherefore, despairing of any succesfull fortune, hee wandred here and there, till he came to *Lunigiana*, and there (by strange accident) he became servant to *Messer Conrado Malespina*, where the service proved well liking to them both.

Very sildome times hee had a sight of his Mother, because shee alwayes kept company with *Conradoes* wife; and yet when they came within view of each other, shee knew not him, nor he her, so much yeeres had altered them both, from what they were wont to be, and when they saw each other last. *Jehannot* being thus in the service of *Messer Conrado*, it fortun'd that a daughter of his, named *Spina*, being the Widdow of one *Messer Nicolas Grignan*, returned home to her Fathers House. Very beautifull and amiable shee was, young likewise, aged but little above sixteene; growing wonderously amorous of *Jehannot*, and he of her, in extraordinary and most fervent manner; which love was not long without full effect, continuing many moneths before any person could perceive it: which making them to build on the more assurance, they began to carrie their meanes with lesse discretion, then is required in such nice cases, and which cannot be too providently managed.

Upon a day, he and shee walking to a goodly wood, plentifully furnished with spreading Trees, having out-gone the rest of their company; they made choise of a pleasant place, very daintily shaded, and beautified with all sorts of floures. There they spent sometime in amorous discourse, beside some other sweete embraces, which though it seemed over-short to them, yet was it so unadvisedly prolonged; that they were on a sudden surprized, first by the Mother, and next by *Messer Conrado* himselfe: who greeving beyond measure, to be thus trecherously dealt withall, caused them to be apprehended by three of his servants, and (without telling them any reason why) ledde bound to another Castle of his, and fretting with extremity of rage, concluded in his minde, that they should both shamefully be put to death.

The Mother to this regardlesse Daughter, having heard the angry words of her Husband, and how hee would be revenged on the faultie; could not endure that he should be so severe: wherefore, although shee was likewise much afflicted in minde, and reputed her Daughter worthy (for so great an offence) of all cruell punishment: yet shee hasted to her displeas'd husband, and began to entreate, that he would not runne on in such a furious spleene, now in his aged yeares, to be the murtherer of his owne childe, and soile his hands in the blood of his servant. Rather he might finde out some milde course for the satisfaction of his Anger, by committing them to close imprisonment, there to remaine & mourne for their follie committed.

The vertuous and religious Lady alledged so many commendable examples, and used such plenty of mooving perswasions; that she quite altered his minde, from putting them to death, and he commanded onely, that they should separately bee imprisoned, with little store of foode, and lodging of the uneasiest, untill hee should otherwise determine of them, and so it was done. What their life now was in captivity and continuall teares, with stricter abstinence then was needefull for them; all this I must commit to your consideration.

*Jehannot* and *Spina* remaining in this comfortlesse condition, and an whole yeere being now out-worne, yet *Conrado* keeping them thus still imprisoned: it came to passe, that *Don Pedro* King of *Arragon*, by the meanes of *Messer John de Procida*, caused the Isle of *Sicily* to revolt, and tooke it away from King *Charles*, whereat *Conrado* (he being of the *Ghibbiline* faction) not a little rejoiced. *Jehannot* having intelligence thereof, by some of them that had him in custody, breathing foorth a vehement sigh, spake in this manner. Alas poore miserable wretch as I am! that have already gone begging through the world above fourteene yeares, in expectation of nothing else but this opportunity; and now it is come, must I be in prison, to the end, that I should never more hope for any future happinesse? And how can I get forth of this prison, except it be by death onely? How now, replied the Officer of the Guard? What doth this businesse of great Kings concerne thee? What affaires hast thou in *Sicily*?

Once more *Jehannot* sighed extreemly, and returned him this answer. Me thinkes my heart (quoth hee) doth cleave in sunder, when I call to minde the charge which my Father had there, for although I was but a little boy when I fled thence: yet I can well remember, that I sawe him Governour there, at such time as King *Manfred* lived. The Guard, pursuing on still his purpose, demanded of him, what, and who his Father was? My Father (replied *Jehannot*) I may now securely speake of him, being out of the perill which neerely concerned me if I had beene discovered. He was the named (and so still if he be living) *Henriet Capece*, and my name is *Geoffrey*, not *Jehannot*; and I make no doubt, but if I were free from hence, and might be returned home to *Sicily*, I should (for his sake) be placed in some authority.

The honest man of the Guard, without seeking after any further information; so soone as he could compasse the leysure, reported all to *Messer Conrado*, who having heard these newes (albeit he made no shew thereof to the revealer) went to Madam *Beritola*, graciously demanding of her, if she had any sonne by her husband, who was called *Geoffrey*. The Lady replied in teares, that if her eldest sonne were as yet living, hee was so named, and now aged about two and twenty yeares. *Conrado* hearing this, imagined this same to be the man, considering further withall, that if it fell out to prove so: he might have the better meanes of mercie, and closely concealing his daughters shame, joyfully joyne them in marriage together.

Hereupon he secretly caused *Jehannot* to be brought before him, examining him particularly of all his passed life, and finding (by most manifest arguments) that his name was truly *Geoffrey*, & he the eldest son of *Henriet Capece*, he spake to him alone in this manner. *Jehannot*, thou knowest how great the injuries are which thou hast done me, & my deare daughter, gently entreating thee (as became a good & honest servant) that thou shouldest alwayes have bin respective of mine honour, and all that do appertain unto me. There are many noble Gentlemen, who sustaining the wrong which thou hast offred me, they would have procured thy shameful death, which pittie & compassion will not suffer in me. Wherefore seeing (as thou informest me) that thou art honourably derived both by father & mother; I will give end to all thine anguishes, even when thy self art so pleased, releasing thee from the misery & captivity, wherein I have so long time kept thee, and in one instant, reduce thine honour & mine into compleat perfection. As thou knowest, my Daughter *Spina*, whom thou hast embraced in kindnesse as a friend (although farre unfitting for thee or her) is a widow, and her marriage is both great and good; what her manners and conditions are, thou indifferently knowest, and art not ignorant of her Father and Mother: concerning thine owne estate, as now I purpose not to speake any thing. Therefore, when thou wilt, I am so determined, that whereas thou hast immodestly affected her, she shall become thy honest wife, and accepting thee as my Son, to remain with me so long as you both please.

Imprisonment had somewhat misshapen *Jehannot* in his outward forme, but not impaired a jot of that noble spirit, really derived from his famous progenitors, much lesse the true love he bare to his faire friend. And although most earnestly he desired that, which *Conrado* now so franckly offered him, and was in his power onely to bestow on him; yet could he not cloude any part of his greatnesse, but with a resolved judgement, thus replied. My Lord, affectation of rule, desire of wealthy possessions, or any other matter whatsoever, could never make me a traytor to you or yours; but that I have loved, do love & for ever shal love your beautious daughter; if that be treason, I freely confesse it, & will die a thousand deaths, before you or any else shal enforce me to denie it; for I hold her highly worthy of my love. If I have bin more unmannerly with her, then became me, according to the opinion of vulgar judgment, I have committed but that error, which evermore is so attendant upon youth; that to denie it, is to denie youth also. And if reverend age would but remember, that once he was young, & measure others offences by his own; they would not be thought so great or greivous, as you (& many more) account them to be, mine being committed as a friend, & not as an enemy: what you make offer of so willingly to do, I have alwayes desired, & if I had thought it would have bin granted, long since I had most humbly requested it; and so much the more acceptable would it have bin to me, by how much the further off it stood from my hopes. But if you be so forward as your words doe witness, then feede mee not with any further fruitlesse expectation: but rather send me backe to prison, and lay as many afflictions on mee as you please: for my endeared love to your Daughter *Spina*, maketh mee to love you the more for her sake; how hardly soever you entreate me, & bindeth me in the greater

reverence to you, as being the father of my fairest friend.

*Messer Conrado* hearing these words, stood as one confounded with admiration, reputed him to be a man of lofty spirit, and his affection most fervent to his Daughter, which was not a little to his liking. Wherefore, embracing him, and kissing his cheek, without any longer dallying, hee sent in like manner for his Daughter. Her restraint in prison had made her lookes meager, pale and wan, and very weak was shee also of her person, farre differing from the woman shee was wont to be, before her affection to *Jehannot*; there in presence of her Father, and with free consent of either, they were contracted as man and wife, and the espousals agreed on according to custome. Some few dayes after, (without any ones knowledge of that which was done) having furnished them with all things fit for the purpose, and time aptly serving, that the Mothers should be partakers in this joy; he called his wife, and Madam *Beritola*, to whom first he spake in this manner.

What will you say Madam, if I cause you to see your eldest Son, not long since married to one of my Daughters? whereunto *Beritola* thus replied. My Lord, I can say nothing else unto you, but that I shall be much more obliged to you, then already I am, and so much the rather, because you will let me see the thing which is dearer to me then mine owne life; and rendring it unto mee in such manner as you speake of, you will recall backe some part of my former lost hopes: and with these words the teares streamed abundantly from her eyes. Then turning to his wife, he saide; And you deare Love, if I shew you such a Sonne in Law, what will you thinke of it? Sir (quoth shee) what pleaseth you, must and shall satisfie me, be he Gentleman, or a beggar. Well said Madam, answered *Messer Conrado*, I hope (within few dayes) to make you both joyfull. So when the amorous couple had recovered their former feature, and honourable garments were prepared for them, privately thus he said to *Geoffrey*; Beyond the joy which already thou art enriched withall, how would it please thee to meet with thine owne Mother here? I cannot beleieve Sir, replied *Geoffrey*, that her greivous misfortunes have suffered her to live so long: yet notwithstanding, if Heaven hath beene so merciful to her, my joyes were incomparable, for by her gracious counsell, I might well hope to recover no meane happinesse in *Sicilie*. Within a while after, both the Mothers were sent for, who were transported with unspeakable joyes, when they beheld the so lately married couple; being also much amazed, when they could not guesse what inspiration had guided *Conrado* to this extraordinary benignity, joyning *Jehannot* in mariage with *Spina*. Hereupon Madam *Beritola*, remembring the speeches between her and *Conrado*, began to observe him very advisedly, and by a hidden vertue, which long had silently slept in her, and now with joy of spirit awaked, calling to minde the lineatures of her Sonnes Infancy, without awaiting for any other demonstrations, shee folded him in her armes with earnest affection. Motherly joy and pittie now contended so violently together, that shee was not able to utter one word, the sensitive vertues being so closely combined, that (even as dead) shee fell downe in the armes of her Sonne. And he wondering greatly thereat, making a better recollection of his thoughts, did well remember, that he had often before seene her in the Castell, without any other knowledge of her. Nevertheless, by meere instinct of Nature, whose power (in such actions) declares it selfe to be highly predominant; his very soule assured him, that shee was his Mother, and blaming his understanding, that he had not before beene better advised, he threw his armes about her, and wept exceedingly.

Afterward, by the loving paines of *Conradoes* wife, as also her daughter *Spina*, Madam *Beritola* (being recovered from her passionate trance, and her vitall spirits executing their Offices againe;) fell once more to the embracing of her Sonne, kissing him infinite times, with teares and speeches of motherly kindnesse, he likewise expressing the same dutifull humanity to her. Which ceremonious courtesies being passed over and over, to no little joy in all the beholders, beside repetition of their severall misfortunes. *Messer Conrado* made all knowne to his friends, who were very glad of this new alliance made by him, which was honoured with many solemn & magnificent feastings. Which being all concluded, *Geoffrey* having found out fit place and opportunity, for conference with his new created Father, without any sinister opposition; began as followeth.

Honourable Father, you have raised my contentment to the highest degree, and have heaped also many gracious favours on my noble Mother; but now in the finall conclusion, that nothing may remaine uneffected, which consisteth in your power to performe: I would humbly entreate you, to honour my Mother with your company, at a Feast of my making, where I would gladly also have my Brother present. *Messer Gasparino d'Oria* (as I have once heretofore told you) questing as a common Pyrate on the Seas, tooke us, and sent us home to his house as slaves, where (as yet he detaineth him.) I would have you likewise send one into *Sicilie*, who informing himselfe more amply in the state of the Country; may understand what is become of *Henriet* my Father, and whether he be living or no. If he remaine alive, to know in what condition he is; and being secretly instructed in all things, then to returne backe againe to you.

This motion made by *Geoffrey*, was so pleasing to *Conrado*, that without any reference to further leysure, hee dispatched thence two discrete persons, the one to *Genewaye*, and the other to *Sicilie*: he which went for *Genewaye*, having met with *Gasparino*, earnestly entreated him, (on the behalfe of *Conrado*) to send him the *Poore expelled*; and his Nurse recounting every thing in order, which *Conrado* had tolde him, concerning *Geoffrey* and his Mother: when *Gasparino* had heard the whole discourse, he marvelled greatly thereat, and saide; True it is, that I will doe any thing for *Messer Conrado*, which may be to his love and liking, provided, that it lie in my power to performe; and (about some foureteene yeeres since) I brought such a Lad as you seeke for, with his Mother home to my house; whom I will gladly send unto him. But you may tell him from me, that I advise him from over-rash crediting the fables of *Jehannot*, that now tearms himselfe

by the name of *Geoffrey*, because hee is a more wicked boy, then he taketh him to be, and so did I find him.

Having thus spoken, and giving kinde welcome to the Messenger, secretly he called the Nurse unto him, whom he heedfully examined concerning this case. Shee having heard the rebellion in the Kingdome of *Sicilie*, and understanding withall, that *Henriet* was yet living; joyfully threw off all her former feare, relating every thing to him orderly, and the reasons moving her, to conceale the whole businesse in such manner as shee had done. *Gasparino* well perceiving, that the report of the Nurse, and the message received from *Conrado*, varied not in any one circumstance, beganne the better to credit her wordes. And being a man most ingenious, making further inquisition into the businesse, by all the possible meanes he could devise, and finding every thing to yeeld undoubted assurance; ashamed of the vile and base usage, wherein hee had so long time kept the Ladde, and desiring (by his best meanes) to make him amends; he had a faire Daughter, aged about thirteene yeeres, and knowing what manner of man he was, his father *Henriet* also yet living, he gave her to him in marriage, with a very bountifull and honourable dowry.

The joviall dayes of feasting being past, he went aboard a Galley, with the *Poore expelled*; his Daughter, the Ambassadour, and the Nurse, departing thence to *Lericy*, where they were nobly welcommed by *Messer Conrado*, and his Castle being not farre from thence, with an honourable traine they were conducted thither, and entertained with all possible kindnesse. Now concerning the comfort of the Mother, meeting so happily with both her Sonnes, the joy of the Brethren and Mother together, having also found the faithfull Nurse, *Gasparino* and his Daughter, in company now with *Conrado* and his Wife, friends, familiars, and all generally in a Jubilee of rejoycing: it exceedeth capacity in me to expresse it, and therefore I referre it to your more able imagination.

In the time of this mutuall contentment, to the ende that nothing might be wanting, to compleat and perfect this universall joy; our Lord, a most abundant bestower where he beginneth, added long wished tydings, concerning the life and good estate of *Henriet Capece*. For, even as they were feasting, and the concourse great of worthy guests, both of Lords and Ladies: the first service was scarcely set on the Tables, but the Ambassador which was sent to *Sicilie*, arrived there before them. Among many other important matters, he spake of *Henriet*, who being so long a time detained in prison by King *Charles*, when the commotion arose in the City against the King; the people (grudging at *Henriets* long imprisonment) slew the Guards, and let him at liberty. Then as capitall enemy to King *Charles*, he was created Captaine generall, following the chase, and killing the French.

By meanes whereof, he grew great in the grace of King *Pedro*, who replanted him in all the goods and honours which he had before, with very high and eminent authority. Hereunto the Ambassadour added, that he was entertained with extraordinary grace, and delivery of publike joy and exaltation, when his Wife and Sonne were knowne to be living, of whom no tydings had at any time beene heard, since the houre of his surprizall. Moreover, that a swift winged Barke was now sent thither (upon the happy hearing of this newes) well furnished with noble Gentlemen, to attend till their returning backe. We neede to make no doubt concerning the tydings brought by this Ambassadour, nor of the Gentlemens welcome, thus sent to Madam *Beritola* and *Geoffrey*; who before they would sit downe at the Table, saluted *Messer Conrado* and his kinde Lady (on the behalfe of *Henriet*) for all the great graces extended to her and her Sonne, with promise of any thing, lying in the power of *Henriet*, to rest continually at their command. The like they did to *Signior Gasparino*, (whose liberall favours came unlooked for) with certaine assurance, that when *Henriet* should understand what hee had done for his other Sonne, the *Poore expelled*; there would be no defailance of riciprocall courtesies.

As the longest joyes have no perpetuity of lasting, so all these gracefull ceremonies had their conclusion, with as many sighes and teares at parting, as joyes abounded at their first encountering. Imagine then, that you see such aboard, as were to have here no longer abiding, Madam *Beritola* and *Geoffrey*, with the rest, as the *Poore expelled*, the so late married Wives, and the faithfull Nurse bearing them company. With prosperous windes they arrived in *Sicilie*, where the Wife, Sonnes, and Daughters, were joyfully met by *Henriet* at *Palermo*, and with such honourable pompe, as a case so important equally deserved. The Histories make further mention, that there they lived (a long while after) in much felicity, with thankfull hearts (no doubt) to Heaven, in acknowledgement of so many great mercies received.

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***The Soldan of Babylon sent one of his Daughters, to be joynd in marriage with the King of Cholcos; who by divers accidents (in the space of foure yeeres) happened into the custody of nine men, and in sundry places. At length being restored backe to her Father, shee went to the saide King of Cholcos, as a Maide, and as at first shee was intended to be his wife.***

## **The seaventh Novell.**

***A lively demonstration, that the beauty of a Woman, (oftentimes) is very hurtfull to her selfe, and the occasion of many evils, yea, and of death, to divers men.***

Peradventure the Novell related by Madam *Æmilia*, did not extend it selfe so farre in length, as it moved compassion in the Ladies mindes, hearing the hard fortunes of *Beritola* and her Children,

which had incited them to weeping: but that it pleased the Queene (upon the Tales conclusion) to command *Pamphilus*, to follow (next in order) with his discourse, and hee being thereto very obedient, beganne in this manner.

It is a matter of no meane difficulty (vertuous Ladies) for us to take intire knowledge of every thing we doe, because (as oftentimes hath beene observed) many men, imagining if they were rich, they should live securely, and without any cares. And therefore, not onely have their prayers and intercessions aimed at that end, but also their studies and daily endeavours, without refusall of any paines or perils have not meanelly expressed their hourelly solicitude. And although it hath happened accordingly to them, and their covetous desires fully accomplished; yet at length they have met with such kinde of people, who likewise thirsting after their wealthy possessions, have bereft them of life, being their kinde and intimate friends, before they attained to such riches. Some other, being of low and base condition, by adventuring in many skirmishes and foughten battels, trampling in the bloud of their brethren and friends, have beene mounted to the soveraigne dignity of Kingdomes, (beleeving that therein consisted the truest happinesse) but bought with the dearest price of their lives. For, beside their infinite cares and feares, wherewith such greatnesse is continually attended, at their royall Tables, they have drunke poyson in a golden pot. Many other in like manner (with most earnest appetite) have coveted beauty and bodily strength, not foreseeing with any judgement, that these wishes were not without perill; when being endued with them, they either have beene the occasion of their death, or such a lingering lamentable estate of life, as death were a thousand times more welcome to them.

But because I would not speake particularly of all our fraile and humane affections, I dare assure ye, that there is not any one of these desires, to be elected among us mortals, with entire foresight or providence, warrantable against their ominous issue. Wherefore, if we would walke directly, wee should dispose our willes and affections, to be ordered and guided onely by him, who best knoweth what is needfull for us, and will bestow them at his good pleasure. Nor let me lay this blamefull imputation upon men onely, for offending in many things through over lavish desires: because you your selves (gracious Ladies) sinne highly in one, as namely, in coveting to be beautifull. So that it is not sufficient for you, to enjoy those beauties bestowne on you by Nature: but you practise to encrease them, by the rarities of Art. Wherefore, let it not offend you, that I tell you the hard fortune of a faire Sarrazines, to whom it happened (by strange adventures) within the compasse of foure yeares, nine severall times to be married, and onely for her beauty.

It is now a long time since, that there lived a Soldane in *Babylon*, named *Beminidab*, to whom (while he lived) many things happened, answerable to his owne desires. Among divers other children both male and female, he had a daughter, called *Alathiella*, and shee (according to the common voyce of every one that saw her) was the fayrest Lady then living in all the world. And because the King of *Cholcos* had wonderfully assisted him, in a valiant foughten battaile, against a mighty Armie of *Arabes*, who on a suddaine had assailed him: hee demaunded his faire daughter in marriage, which likewise was kindly granted to him. A goodly and well armed Ship was prepared for her, with full furnishment of all necessary provision, and accompanied with an honourable traine, both Lords and Ladies, as also most costly and sumptuous accoustrements; commending her to the mercy of heaven, in this manner was shee sent away.

The time being propitious for their parting thence, the Mariners hoised their sayles, leaving the part of *Alexandria*, and sayling prosperously many dayes together. When they had past the Country of *Sardignia*, and (as they imagined) were well neere to their journeyes end: suddainly arose boisterous and contrary windes, which were so impetuous beyond all measure, and so tormented the Ship wherein the Lady was; that the Mariners, seeing no signe of comfort, gave over all hope of escaping with life. Neverthelesse, as men most expert in implacable dangers, they laboured to their uttermost power, and contended with infinite blustering tempests, for the space of two dayes and nights together, hoping the third day would prove more favourable. But therein they saw themselves deceived, for the violence continued still, encreasing in the night time more and more, being no way able to comprehend, either where they were, or what course they tooke, neither by marivall judgement, or any apprehension else whatsoever, the heavens were so clouded, and the nights darknesse so extreame.

Being (unknowne to them) neere the Isle of *Majorica*, they felt the Ship to split in the bottome, by meanes whereof, perceiving now no hope of escaping (every one caring for himselfe, and not any other) they threw forth a Squiffe on the troubled waves, reposing more confidence of safety that way, then abiding any longer in the broken Ship. Howbeit, such as were first descended downe, made stout resistance against all other followers, with their drawne weapons: but safety of life so farre prevailed, that what with the tempests violence, and over-lading of the Squiffe, it sunke to the bottome, and all perished that were therein. The Ship being thus split, and more then halfe full of water, tossed and tormented by the blustering windes, first one way, and then another: was at last driven into a strand of the Isle *Majorica*, no other persons remaining therein; but onely the Lady and her women, all of them (through the rude tempest, and their owne conceived feare) lying still, as if they were more then halfe dead. And there, within a stones cast of the neighbouring shore, the Ship (by the rough surging billowes) was fixed fast in the sands, and so continued all the rest of the night, without any further molestation of the windes.

When day appeared, and the violent stormes were more mildly appeased, the Lady, who seemed well-neere dead, lifted up her head, and began (weake as she was) to call first one, and then another: but she called in vaine, for such as she named were farre enough from her. Wherefore, hearing no answeare, nor seeing any one, she wondered greatly, her feares encreasing then more and more. Raising her selfe so well as shee could, she beheld the Ladies that were of her

company, and some other of her women, lying still without any stirring: whereupon, first jogging one, and then another, and calling them severally by their names; shee found them bereft of understanding, and even as if they were dead, their hearts were so quailed, and their feare so over-ruling, which was no meane dismay to the poore Lady her selfe. Neverthelesse, necessity now being her best counsaillour, seeing her selfe thus all alone, and not knowing in what place she was, she used such meanes to them that were living, that (at the last) they came better to knowledge of themselves. And being unable to guesse, what was become of the men and Mariners, seeing the Ship also driven on the sands, and filled with water: she began (with them) to lament most grievously, and now it was about the houre of mid-day, before they could descry any person on the shore, or any else to pittie them in so urgent a necessity.

At length, noone being past, a Gentleman, named *Bajazeth*, attended by divers of his followers on horseback, and returning from a Country house belonging to him, chanced to ride by on the sands. Upon sight of the Ship lying in that case, he imagined truely what had happened, and commanded one of his men to enter aboard it, which (with some difficulty) hee did, to resolve his Lord what remayned therein. There hee found the faire young Lady, with such small store of company as was left her, fearefully hidden under the prow of the Ship. So soone as they saw him, they held up their hands, wofully desiring mercy of him: but he perceiving their lamentable condition, and that hee understoode not what they said to them; their affliction grew the greater, labouring by signes and gestures, to give him knowledge of their misfortune.

The servant, gathering what he could by their outward behaviour, declared to his Lord, what hee had seene in the Ship: who caused the women to be brought on shore, and all the precious things remaining with them, conducting them with him to a place not farre off, where, with foode and warmth he gave them comfort. By the rich garments which the Lady was cloathed withall, hee reputed her to be a Gentlewoman well derived, as the great reverence done to her by the rest, gave him good reason to conceive. And although her lookes were pale and wan, as also her person mightily altered, by the tempestuous violence of the Sea: yet notwithstanding, she appeared faire and lovely in the eye of *Bajazeth*, whereupon forthwith he determined, that if she were not married, he would enjoy her as his owne in mariage, or if he could not winne her to be his wife, yet (at the least) shee should be his friend, because shee remained now in his power.

*Bajazeth* was a man of sterne lookes, rough and harsh both in speech and behaviour: yet causing the Lady to be honourably used divers dayes together, she became thereby well comforted and recovered. And seeing her beauty to exceede all comparison, he was afflicted beyond measure, that he could not understand her, nor she him, whereby hee could not know, of whence or what she was. His amorous flames encreasing more and more; by kinde, courteous, and affable actions, hee laboured to compasse what he aymed at. But all his endeavour proved to no purpose, for shee refused all familiar privacie with him, which so much the more kindled the fury of his desire. This being well observed by the Lady, having now remayned there a moneth & more, and collecting by the customes of the Countrey, that she was among Turkes, and in such a place, where although she were knowne, yet it would little advantage her, beside, that long protraction of time would provoke *Bajazeth*, by faire meanes or force to obtaine his will: she propounded to her selfe (with magnanimity of spirit) to tread all misfortunes under her feete, commaunding her women (whereof she had but three now remaining alive) that they should not disclose what she was; except it were in some such place, where manifest signes might yeeld hope of regaining their liberty. Moreover, shee admonished them, stoutly to defend their honour and chastity, affirming, that shee had absolutely resolved with her selfe, that never any other should enjoy her, but her intended husband; wherein her women did much commend her, promising to preserve their reputation, according as she had commanded.

Day by day were the torments of *Bajazeth* wonderfully augmented, yet still his kinde offers scornefully refused, and he as farre off from compassing his desires, as when hee first began to moove the matter: wherefore, perceiving that all faire courses served to no effect, hee resolved to compasse his purpose by craft and subtilty, reserving rigorous extremity for his finall conclusion. And having once observed, that wine was very pleasing to the Lady, she being never used to drinke any at all, because (by her Countries law) it was forbidden her, and no meane store having beene lately brought to *Bajazeth* in a Barke of *Geneway*: hee resolved to surprize her by meanes thereof, as a chiefe Minister of *Venus*, to heate the coolest blood. And seeming now in his outward behaviour, as if he had given over his amorous pursuite, and which she strove by all her best endeavours to withstand: one night, after a very majestick and solemne manner, he prepared a delicate and sumptuous supper, whereto the Lady was invited: and hee had given order, that hee who attended on her Cup, should serve her with many wines compounded and mingled together, which hee accordingly performed, as being cunning enough in such occasions.

*Alathiella*, mistrusting no such trecherie intended against her, and liking the wines pleasing taste extraordinarily; dranke more then stode with with her precedent modest resolution, and forgetting all her passed adversities, became very frolick and merry: so that seeing some women daunce after the manner observed therein *Majorica*, she also fell to dauncing, according to the *Alexandrian* custome. Which when *Bajazeth* beheld, he imagined the victory to be more then halfe wone, and his hearts desire very neere the obtaining: plying her still with wine upon wine, and continuing this revelling the most part of the night. At the length, the invited guests being all gone, the Lady retired then to her chamber, attended on by none but *Bajazeth* himselfe, and as familiarly, as if hee had beene one of her women, shee no way contradicting his bold intrusion, so faire had wine over-gone her sences, and prevailed against all modest bashfulnesse. These wanton embracings, strange to her that had never tasted them before, yet pleasing beyond measure, by reason of his trecherous advantage: afterward drew on many more of the like



carousing meetings, without so much as a thought of her passed miseries, or those more honourable and chaste respects, that ever ought to attend on Ladies.

Now, Fortune envying these their stolne pleasures, and that she, being the purposed wife of a potent King, should thus become the wanton friend of a much meaner man, whose onely glory was her shame: altered the course of their too common pastimes, by preparing a farre greater infelicity for them. This *Bajazeth* had a Brother, aged about five and twenty yeares, of most compleate person, in the very beauty of his time, and fresh as the sweetest smelling Rose, he being named *Amurath*. After he had once seene this Lady (whose faire feature pleased him beyond all womens else) she seemed in his suddaine apprehension, both by her outward behaviour and civill apparance, highly to deserve his very best opinion, for she was not meanely entred into his favour. Now he found nothing to his hinderance, in obtayning the height of his hearts desire, but onely the strict custody and guard, wherein his brother *Bajazeth* kept her: which raised a cruell conceit in his minde, whereon followed (not long after) as cruell an effect.

It came to passe, that at the same time, in the Port of the Citie, called *Caffa*, there lay then a Ship laden with Merchandize, being bound thence for *Smirna*, of which Ship two *Geneway* Merchants (being brethren) were the Patrones and owners, who had given direction for hoysing the sayles, to depart thence when the winde should serve. With these two *Genewayes* *Amurath* had covenanted, for himselfe to goe aboard the Ship the night ensuing, and the Lady in his company. When night was come, having resolved with himselfe what was to be done: in a disguised habite hee went to the house of *Bajazeth*, who stood not any way doubtfull of him, and with certaine of his most faithfull confederates (whom he had sworne to the intended action) they hid themselves closely in the house. After some part of the night was over-past, hee knowing the severall lodgings both of *Bajazeth* and *Alathiella*: slew his brother soundly sleeping, and seizing on the Lady, whom hee found awake and weeping, threatned to kill her also, if shee made any noyse. So, being well furnished, with the greater part of costly Jewels belonging to *Bajazeth*, unheard or undescried by anybody, they went presently to the Port, and there, without any further delay, *Amurath* and the Lady were received into the Ship, but his companions returned backe againe; when the Mariners, having their sayles ready set, and the winde aptly fitting for them, launched forth merrily into the maine.

You may well imagine, that the Lady was extraordinarily afflicted with grieffe for her first misfortune, and now this second chancing so suddainly, must needes offend her in greater manner: but *Amurath* did so kindly comfort her, with milde, modest, and manly perswasions; that all remembrance of *Bajazeth* was quickly forgotten, and shee became converted to lovely demeanour, even when Fortune prepared a fresh misery for her, as not satisfied with those whereof shee had tasted already. The Lady being enriched with unequalled beauty (as wee have often related before) her behaviour also in such exquisite and commendable kinde expressed: the two brethren, owners of the Ship, became so deeply enamoured of her, that forgetting all their more serious affaires, they studied by all possible meanes, to be pleasing and gracious in her eye, yet with such a carefull carriage, that *Amurath* should neither see or suspect it.

When the brethren had imparted their loves extremity each to the other, and plainly perceived, that though they were equally in their fiery torments, yet their desires were utterly contrary: they began severally to consider, that gaine gotten by Merchandize, admitted an equall and honest division, but this purchase was of a different quality, pleading the title of a sole possession, without any partner or intruder. Fearefull and jealous were they both, least either should ayme at the others intention, yet willing enough to shake hands, in ridding *Amurath* out of the way, who onely was the hinderer of their hopes. Whereupon they concluded together, that on a day, when the Ship sayled on very swiftly, and *Amurath* was sitting upon the deck, studiously observing, how the billowes combatted each with other, and not suspecting any such treason in them towards him: stealing softly behinde him, suddainly they threw him into the Sea, the Ship fleeting on above halfe a leagues distance, before any perceived his fall into the Sea.

When the Lady heard thereof, and saw no likely meanes of recovering him againe, she fell to her wonted teares and lamentations: but the two Lovers came quickly to comfort her, using kinde words and pithie perswasions (albeit shee understood them not, or at the most very little) to appease the violence of her passions; and, to speake uprightly, shee did not so much bemoane the loss of *Amurath*, as the multiplying of her owne misfortunes, still one succeeding in the necke of another. After divers long and well delivered Orations, as also very faire and courteous behaviour, they had indifferently pacified her complaynings: they began to discourse and commune with themselves, which of them had most right and title to *Alathiella*, and (consequently) ought to enjoy her. Now that *Amurath* was gone, each pleaded his priviledge to be as good as the others, both in the Ship, goods, and all advantages else whatsoever happening: which the elder brother absolutely denied, alleadging first his propriety of birth, a reason sufficient, whereby his younger ought to give him place; likewise his right and interest both in ship and goods, to be more then the others, as being heire to his Father, and therefore in justice to be highest preferred. Last of all, that his strength onely threw *Amurath* into the Sea, and therefore gave him the full possession of his prize, no right at all remaining to his brother.

From temperate and calme speeches, they fell to frownes and ruder language, which heated their blood in such violent manner, that forgetting brotherly affection, and all respect of Parents or friends, they drew forth their Poniards, stabbing each other so often and desperately, that before any in the shippe had the power or meanes to part them, both of them being very dangerously wounded, the younger brother fell downe dead, the elder being in little better case, by receiving so many perilous hurts, remained (neverthesse) living. This unhappy accident displeased the Lady very highly, seeing her selfe thus left alone, without the help or counsell of any body, and

fearing greatly, least the anger of the two Brethrens Parents and Friends, should now be laide to her charge, and thereon follow severity of punishment. But the earnest entreaties of the wounded survivor, and their arrivall at *Smirna* soone after, delivered him from the danger of death, gave some ease to her sorrow, and there with him shee went on shore.

Remaining there with him in a common Inne, while he continued in the Chirurgians cure, the fame of her singular and much admired beauty was soone spread abroad throughout all the City; and amongst the rest, to the hearing of the Prince of *Ionia*, who lately before (on very urgent occasions) was come to *Smirna*. This rare rumour, made him desirous to see her, and after he had seene her, shee seemed farre fairer in his eye, then common report had noysed her to be, and suddenly grew so enamored of her, that shee was the onely Idea of his best desires. Afterward, understanding in what manner shee was brought thither, he devised how to make her his owne; practising all possible meanes to accomplish it: which when the wounded brothers Parents heard of, they not onely made tender of their willingnesse therein, but also immediately sent her to him: a matter most highly pleasing to the Prince, and likewise to the Lady her selfe; because shee thought now to be freed from no meane perill, which (otherwise) the wounded Merchants friends might have inflicted on her.

The Prince perceiving, that beside her matchlesse beauty, shee had the true character of royall behaviour; greeved the more, that he could not be further informed of what Countrey shee was. His opinion being so stedfastly grounded, that (lesse then Noble) shee could not be, was a motive to set a keener edge on his affection towards her, yet not to enjoy her as in honourable and loving complement onely, but as his espoused Lady and Wife. Which appearing to her by apparant demonstrations, though entercourse of speech wanted to confirme it; remembrance of her so many sad disasters, and being now in a most noble and respected condition, her comfort enlarged it selfe with a settled hope, her feares grew free from any more molestations, and her beauties became the onely theame and argument of private and publike conference in all *Natolia*, that (welneere) there was no other discourse, in any Assembly whatsoever.

Hereupon the Duke of *Athens*, being young, goodly, and valiant of person, as also a neere Kinsman to the Prince, had a desire to see her; and under colour of visiting his noble Kinsman, (as oftentimes before he had done) attended with an honourable traine, to *Smirna* he came, being there most royally welcomed, and bounteously feasted. Within some few dayes of his there being, conference passed betweene them, concerning the rare beauty of the Lady; the Duke questioning the Prince, whether shee was of such wonder, as fame had acquainted the World withall? Whereto the Prince replied; Much more (noble Kinsman) then can be spoken of, as your owne eyes shall witnesse, without crediting any words of mine. The Prince solliciting the Duke thereto very earnestly, they both went together to see her; and shee having before heard of their comming, adorned her selfe the more majestically, entertaining them with ceremonious demeanor (after her Countries custome) which gave most gracious and unspeakable acceptation.

At the Princes affable motion, shee sate downe betweene them, their delight being beyond expression, to behold her, but abridged of much more felicity, because they understood not any part of her language: so that they could have no other conference, but by lookes and outward signes onely; and the more they beheld her, the more they marvelled at her rare perfections, especially the Duke, who hardly credited that shee was a mortall creature. Thus not perceiving, what deepe carowes of amorous poyson, his eyes dranke downe by the meere sight of her, yet thinking thereby onely to be satisfied; he lost both himselfe and his best sences, growing in love (beyond all measure) with her. When the Prince and he were parted from her, and hee was at his owne private amorous meditations in his Chamber; he reputed the Prince far happier then any man else whatsoever, by the enjoying of such a peerelesse beauty.

After many intricate and distracted cogitations, which molested his braines incessantly, regarding more his loves wanton heate, then reason, kindred, and honourable hospitality; he resolutely determined (whatsoever ensued thereupon) to bereave the Prince of his faire felicity, that none but himselfe might possesse such a treasure, which he esteemed to be the height of all happinesse. His courage being conformable to his bad intent, with all hast it must be put in execution; so that equity, justice, and honesty, being quite abandoned, nothing but subtile stratagems were now his meditations. On a day, according to a fore compacted treachery, which he had ordered with a Gentleman of the Princes Chamber, who was named *Churiacy*; he prepared his horses to be in readinesse, and dispatched all his affaires else for a sudden departure. The night following, he was secretly conveyed by the said *Churiacy*, and a friend of his with him (being both armed) into the Princes Chamber, where he (while the Lady was soundly sleeping) stood at a gazing window towards the Sea, naked in his shirt, to take the coole ayre, because the season was exceeding hot. Having formerly enstructed his friend what was to be done, verie softly they stept to the Prince, and running their weapons quite thorow his body, immediately they threw him forth of the window.

Here you are to observe, that the Pallace was seated on the Sea shore, and very high, and the window wheratt the Prince then stood looking forth, was directly over divers houses, which the long continuance of time, and incessant beating on by the surges of the Sea, had so defaced and ruined them, as sildome they were visited by any person; whereof the Duke having knowledge before, was the easier perswaded, that the falling of the Princes body in so vaste a place, could neither be heard, or descried by any. The Duke and his companion having thus executed what they came for, proceeded yet in their cunning a little further; casting a strangling coard about the necke of *Churiacy*, seeming as if they hugged and embraced him: but drew it with so maine strength, that he never spake one word after, and so threw him downe after the Prince.

This done, and plainly perceiving that they were not heard or seene, either by the Lady, or any

other: the Duke tooke a light in his hand, going on to the bed, where the Lady lay most sweetly sleeping; whom the more he beheld, the more he admired and commended: but if in her garments shee appeared so pleasing, what did shee now in a bed of such state and Majesty? Being no way daunted by his so late committed sinne, but swimming rather in surfet of joy, his hands all bloody, and his soule much more uglye; he laide him downe on the bed by her, bestowing infinite kisses and embraces on her, she supposing him to be the Prince all this while, nor opening her eyes to be otherwise resolved. But this was not the delight he aimed at, neither did he thinke it safe for him, to delay time with any longer tarrying there: wherefore having his agents at hand fit and convenient for the purpose, they surprized her in such sort, that she could not make any noise or outcry, and carrying her thorough the same false posterne, whereat themselves had entred, laying her in a Princely litter; away they went with all possible speede, not tarrying in any place, untill they were arrived neere *Athens*. But thither hee would not bring her, because himselfe was a married man, but rather to a goodly Castle of his owne, not distant farre off from the City; where he caused her to be kept very secretly (to her no little greefe and sorrow) yet attended on and served in most honourable manner.

The Gentlemen usually attending on the Prince, having waited all the next morning till noone, in expectation of his rising, and hearing no stirring in the Chamber: did thrust at the doore, which was but onely closed together, & finding no body there, they presently imagined, that he was privately gone to some other place, where (with the Lady, whom he so deere affected) hee might remaine some few dayes for his more contentment, and so they relied verily perswaded. Within some few dayes following, while no other doubt came in question, the Princes Foole, entering by chance among the ruined houses, where lay the dead bodies of the Prince and *Churiacy*: tooke hold of the corde about *Churiacyes* necke, and so went along dragging it after him. The bodye being knowne to many, with no meane mervaille, how hee should bee murdered in so vile manner: by giftes and faire perswasions they wonne him, to bring them to the place where hee found it. And there (to the no little greefe of all the Cittie) they found the Princes body also, which they caused to bee interred with all the most majesticke pomp that might bee.

Upon further inquisition, who should commit so horrid a deed, perceyving likewise, that the Duke of *Athens* was not to be found, but was closely gone: they judged (according to the truth) that he had his hand in this bloody businesse, and had carried away the Lady with him. Immediately, they elected the Princes brother to bee their Lord and Sovereigne, inciting him to revenge so horrid a wrong, and promising to assist him with their utmost power. The new chosen Prince being assured afterward, by other more apparant and remarkeable proofes, that his people informed him with nothing but truth: sodainly, and according as they had concluded, with the helpe of neighbours, kindred, and friends, collected from divers places; he mustred a goodly and powerful army, marching on towards *Athens*, to make war against the Duke.

No sooner heard he of this warlike preparation made against him, but he likewise levied forces for his owne defence, and to his succour came many great States: among whom, the Emperour of *Constantinople* sent his Sonne *Constantine*, attended on by his Nephew *Emanuel*, with troopes of faire and towardly force, who were most honourably welcommed and entertained by the Duke, but much more by the Dutchesse, because she was their sister in law.

Military provision thus proceeding on daily more and more, the Dutches making choise of a fit and convenient houre, took these two Princes with her to a with-drawing Chamber; and there in flouds of teares flowing from her eyes, wringing her hands, and sighing incessantly, shee recounted the whole History, occasion of the warre, and how dishonourably the Duke had dealt with her about this strange woman, whom he purposed to keepe in despite of her, as thinking that she knew nothing thereof, and complaining very earnestly unto them, entreated that for the Dukes honour, and her comfort, they would give their best assistance in this case.

The two young Lords knew all this matter, before shee thus reported it to them; and therefore, without staying to listen her any longer, but comforting her so wel as they could, with promise of their best employed paines: being informed by her, in what place the Lady was so closely kept, they tooke their leave, and parted from her. Often they had heard the Lady much commended, and her incomparable beauty highly extolled, yea, even by the Duke himselfe; which made them the more desirous to see her: wherefore earnestly they solicited him, to let them have a sight of her, and he (forgetting what happened to the Prince, by shewing her so unadvisedly to him) made them promise to grant their request. Causing a magnificent dinner to be prepared, & in a goodly garden, at the Castle where the Lady was kept: on the morrow morning, attended on by a small train, away they rode to dine with her.

*Constantine* being seated at the Table, he began (as one confounded with admiration) to observe her judiciously, affirming secretly to his soule that he had never seene so compleat a woman before; and allowing it for justice, that the Duke, or any other whosoever, if (to enjoy so rare a beauty) they had committed treason, or any mischief else beside, yet in reason they ought to be held excused. Nor did he bestow so many lookes upon her, but his prayes infinitely surpassed them, as thinking that he could not sufficiently commend her, following the Duke step by step in affection: for being now growne amorous of her, and remembrance of the intended warre utterly abandoned; no other thoughts could come neerer him, but how to bereave the Duke of her, yet concealing his love, and not imparting it to any one.

While his fancies were thus amorously set on fire, the time came, that they must make head against the Prince, who already was marching within the Dukes Dominions: wherefore the Duke *Constantine* and all the rest, according to a counsell held among them, went to defend certaine of the frontiers, to the end that the Prince might passe no further. Remaining there divers dayes together, *Constantine*, who could thinke on nothing else, but the beautifull Lady, considered with

himselfe, that while the Duke was now so far off from her, it was an easie matter to compass his intent: hereupon, the better to colour his present returne to *Athens*, he seemed to be surprized with a sudden extreame sicknesse, in regard whereof (by the Dukes free lisenche, and leaving all his power to his Cousen *Emanuel*) forthwith he journeyed backe to *Athens*. After some conference had with his sister, concerning her dishonourable wrongs endured at his hands only by the Lady: he solemnly protested, that if shee were so pleased, he would aide her powerfully in the matter, by taking her from the place where she was, and never more afterward, to be seene in that Countrey any more.

The Dutchesse being faithfully perswaded, that he would doe this onely for her sake, and not in any affection he bare to the Lady, made answer that it highly pleased her; alwayes provided, that it might be performed in such sort, as the Duke her Husband should never understand, that ever shee gave any consent thereto, which *Constantine* sware unto her by many deep oathes, whereby she referred all to his owne disposition. *Constantine* hereupon secretly prepared in readinesse a subtile Barke, sending it (in an evening) neere to the garden where the Lady resorted; having first informed the people which were in it, fully in the businesse that was to be done. Afterward, accompanied with some other of his attendants, hee went to the Palace to the Lady, where he was gladly entertained, not only by such as waited on her, but also by the Lady her selfe.

Leading her along by the arme towards the Garden, attended on by two of her servants, and two of his owne, seeming as if he was sent from the Duke, to conferre with her: they walked alone to a Port opening on the Sea, which standing ready open, upon a signe given by him to one of his complices, the Barke was brought close to the shore, and the Lady being suddenly seized on, was immediately conveyed into it; and he returning backe to her people, with his sword drawne in his hand, saide: Let no man stirre, or speake a word, except he be willing to loose his life: for I intend not to rob the Duke of his faire friend, but to expel the shame and dishonour which he hath offered to my Sister, no one being so hardy as to returne him any answer. Aboard went *Constantine* with his consorts, and sitting neer to the Lady, who wrung her hands, and wept bitterly; he commanded the Marriners to launch forth, flying away on the wings of the wind, till about the breake of day following, they arrived at *Melasso*. There they tooke landing, and reposed on shore for some few dayes, *Constantine* labouring to comfort the Lady, even as if shee had been his owne Sister, shee having good cause to curse her infortunate beauty.

Going aboard the Barke againe, within few dayes they came to *Setalia*, and there fearing the reprehension of his Father, and least the Ladie should be taken from him; it pleased *Constantine* to make his stay, as in a place of no meane security. And (as before) after much kinde behaviour used towards the Lady, without any meanes in her selfe to redresse the least of all these great extremities: shee became more milde and affable, for discontentment did not a jot quaille her.

While occurrences passed on in this manner, it fortun'd, that *Osbech* the King of *Turky* (who was in continuall war with the Emperour) came by accident to *Laiazzo*: and hearing there how lasciviously *Constantine* spent his time in *Setalia*, with a Lady which he had stolne, being but weake and slenderly guarded; in the night with certaine well provided ships, his men & he entred the Towne, & surprized many people in their beds, before they knew of their enemies comming, killing such as stood upon their defence against them, (among whom was *Constantine*) and burning the whole Towne, brought their booty and prisoners aboard their ships, wherewith they returned backe to *Laiazzo*. Being thus come to *Laiazzo*, *Osbech*, who was a brave and gallant young man, upon a review of the pillage; found the faire Lady, whom hee knew to be the beloved of *Constantine*, because shee was found lying on his bed. Without any further delay, he made choyse of her to be his Wife; causing his nuptials to be honourably sollemnized, and many moneths hee lived there in great joy with her.

But before occasions grew to this effect, the Emperour made a confederacy with *Bassano*, King of *Cappadocia*, that hee should descend with his forces; one way upon *Osbech*, and hee would assault him with his power on the other. But he could not so conveniently bring this to passe, because the Emperour would not yeeld to *Bassano*, in any unreasonable matter he demanded. Neverthesse, when he understood what had happened to his Son (for whom his grieffe was beyond all measure) he granted the King of *Cappadociaes* request, solliciting him with all instancy, to be the more speedy in assailing *Osbech*. It was not long, before hee heard of this conjuration made against him; and therefore speedily mustered up all his forces, ere he would be encompassed by two such potent Kings, and marched on to meete the King of *Cappadocia*, leaving his Lady and Wife, (for her safety) at *Laiazzo*, in the custodie of a true and loyall servant of his.

Within a short while after, he drew neere the Campe belonging to the King of *Cappadocia*, where boldly he gave him battell; chancing therein to be slaine, his Army broken and discomfited, by meanes whereof the King of *Cappadocia* remaining Conquerour, marched on towards *Laiazzo*, every one yeelding him obeysance all the way as he went. In the meane space, the servant to *Osbech*, who was named *Antiochus*, and with whom the faire Lady was left in guard; although hee was aged, yet seeing shee was so extraordinarily beautifull, he fell in love with her, forgetting the sollemne vowes he had made to his Master. One happinesse hee had in this case to helpe him, namely, that he understood and could speake her language, a matter of no meane comfort to her; who constrainedly had lived divers yeeres together, in the state of a deafe or dumbe woman, because every where else they understood her not, nor shee them, but by shewes and signes.

This benefit of familiar conference, beganne to embolden his hopes, elevate his courage, and make him seeme more youthfull in his owne opinion, then any ability of body could speake unto him, or promise him in the possession of her, who was so farre beyond him, and so unequall to be

enjoyed by him; yet to advance his hopes a great deale higher, newes came, that *Osbech* was vanquished and slaine, and that *Bassano* made everie where havocke of all: whereon they concluded together, not to tarrie there any longer, but storing themselves with the goods of *Osbech*, secretly they departed thence to *Rhodes*. Being seated there in some indifferent abiding, it came to passe, that *Antiochus* fell into a deadly sicknesse, to whom came a *Cyprian* Merchant, one much esteemed by him, as being an intimate friend and kinde acquaintance, and in whom hee reposed no small confidence. Feeling his sicknesse to encrease more and more upon him dayly, hee determined, not onely to leave such wealth as hee had to this Merchant, but the faire Lady likewise; and calling them both to his beds side, he brake his minde unto them in this manner.

Deare Love, and my most worthily respected friend, I perceive plainly and infallibly, that I am drawing neere unto my end, which much discontenteth me; because my hope was, to have lived longer in this world, for the enjoying of your kinde and most esteemed company. Yet one thing maketh my death very pleasing and welcome to me, namely, that lying thus in my bed of latest comfort in this life: I shall expire and finish my course, in the armes of those two persons, whom I most affected in all this world, as you my ever dearest friend, and you faire Lady, whom (since the very first sight of you) I loved and honoured in my soule. Irksome and very grievous it is to me, that (if I dye) I shall leave you here a stranger, without the counsaile and helpe of any body: and yet much more offensive would it become, if I had not such a friend as you here present, who I am faithfully perswaded, will have the like care and respect of her (even for my sake) as of myselfe, if time had allotted my longer tarying here. And therefore (worthy friend) most earnestly I desire you, that if I dye, all mine affaires and she may remaine to your trusty care, as being (by my selfe) absolutely commended to your providence, and so to dispose both of the one and other, as may best agree with the comfort of my soule. As for you (choise beauty) I humbly entreate, that after my death you would not forget mee, to the end, I may make my vaunt in another world, that I was affected here, by the onely fairest Lady that ever Nature framed. If of these two things you will give me assurance; I shall depart from you with no meane comfort.

The friendly Merchant, and likewise the Lady, hearing these words, wept both bitterly, and after hee had given over speaking: kindly they comforted him, with promise and solemne vowes, that if hee dyed, all should be performed which he had requested. Within a short while after, he departed out of this life, and they gave him very honourable buriall, according to that Country custome. Which being done, the Merchant dispatching all his affaires at *Rhodes*, was desirous to returne home to *Cyprus*, in a Carrack of the Catelans then there being: moving the Lady in the matter, to understand how shee stood enclined, because urgent occasions called him thence to *Cyprus*. The Lady made answer, that she was willing to passe thither with him, hoping for the love hee bare to deceased *Antiochus*, that he would respect her as his Sister. The Merchant was willing to give her any contentment, but yet resolved her, that under the title of being his Sister, it would be no warrant of security to them both; wherefore hee rather advised her, to stile him as her husband, and hee would terme her his wife, and so hee should be sure to defend her from all injuries whatsoever.

Being aboard the Carrack, they had a Cabine and small bed conveniently allowed them, where they slept together, that they might the better be reputed as man and wife; for, to passe otherwise, would have beene very dangerous to them both. And questionlesse, their faithfull promise made at *Rhodes* to *Antiochus*, sicknesse on the Sea, and mutuall respect they had of each others credit, was a constant restraint to all wanton desires, and a motive rather to incite chastity, then otherwise, and so (I hope) you are perswaded of them. But howsoever, the windes blewe merrily, the Carrack sayled lustily, and (by this time) they are arrived at *Baffa*, where the *Cyprian* Merchant dwelt, and where shee continued a long while with him, no one knowing otherwise, but that shee was his wife indeede.

Now it fortun'd, that there arriv'd also at the same *Baffa* (about some especiall occasions of his) a Gentleman, whose name was *Antigonus*, well stept into yeares, and better stored with wisdom than wealth: because by meddling in many matters, while hee followed the service of the King of *Cyprus*, Fortune had beene very adverse to him. This ancient Gentleman, passing (on a day) by the house where the Lady lay, and the Merchant being gone about his businesse into *Armenia*: hee chanced to see the Lady at a window of the house, and because shee was very beautifull, he observed her the more advisedly, recollecting his sences together, that doubtlesse he had seene her before, but in what place hee could not remember. The Lady her selfe likewise, who had so long time beene Fortunes tennis ball, and the terme of her many miseries drawing now neere ending: began to conceive (upon the very first sight of *Antigonus*) that she had formerly seene him in *Alexandria*, serving her Father in place of great degree. Hereupon, a suddaine hope perswaded her, that by the advice and furtherance of this Gentleman, she should recover her wonted Royall condition: and opportunity now aptly fitting her, by the absence of her pretended Merchant husband, she sent for him, requesting to have a few words with him.

When he was come into the house, she bashfully demanded of him, if he was not named *Antigonus* of *Famagosta*, because shee knew one (like him) so called? Hee answered, that he was so named, saying moreover: Madame, me thinkes that I should know you, but I cannot remember where I have seene you, wherefore I would entreate (if it might stand with your good liking) that my memory might be quickned with better knowledge of you. The Lady perceiving him to be the man indeede, weeping incessantly, she threw her armes about his necke, and soone after asked *Antigonus* (who stood as one confounded with mervaille) if hee had never seene her in *Alexandria*? Upon these words, *Antigonus* knew her immediatly to be *Alathiella*, daughter to the great Soldane, who was supposed (long since) to be drowned in the Sea: and offering to doe her

such reverence as became him, she would not permit him, but desired, that he would be assistant to her, and willed him also to sit downe a while by her.

A goodly Chaire being brought him, in very humble manner he demanded of her, what had become of her in so long a time: because it was verily beleev'd throughout all Egypt, that shee was drowned in the Sea. I would it had bin so, answered the Lady, rather then to leade such a life as I have done; and I thinke my Father himselfe would wish it so, if ever he should come to the knowledge thereof. With these words the teares rained downe her faire cheekes: wherefore *Antigonus* thus spake unto her. Madame, discomfort not your selfe before you have occasion, but (if you be so pleased) relate your passed accidents to mee, and what the course of your life hath bene: perhaps, I shall give you such friendly advice as may stand you in sted, and no way be injurious to you.

Fetching a sigh, even as if her heart would have split in sunder, thus she replied. Ah *Antigonus*, me thinkes when I looke on thee, I seeme to behold my royall Father, and therefore mooved with the like religious zeale and charitable love, as (in duty) I owe unto him: I will make knowne to thee, what I rather ought to conceale, and hide from any person living. I know thee to bee honourable, discrete, and truely wise, though I am a fraile, simple, and weake woman, therefore I dare discover to thee, rather then any other that I know, by what straunge and unexpected misfortunes, I have lived so long obscurely in the world. And if in thy great and grave judgement (after the hearing of my many miseries) thou canst any way restore me to my former estate, I pray thee do it: but if thou perceive it impossible to bee done, as earnestly likewise I entreate thee, never to reveale to any living person, that either thou hast seene me, or heard any speech of me. After these words, the teares still streaming from her faire eyes, shee recounted the whole passage of her rare mishaps, even from her shipwracke in the Sea of *Majorica*, until that very instant houre; speaking them in such harsh manner as they hapned, and not sparing any jot of them.

*Antigonus* being mooved to much compassion, declared how hee pitied her by his teares, and having bene silent an indifferent while, as considering in this case, what was best to be done, thus he began. Madam, seeing you have past through such a multitude of misfortunes, yet undiscovered, what and who you are: I will render you as blamelesse to your Father, and estate you as fairely in his love, as at the houre when you parted from him, and afterward make you wife to the King of *Cholcos*. Shee demanding of him, by what meanes possibly this could be accomplished: breefely he made it knowne to her, how, and in what manner hee would performe it.

To cut off further tedious circumstances, forthwith he returned to *Famagosta*, and going before the King of the country, thus he spake to him. Sir, you may (if so you will be pleased) in an instant, do me an exceeding honour, who have bene impoverished by your service, and also a deed of great renowne to your selfe, without any much matter of expence and cost. The King demanding how? *Antigonus* thus answered. The fayre daughter of the Soldane, so generally reported to be drowned, is arrived at *Baffa*, and to preserve her honour from blemishing, hath suffered many crosses and calamities: being at this instant in very poore estate, yet desirous to re-visite her father. If you please to send her home under my conduct, it will be great honour to you, and no meane benefite to mee; which kindnesse will for ever be thankfully remembered by the Soldan.

The King in royall magnificence, replied sodainly, that he was highly pleased with these good tydings; & having sent honourably for her from *Baffa*, with great pompe she was conducted to *Famagosta*, and there most graciously welcommed both by the King and Queene, with solemne triumphes, bankets, and revelling, performed in most Majesticke manner. Being questioned by the King and Queene, concerning so large a time of strange misfortunes: according as *Antigonus* had formerly enstructed her, so did she shape the forme of her answers, and satisfied (with honour) all their demands. So, within few dayes after, upon her earnest & instant request, with an honourable traine of Lords and Ladies, shee was sent thence, and conducted all the way by *Antigonus*, untill she came unto the Soldans Court.

After some few dayes of her reposing there, the Soldan was desirous to understand, how she could possibly live so long, in any Kingdome or Province whatsoever, and yet no knowledge to bee taken of her? The Lady, who perfectly retained by heart, and had all her lessons at her fingers ends, by the warie instructions which *Antigonus* had given her, answered her father in this manner. Sir, about the twentieth day after my departure from you, a verie terrible and dreadfull tempest over-tooke us, so that in dead time of the night, our ship being split in sunder upon the sands, neere to a place called *Varna*; what became of all the men that were aboard, I neither know, or ever heard of. Onely I remember, then when death appeared, and I being recovered from death to life, certaine pezants of the countrey, comming to get what they could finde in the ship so wrackt, I was first (with two of my women) brought and set safely on the shore.

No sooner were we there, but certaine rude shagge-haired villaines set upon us, carrying away from me both my women, then haling me along by the haire of my head, neither teares or intercessions could draw any pittie from them. As thus they dragd me into a spacious Woodd, foure horsemen on a sodaine came riding by, who seeing how dishonourably the villaines used me, rescued me from them, and forced them to flight. But the foure horsemen, seeming (in my judgement) to bee persons of power and authority, letting them go, came to mee, urging sundry questions to me, which neither I understood, or they mine answers. After many deliberations held among themselves, setting me upon one of their horses, they brought me to a Monastery of religious women, according to the custome of their law: and there, whatsoever they did or sayde,

I know not, but I was most benignly welcommed thither, and honoured of them extraordinarily, where (with them in devotion) I dedicated my selfe to the Goddess of chastity, who is highly revered and regarded among the women of that Countrey, and to her religious service, they are wholly addicted.

After I had continued some time among them, and learned a little of their language; they asked me, of whence, and what I was. Reason gave me so much understanding, to be fearfull of telling them the truth, for feare of expulsion from among them, as an enemy to their Law and Religion: wherefore I answered (according as necessity urged) that I was daughter to a Gentleman of *Cyprus*, who sent me to be married in *Candia*; but our fortunes (meaning such as had the charge of mee) fell out quite contrary to our expectation, by losses, Shipwracke, and other mischances; adding many matters more beside, onely in regard of feare, & yeelding obediently to observe their customes.

At length, she that was in cheefest preheminece among these Women (whom they termed by the name of their Lady Abbesse) demaunded of me, whither I was willing to abide in that condition of life, or to returne home againe into *Cyprus*. I answerd, that I desired nothing more. But she, being very carefull of mine honour, would never repose confidence in any that came for *Cyprus*; till two honest Gentlemen of *France*, who hapned thither about two moneths since, accompanied with their wives, one of them being a neere kinswoman to the Lady Abbesse. And she well knowing, that they travelled in pilgrimage to *Jerusalem*, to visit the holy Sepulcher, where (as they beleeve) that he whom they held for their God was buried, after the Jewes had put him to death: recommended me to their loving trust, with especial charge, for delivering me to my Father in *Cyprus*. What honourable love and respect I found in the company of those Gentlemen and their wives, during our voyage backe to *Cyprus*: the history would be over-tedious in reporting, neither is it much material to our purpose, because your demand is to another end.

Sayling on prosperously in our Ship, it was not long, before wee arrived at *Baffa*, where being landed, and not knowing any person, neither what I should say to the Gentlemen, who onely were carefull for delivering me to my Father, according as they were charged by the reverend Abbesse: it was the will of heaven doubtlesse (in pittie and compassion of my passed disasters) that I was no sooner come on shore at *Baffa*: but I should there haply meete with *Antigonus*, whome I called unto in our countrey Language, because I would not be understood by the Gentlemen nor their wives, requesting him to acknowledge me as his Daughter. Quickly he apprehended mine intention, accomplishing what I requested, and (according to his poore power) most bounteously feasted the Gentlemen and their wives, conducting me to the K. of *Cyprus*, who received me royally, and sent me home to you with so much honour, as I am no way able to relate. What else remaineth to be said, *Antigonus* who hath oft heard the whole story of my fortunes, at better leisure will report.

*Antigonus* then turning to the Soldan, said: My Lord, as shee hath often told me, and by relation both of the Gentlemen and their wives, she hath delivered nothing but truth. Onely shee hath forgotten somewhat worth the speaking, as thinking it not fit for her to utter, because (indeede) it is not so convenient for her. Namely, how much the Gentlemen and their wives (with whom she came) commended the rare honesty and integrity of life, as also the unspotted vertue, wherein she lived, among those chaste Religious women, as they constantly (both with teares and solemne protestations) avouched to me, when kindly they resigned their charge to mee. Of all which matters, and many more beside, if I should make discourse to your Excellencie; this whole day, the night ensuing, and the next dayes full extendure, are not sufficient to acquaint you withall. Let it suffice then, that I have said so much, as (both by the reports, and mine owne understanding) may give you faithfull assurance, to make your Royall vaunt; of having the fayrest, most vertuous, and honest Lady to your Daughter, of any King or Prince whatsoever.

The Soldane was joyfull beyond all measure, welcomming both him and the rest in most stately manner, oftentimes entreating the Gods very heartily, that he might live to requite them with equall recompence, who had so graciously honoured his daughter: but (above all the rest) the King of *Cyprus*, who sent her home so majestically. And having bestowne great gifts on *Antigonus*, within a few dayes after, hee gave him leave to returne to *Cyprus*: with thankfull favours to the King as well by Letters, as also by Ambassadors espresly sent, both from himselfe and his daughter.

When as this businesse was fully finished, the Soldane, desiring to accomplish what formerly was intended and begun, namely, that shee might be wife to the King of *Cholcos*: he gave him intelligence of all that had happened, writing moreover to him, that (if he were so pleased) hee would yet send her in Royall manner to him. The King of *Cholcos* was exceeding joyfull of these glad tydings, and dispatching a worthy trayne to fetch her, she was convayed thither very pompously, and she who had beene embraced by so many, was received by him as an honest virgine, living long time after with him in much joy and felicity. And therefore, it hath beene said as a common Proverbe: The mouth well kist comes not short of good fortune, but is still renewed like the Moone.

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***The Count D'Angiers being falsly accused, was banished out of France, & left his two children in England in divers places. Returning afterward (unknowne) thorow Scotland, hee found them advanced unto great dignity. Then, repaying in the habite of a Servitour, into the King of France his Armie, and his innocencie made publiquely***

*knowne; hee was reseated in his former honourable degree.*

## The eight Novell.

***Whereby all men may plainly understand, that loyalty faithfully kept to the Prince (what perils so ever doe ensue) doth yet neverthelesse renowne a man, and bring him to farre greater honour.***

The Ladies sighed very often, hearing the variety of wofull miseries happening to *Alathiella*: but who knoweth, what occasion moved them to those sighes? Perhaps there were some among them, who rather sighed they could not be so often married as she was, rather then for any other compassion they had of her disasters. But leaving that to their owne construction, they smiled merrily at the last speeches of *Pamphilus*, and the Queene perceiving the Novell to be ended: shee fixed her eye upon Madame *Eliza*, as signifying thereby, that she was next to succede in order, which shee joyfully embracing, spake as followeth. The field is very large and spacious, wherein all this day we have walked, and there is not any one here, so wearied with running the former races, but nimbly would adventure on as many more, so copious are the alterations of Fortune, in sad repetition of her wonderfull changes; and among the infinity of her various courses, I must make addition of another, which I trust will no way discontent you.

When the Romaine Empire was translated from the French to the Germaines, mighty dissentions grew between both the nations, insomuch that it drew a dismall and a lingring warre. In which respect, as well for the safety of his owne Kingdome, as to annoy and disturbe his enemies; the King of *France* and one of his sonnes, having congregated the forces of their owne dominions, as also of their friends and confederates, they resolved manfully to encounter their enemies. But before they would adventure on any rash proceeding; they held it as the chiefe part of pollicie and Royall providence, not to leave the State without a chiefe or Governour. And having had good experience of *Gualtier*, Counte *D'Angiers*, to be a wise, worthy, and most trusty Lord, singularly expert in militarie discipline, and faithfull in all affaires of the Kingdome (yet fitter for ease and pleasure, then laborious toyle and travaile:) hee was elected Lieutenant Governour in their sted, over the whole Kingdome of *France*, and then they went on in their enterprize.

Now began the Counte to execute the office committed to his trust, by orderly proceeding, and with great discretion, yet not entring into any businesse, without consent of the Queene and her faire daughter in law: who although they were left under his care and custodie, yet (notwithstanding) he honoured them as his superiours, and as the dignity of their quality required. Heere you are to observe, concerning Counte *Gualtier* himselfe, that he was a most compleat person, aged little above forty yeares; as affable and singularly conditioned, as any Noble man possibly could be, nor did those times afford a Gentleman, that equalled him in all respects. It fortun'd, that the King and his sonne being busie in the afore-named warre, the wife and Lady of Counte *Gualtier* died in the meane while, leaving him onely a sonne and a daughter, very young and of tender yeares, which made his owne home the lesse welcome to him, having lost his deare Love and second selfe.

Hereupon, hee resorted to the Court of the said Ladies the more frequently, often conferring with them, about the waighty affaires of the Kingdome: in which time of so serious interparlance, the Kings Sonnes wife, threw many affectionate regards upon him, convaying such conspiring passions to her heart (in regard of his person and vertues) that her love exceeded all capacity of government. Her desires out-stepping all compasse of modesty, or the dignity of her Princely condition; throwes off all regard of civill and sober thoughts, and guides her into a Labyrinth of wanton imaginations. For, she regards not now the eminencie of his high authority, his gravity of yeares, and those parts that are the true conducts to honour: but lookes upon her owne loose and lascivious appetite, her young, gallant, and over-ready yeelding nature, comparing them with his want of a wife, and likely hope (thereby) of her sooner prevailing; supposing, that nothing could be her hinderance, but onely bashfull shame-facednesse, which she rather chose utterly to forsake and set aside, then to faile of her hote enflamed affection, and therefore, shee would needes be the discoverer of her owne disgrace.

Upon a day, being alone by her selfe, and the time seeming suteable to her intention: shee sent for the Counte, under colour of some other important conference with him. The Counte *D'Angiers*, whose thoughts were quite contrary to hers: immediately went to her, where they both sitting downe together on a beds side in her Chamber, according as formerly shee had plotted her purpose; twice hee demaunded of her, upon what occasion she had thus sent for him. She sitting a long while silent, as if she had no answer to make him: pressed by the violence of her amorous passions, a vermillion tincture leaping up into her face, yet shame enforcing teares from her eyes, with words broken and halfe confused, at last she began to deliver her minde in this manner.

Honourable Lord, and my dearely respected friend, being so wise a man as you are, it is no difficult matter for you to know, what a fraile condition is imposed both on men and women; yet (for divers occasions) much more upon the one, then the other. Wherefore desertfully, in the censure of a just and upright Judge, a fault of divers conditions (in respect of the person) ought not to be censured with one and the same punishment. Beside, who will not say, that a man or woman of poore and meane estate, having no other helpe for maintainance, but labourious travaile of their bodies should worthily receive more sharpe reprehension, in yeelding to amorous desires, or such passions as are incited by love; then a wealthy Lady whose living relieth not on



her paines or cares, neither wanteth any thing that she can wish to have: I dare presume, that you your selfe will allow this to be equall and just. In which respect, I am of the minde, that the fore-named allegations, ought to serve as a sufficient excuse, yea, and to the advantage of her who is so possessed, if the passions of love should over-reach her: alwayes provided, that shee can pleade (in her owne defence) the choise of a wise and vertuous friend, answerable to her owne condition and quality, and no way to be taxed with a servile or vile election.

These two especiall observations, allowable in my judgement, and living now in me, seazing on my youthfull blood and yeares: have found no mean inducement to love, in regard of my husbands far distance from me, meddling in the rude uncivill actions of warre, when he should rather be at home in more sweet employment. You see Sir, that these Orators advance themselves here in your presence, to acquaint you with the extremity of my over-commanding agony: and if the same power hath dominion in you, which your discretion (questionlesse) cannot be voide of; then let me entreate such advise from you, as may rather helpe, then hinder my hopes. Beleeve it then for trueth Sir, that the long absence of my husband from me, the solitary condition wherein I am left, ill agreeing with the hot blood running in my veines, & the temper of my earnest desires: have so prevailed against my strongest resistances, that not onely so weake a woman as I am, but any man of much more potent might (living in ease and idlenesse as I doe) cannot withstand such continuall assaults, having no other helpe then flesh and blood.

Nor am I so ignorant, but publique knowledge of such an error in me, would be reputed a shrewd taxation of honesty: whereas (on the other side) secret carriage, and heedfull managing such amorous affaires, may passe for currant without any reproach. And let me tell you Noble Counte, that I repute Love highly favourable to mee, by guiding my judgement with such moderation, to make election of a wise, worthy, and honourable friend, fit to enjoy the grace of a farre greater Lady then I am, and the first letter of his name, is the Count *D'Angiers*. For if error have not misled mine eye, as in Love no Lady can be easily deceived: for person, perfections, and all parts most to be commended in a man, the whole Realme of *France* containeth not your equall. Observe beside, how forward Fortune sheweth her selfe to us both in this case, you to be destitute of a wife, as I am of an husband; for I count him as dead to me, when he denies me the duties belonging to a wife. Wherefore, in regard of the unfaigned affection I beare you, and compassion, which you ought to have of Royall Princesse, even almost sicke to death for your sake: I earnestly entreate you, not to denie me your loving society, but pittying my youth and fiery afflictions (never to be quenched but by your kindnesse) I may enjoy my hearts desire.

As shee uttered these words, the teares streamed abundantly downe her faire cheekes, preventing her of any further speech: so that dejecting her head into her bosome, overcome with the predominance of her passions; shee fell upon the Countes knee, whereas else shee had falne upon the ground. When hee, like a loyall and most honourable man, sharply reprehended her fonde and idle love, and when shee would have embraced him about the necke; hee repulsed her roughly from him, protesting upon his honourable reputation, that rather then hee would so wrong his Lord and Maister, he would endure a thousand deathes.

The Lady seeing her desire disappointed, and her fond expectation utterly frustrated: grewe instantly forgetfull of her intemperate love, and falling into extremity of rage, converted her former gentle speeches, into this harsh and ruder language. Villaine (quoth shee) shall the longing comforts of my life, be abridged by thy base and scornefull deniall? Shall my destruction bee wrought by thy currish unkindnesse, and all my hoped joyes be defeated in a moment? Know slave, that I did not so earnestly desire thy sweet embracements before, but now as deadly I hate and despise them, which either thy death or banishment shall dearely pay for. No sooner had shee thus spoken, but tearing her haire, and renting her garments in pieces, shee ranne about like a distracted woman, crying out aloud: Helpe, helpe, the Count *D'Angiers* will forcibly dishonour mee, the lustfull Count will violence mine honour.

*D'Angiers* seeing this, and fearing more the malice of the over-credulous Court, then either his owne conscience, or any dishonourable act by him committed, beleeving likewise, that her slanderous accusation would bee credited, above his true and spotlesse innocency: closely he conveyed himselfe out of the Court, making what hast hee could, home to his owne house, which being too weake for warranting his safety upon such pursuite as would be used against him, without any further advice or counsell, he seated his two children on horsebacke, himselfe also being but meanelly mounted, thus away thence hee went to *Calice*.

Upon the clamour and noise of the Lady, the Courtiers quickly flocked thither; and, as lies soone winne beleefe in hasty opinions, upon any silly or shallow surmise: so did her accusation passe for currant, and the Counts advancement being envied by many, made his honest carriage (in this case) the more suspected. In hast and madding fury, they ran to the Counts houses, to arrest his person, and carry him to prison: but when they could not finde him, they raced his goodly buildings downe to the ground, and used all shamefull violence to them. Now, as il newes sildome wants a speedy Messenger; so, in lesse space then you will imagine, the King and Dolphin heard thereof in the Camp, and were therewith so highly offended, that the Count had a sodaine and severe condemnation, all his progeny being sentenced with perpetuall exile, and promises of great and bountifull rewards, to such as could bring his body alive or dead.

Thus the innocent Count, by his over-hasty and sodaine flight, made himselfe guilty of this foule imputation: and arriving at *Callice* with his children, their poore and homely habites, hid them from being knowne, and thence they crossed over into England, staying no where untill hee came to London. Before he would enter into the City, he gave divers good advertisements to his children, but especially two precepts above all the rest. First, with patient soules to support the poore condition, whereto Fortune (without any offence in him or them) had thus dejected them.

Next, that they should have most heedfull care, at no time to disclose from whence they came, or whose children they were, because it extended to the perill of their lives. His Sonne, being named *Lewes*, and now about nine yeares old, his daughter called *Violenta*, and aged seaven yeares, did both observe their fathers direction, as afterward it did sufficiently appeare. And because they might live in the safer securitie, hee thought it for the best to change their names, calling his sonne *Perotto*, and his daughter *Gianetta*, for thus they might best escape unknowne.

Being entred into the Citty, and in the poore estate of beggers, they craved every bodies mercy and almes. It came to passe, that standing one morning at the Cathedrall Church-doore, a great Lady of England, being then wife to the Lord high Marshall, comming forth of the Church, espied the Count and his children there begging. Of him she demanded what Country-man he was? and whether those children were his owne, or no? The Count replyed, that he was borne in *Picardy*, and for an unhappy fact committed by his eldest sonne (a stripling of more hopefull expectation, then proved) hee was enforced, with those his two other children to forsake his country. The Lady being by nature very pittiful, looking advisedly on the yong Girle, beganne to grow in good liking of her; because (indeede) she was amiable, gentle, and beautifull, whereupon shee saide. Honest man, thy daughter hath a pleasing countenance, and (perhaps) her inward disposition may proove answerable to hir outward goods parts: if therefore thou canst bee content to leave her with me, I will give her entertainment, and upon her dutifull carriage and behaviour, if she live to such yeares as may require it, I will have her honestly bestowne in marriage. This motion was verie pleasing to the Count, who readily declared his willing consent thereto, and with the teares trickling downe his cheekes, in thankfull manner he delivered his prettie daughter to the Lady.

Shee being thus happily bestowne, hee minded to tarry no longer in *London*; but, in his wonted begging manner, travailing thorough the Country with his sonne *Perotto*, at length hee came into *Wales*: but not without much weary paine and travell, being never used before, to journey so far on foote. There dwelt another Lord, in office of Marshalship to the King of *England*, whose power extended over those partes; a man of very great authority, keeping a most noble and bountifull house, which they termed the *President of Wales his Court*; whereto the Count and his son oftentimes resorted, as finding there good releefe and comfort. On a day, one of the Presidents sons, accompanied with divers other Gentlemens children, were performing certaine youthfull sports & pastimes, as running, leaping, and such like, wherein *Perotto* presumed to make one among them, excelling all the rest in such commendable manner, as none of them came any thing nere him. Divers times the President had taken notice thereof, and was so well pleased with the Lads behaviour, that he enquired, of whence he was? Answer was made, that hee was a poore mans son, that every day came for an almes to his gate.

The President being desirous to make the boy his, the Count (whose dayly prayers were to the same purpose) frankly gave his son to the Nobleman: albeit naturall and fatherly affection, urged some unwillingnesse to part so with him; yet necessity and discretion, found it to bee for the benefit of them both. Being thus eased of care for his son and daughter, and they (though in different places) yet under good and woorthie government: the Count would continue no longer in *England*: but, as best he could procure the meanes, passed over into *Ireland*, and being arrived at a place called *Stanford*, became servant to an Earle of that Country, a Gentleman professing Armes, on whom he attended as a serving man, & lived a long while in that estate very painfully.

His daughter *Violenta*, clouded under the borrowed name of *Gianetta*, dwelling with the Lady at *London*, grew so in yeares, beauty, comelinesse of person, and was so gracefull in the favour of her Lord and Lady, yea, of every one in the house beside, that it was wonderfull to behold. Such as but observed her usuall carriage, and what modesty shined clearely in her eyes, reputed her well worthy of honourable preferment; in which regard, the Lady that had received her of her Father, not knowing of whence, or what shee was; but as himselfe had made report, intended to match her in honourable mariage, according as her vertues worthily deserved. But God, the just rewarder of all good endeavours, knowing her to be noble by birth, and (causelesse) to suffer for the sinnes of another; disposed otherwise of her, and that so worthy a Virgin might be no mate for a man of ill conditions, no doubt ordained what was to be done, according to his owne good pleasure.

The noble Lady, with whom poore *Gianetta* dwelt, had but one onely Sonne by her Husband, and he most deerely affected of them both, as well in regard hee was to be their heire, as also for his vertues and commendable qualities, wherein he excelled many young Gentlemen. Endued he was with heroycal valour, compleate in all perfections of person, and his mind every way answerable to his outward behaviour, exceeding *Gianetta* about sixe yeeres in age. Hee perceiving her to be a faire and comely Maiden, grew to affect her so entirely, that all things else he held contemptible, and nothing pleasing in his eye but shee. Now, in regard her parentage was reputed poore, hee kept his love concealed from his Parents, not daring to desire her in marriage: for loth hee was to loose their favour, by disclosing the vehemency of his afflictions, which proved a greater torment to him, then if it had beene openly knowne.

It came to passe, that love over-awed him in such sort, as he fell into a violent sicknesse, and score of Physicions were sent for, to save him from death, if possibly it might be. Their judgements observing the course of his sicknesse, yet not reaching to the cause of the disease, made a doubtfull question of his recovery; which was so displeasing to his parents, that their grieffe and sorrow grew beyond measure. Many earnest entreaties they moved to him, to know the occasion of his sicknesse, whereto he returned no other answer, but heart-breaking sighes, and incessant teares, which drew him more and more into weakenesse of body.

It chanced on a day, a Physicion was brought unto him, being young in yeeres, but well

experienced in his practise, and as hee made triall of his pulse, *Gianetta* (who by his Mothers command, attended on him very diligently) upon some especial occasion entred into the Chamber, which when the young Gentleman perceived, and that shee neither spake word, nor so much as looked towards him, his heart grew great in amorous desire, and his pulse did beate beyond the compasse of ordinary custome; whereof the Physicion made good observation, to note how long that fit would continue. No sooner was *Gianetta* gone forth of the Chamber, but the pulse immediately gave over beating, which perswaded the Physicion, that some part of the disease had now discovered it selfe apparantly.

Within a while after, pretending to have some speech with *Gianetta*, and holding the Gentleman still by the arme, the Physicion caused her to be sent for, and immediately shee came. Upon her very entrance into the Chamber, the pulse began to beate againe extreamely, and when shee departed, it presently ceased. Now was he thorowly perswaded, that hee had found the true effect of his sicknesse; when taking the Father and mother aside, thus he spake to them. If you be desirous of your Sons health, it consisteth not either in Physicion or physicke, but in the mercy of your faire Maide *Gianetta*; for manifest signes have made it knowne to me, and he loveth the Damosell very dearely: yet (for ought I can perceive, the Maide doth not know it) now if you have respect of his life, you know (in this case) what is to be done. The Nobleman and his Wife hearing this, became somewhat satisfied, because there remained a remedy to preserve his life: but yet it was no meane grieffe to them, if it should so succede, as they feared, namely, the marriage betweene their Sonne and *Gianetta*.

The Physicion being gone, and they repairing to their sicke Sonne, the Mother began with him in this manner. Sonne, I was alwayes perswaded, that thou wouldest not conceale any secret from me, or the least part of thy desires; especially, when without enjoying them, thou must remaine in the danger of death. Full well art thou assured, or in reason oughtest to be, that there is not any thing for thy contentment, be it of what quality soever, but it should have beene provided for thee, and in as ample manner as for mine owne selfe. But though thou hast wandred so farre from duty, and hazarded both thy life and ours, it commeth so to passe, that Heaven hath been more mercifull to thee, then thou wouldest be to thy selfe or us. And to prevent thy dying of this disease, a dreame this night hath acquainted me with the principall occasion of thy sicknesse, to wit, extraordinary affection to a young Maiden, in some such place as thou hast seene her. I tell thee Sonne, it is a matter of no disgrace to love, and why shouldst thou shame to manifest as much, it being so apt and convenient for thy youth? For if I were perswaded, that thou couldst not love, I should make the lesse esteeme of thee. Therefore deare Sonne, be not dismayed, but freely discover thine affections. Expel those disastrous drouping thoughts, that have indangered thy life by this long lingering sicknesse. And let thy soule be faithfully assured, that thou canst not require any thing to be done, remaining within the compasse of my power, but I will performe it; for I love thee as dearely as mine owne life. Set therefore aside this nice conceit of shame and feare, revealing the truth boldly to me, if I may stead thee in thy love; resolving thy selfe unfaignedly, that if my care stretch not to compasse thy content, account me for the most cruell Mother living, and utterly unworthy of such a Sonne.

The young Gentleman having heard these protestations made by his Mother, was not a little ashamed of his owne follie; but recollecting his better thoughts together, and knowing in his soule, that no one could better further his hopes, then shee; forgetting all his former feare, he returned her this answere; Madam, and my dearely affected Mother, nothing hath more occasioned my loves so strict concealement, but an especiall error, which I finde by daily prooffe in many, who being growne to yeeres of grave discretion, doe never remember, that they themselves have bin yong. But because heerein I find you to be both discreet and wise, I will not onely affirme, what you have seen in me to be true, but also will confesse, to whom it is: upon condition, that the effect of your promise may follow it, according to the power remaining in you, whereby you onely may secure my life.

His Mother, desirous to bee resolved, whether his confession would agree with the Physicians words, or no, and reserving another intention to her selfe: bad him feare nothing, but freely discover his whole desire, and forthwith she doubted not to effect it. Then Madame (quoth hee) the matchlesse beauty, and commendable qualities of your maid *Gianetta*, to whom (as yet) I have made no motion, to commiserate this my languishing extremity, nor acquainted any living creature with my love: the concealing of these afflictions to my selfe, hath brought mee to this desperate condition: and if some meane bee not wrought, according to your constant promise, for the full enjoying of my longing desires, assure your selfe (most noble Mother) that the date of my life is very short.

The Lady well knowing, that the time now rather required kindest comfort, then any severe or sharpe reprehension; smiling on him, saide. Alas deere sonne, wast thou sicke for this? Be of good cheare, and when thy strength is better restored, then referre the matter to me. The young Gentleman, being put in good hope by his mothers promise, began (in short time) to shew apparant signes of well-forwarded amendment: to the Mothers great joy and comfort, disposing her selfe daily to proove, how in honour she might keepe promise with her Son.

Within a short while after, calling *Gianetta* privately to her, in gentle manner, and by the way of pleasant discourse, she demanded of her, whither she was provided of a Lover, or no. *Gianetta*, being never acquainted with any such questions, a scarlet Dye covering all her modest countenance, thus replied. Madam, I have no neede of any Lover, and very unseemly were it, for so poore a Damosell as I am, to have so much as a thought of Lovers: being banished from my friends and kinsfolke, and remaining in service as I do.

If you have none (answered the Lady) wee will bestowe one on you, which shall content your

minde, and bring you to a more pleasing kinde of life; because it is farre unfit, that so faire a Maid as you are, should remaine destitute of a lover. Madam, sayde *Gianetta*, considering with my selfe, that since you received me of my poore Father, you have used me rather like your daughter, then a servant; it becommeth mee to doe as pleaseth you. Notwithstanding, I trust (in the regard of mine own good and honour) never to use any complaint in such a case: but if you please to bestow a husband on me, I purpose to love and honour him onely, & not any other. For, of all the inheritance left me by my progenitors, nothing remaineth to me but honourable honesty, and that shall bee my legacie so long as I live.

These words were of a quite contrary complexion, to those which the Lady expected from her, and for effecting the promise made unto hir Sonne: howbeit (like a wise and noble Lady) much shee inwardly commended the maids answers, and saide unto her. But tell me *Gianetta*, what if my Lord the King (who is a gallant youthfull Prince, and you so bright a beauty as you are) should take pleasure in your love, would ye denie him? Sodainly the Maide returned this answer; Madam, the King (perhaps) might enforce me; but with my free consent, hee shall never have any thing of me that is not honest. Nor did the Lady mislike her Maides courage and resolution, but breaking off all her further conference, intended shortly to put her project in prooffe, saying to her son, that when he was fully recovered, he should have private accesse to *Gianetta*, whom shee doubted not but would be tractable enough to him; for she held it no meane blemish to her honour, to moove the Maide any more in the matter, but let him compasse it as he could.

Farre from the yong Gentlemans humour was this answer of his Mother, because he aimed not at any dishonourable end: true, faithfull, & honest love was the sole scope of his intention, foule and loathsome lust he utterly defied; whereupon, he fell into sicknesse againe, rather more violently then before. Which the Lady perceiving, revealed her whole intent to *Gianetta*, and finding her constancie beyond common comparison, acquainted her Lord with all she had done, and both consented (though much against their mindes) to let him enjoy her in honourable marriage: accounting it better, for preservation of their onely sons life, to match him farre inferiour to his degree, then (by denying his desire) to let him pine away, and die for her love.

After great consultation with kindred and friendes, the match was agreed upon, to the no little joy of *Gianetta*, who devoutly returned infinite thanks to heaven, for so mercifully respecting her dejected poore estate, after the bitter passage of so many miseries, and never tearing her selfe any otherwise, but the daughter of a poore *Piccard*. Soone was the yong Gentleman recovered and married, no man alive so well contented as he, and setting downe an absolute determination, to lead a loving life with his *Gianetta*.

Let us now convert our lookes to *Wales*, to *Perotto*; being lefte there with the other Lord Marshall, who was the President of that Country. On he grew in yeares, choisely respected by his Lord, because hee was most comely of person, and addicted to all valiant attempts: so that in Tourneyes, Justes, and other actions of Armes, his like was not to bee found in all the Island, being named onely *Perotto* the valiant *Piccard*, and so was he famed farre and neere. As God had not forgotten his Sister, so in mercy he became as mindefull of him; for, a contagious mortalitie hapning in the Country, the greater part of the people perished thereby, the rest flying thence into other partes of the Land, whereby the whole Province became dispeopled and desolate.

In the time of this plague and dreadful visitation, the Lord President, his Lady, Sonnes, Daughters, Brothers, Nephewes, and Kindred dyed, none remaining alive, but one onely Daughter marriageable, a few of the household servants, beside *Perotto*, whom (after the sicknesse was more mildly asswaged) with counsaile and consent of the Country people, the young Lady accepted to be her husband, because hee was a man so worthy and valiant, and of all the inheritance left by her deceased Father, she made him Lord and sole commaunder. Within no long while after, the King of *England*, understanding that his President of *Wales* was dead, and fame liberally relating, the vertues, valour, and good parts of *Perotto* the *Piccard*: hee created him to be his President there, and to supply the place of his deceased Lord. These faire fortunes, within the compasse of so short a time, fell to the two innocent children of the Count *D'Angiers*, after they were left by him as lost and forlorne.

Eighteene yeares were now fully over-past, since the Count *D'Angiers* fled from *Paris*, having suffered (in miserable sort) many hard and lamentable adversities, and seeing himselfe now to be growne aged, hee was desirous to leave Ireland, and to know (if hee might) what was become of both his children. Hereupon, perceiving his wonted forme to be so altered, that such as formerly had conversed most with him, could now not take any knowledge of him, & feeling his body (through long labour and exercise endured in service) more lusty, then in his idle youthfull yeares, especially when he left the Court of *France*, hee purposed to proceede in his determination. Being very poore and simple in apparell, hee departed from the Irish Earle his Maister, with whom hee had continued long in service, to no advantage or advancement, and crossing over into *England*, travailed to the place in *Wales*, where he left *Perotto*: and where hee found him to be Lord Marshall and President of the Country, lusty and in good health, a man of goodly feature, and most honourably respected and reverenced of the people.

Well may you imagine, that this was no small comfort to the poore aged Countes heart, yet would he not make himselfe knowne to him or any other about him? but referred his joy to a further enlarging or diminishing, by sight of the other limme of his life, his dearely affected daughter *Gianetta*, denying rest to his body in any place, untill such time as he came to *London*. Making there secret enquiry, concerning the Lady with whom he had left his daughter: hee understoode, that a young Gentlewoman, named *Gianetta*, was married to that Ladies onely Son; which made a second addition of joy to his soule, accounting all his passed adversities of no value, both his children being living, and in so high honour.

Having found her dwelling, and (like a kinde Father) being earnestly desirous to see her; he dayly resorted neere to the house, where Sir *Roger Mandavill* (for so was *Gianettaes* husband named) chauncing to see him, being moved to compassion because he was both poore and aged: commaunded one of his men, to take him into the house, and to give him some foode for Gods sake, which (accordingly) the servant performed. *Gianetta* had divers children by her husband, the eldest of them being but eight yeares olde, yet all of them so faire and comely as could be. As the olde Count sate eating his meate in the Hall, the children came all about him, embracing, hugging, and making much of him, even as if Nature had truly instructed them, that this was their aged, though poore Grandfather, and hee as lovingly receiving these kinde relations from them, wisely and silently kept all to himselfe, with sighes, teares, and joyes entermixed together. So that the children would not part from him, though their Tutour and Maister called them often, which being tolde to their Mother, shee came forth of the neere adjoining Parlour, and threatned to beate them, if they would not doe what their Maister commaunded them.

Then the children began to cry, saying, that they would tarie still by the good olde man, because he loved them better then their Maister did; whereat both the Lady and the Count began to smile. The Count, like a poore beggar, and not as father to so great a Lady, arose, and did her humble reverence, because shee was now a Noble woman, conceiving wonderfull joy in his soule, to see her so faire and goodly a creature: yet could she take no knowledge of him, age, want and misery had so mightily altred him, his head all white, his beard without any comely forme, his garments so poore, and his face so wrinkled, leane and meager, that hee seemed rather some Carter, then a Count. And *Gianetta* perceiving, that when her children were fetcht away, they returned againe to the olde man, and would not leave him; desired their Maister to let them alone.

While thus the children continued making much of the good olde man, Lord *Andrew Mandevile*, Father to Sir *Roger*, came into the Hall, as being so willed to doe by the Childrens Schoolemaister. He being a hastie minded man, and one that ever despised *Gianetta* before, but much more since her marriage to his sonne, angrily said. Let them alone with a mischiefe, and so befall them, their best company ought to be with beggars, for so are they bred and borne by the Mothers side: and therefore it is no mervaille, if like will to like, a beggars brats to keepe company with beggars. The Count hearing these contemptible words, was not a little grieved thereat, and although his courage was greater, then his poore condition would permit him to expresse; yet, clouding all injuries with noble patience, hanging downe his head, and shedding many a salt teare, endured this reproach, as hee had done many, both before and after.

But honourable Sir *Roger*, perceiving what delight his children tooke in the poore mans company; albeit he was offended at his Fathers harsh words, by holding his wife in such base respect; yet favoured the poore Count so much the more, and seeing him weepe, did greatly compassionate his case, saying to the poore man, that if hee would accept of his service, he willingly would entertaine him. Whereto the Count replied, that very gladly he would embrace his kinde offer: but hee was capable of no other service, save onely to be an horse-keeper, wherein he had employed the most part of his time. Heereupon, more for pleasure and pittie, then any necessity of his service, he was appointed to the keeping of one Horse, which was onely for his Daughters saddle, and daily after he had done his diligence about the Horse, he did nothing else but play with the children. While Fortune pleased thus to dally with the poore Count *D'Angiers*, & his children, it came to passe, that the King of *France* (after divers leagues of truces passed between him & the *Germaines*) died, and next after him, his Son the dolphin was crowned King, and it was his wife that wrongfully caused the Counts banishment. After expiration of the last league with the *Germaines*, the warres began to grow much more fierce and sharpe, and the King of *England*, (upon request made to him by his new brother of *France*) sent him very honourable supplies of his people, under the conduct of *Perotto*, his lately elected President of *Wales*, and Sir *Roger Mandevile*, Son to his other Lord high Marshall; with whom also the poore Count went, and continued a long while in the Campe as a common Souldier, where yet like a valiant Gentleman (as indeed he was no lesse) both in advice and actions; he accomplished many more notable matters, then was expected to come from him.

It so fell out, that in the continuance of this warre, the Queen of *France* fell into a grievous sicknes, and perceiving her selfe to be at the point of death, shee became very penitently sorrowfull for all her sinnes, earnestly desiring that shee might be confessed by the Archbishop of *Roane*, who was reputed to be an holy and vertuous man. In the repetition of her other offences, she revealed what great wrong she had done to the Count *D'Angiers*, resting not so satisfied, with disclosing the whole matter to him alone; but also confessed the same before many other worthy persons, and of great honour, entreating them to worke so with the King; that (if the Count were yet living, or any of his Children) they might be restored to their former honour againe.

It was not long after, but the Queene left this life, and was most royally entred, when her confession being disclosed to the King, after much sorrow for so injuriously wronging a man of so great valour and honour: Proclamation was made throughout the Camp, and in many other parts of *France* beside, that whosoever could produce the Count *D'Angiers*, or any of his Children, should richly be rewarded for each one of them; in regard he was innocent of the foule imputation, by the Queenes owne confession, and for his wrongfull exile so long, he should be exalted to his former honour with farre greater favours, which the King franckely would bestow upon him. When the Count (who walked up and downe in the habite of a common servitor) heard this Proclamation, forth-with he went to his Master Sir *Roger Mandevile*, requesting his speedy repaire to Lord *Perotto*, that being both assembled together, he would acquaint them with a serious matter, concerning the late Proclamation published by the King. Being by themselves

alone in the Tent, the Count spake in this manner to *Perotto*. Sir, *S. Roger Mandevile* here, your equal competitor in this military service, is the husband to your naturall sister, having as yet never received any dowry with her, but her inherent unblemishable vertue & honour. Now because she may not still remain destitute of a competent Dowry: I desire that Sir *Roger*, and none other, may enjoy the royall reward promised by the King. You Lord *Perotto*, whose true name is *Lewes*, manifest your selfe to be nobly borne, and sonne to the wrongfull banished Count *D'Angiers*: avouch moreover, that *Violenta*, shadowed under the borrowed name of *Gianetta*, is your owne Sister; and deliver me up as your Father, the long exiled Count *D'Angiers*. *Perotto* hearing this, beheld him more advisedly, and began to know him: then, the tears flowing abundantly from his eyes, he fell at his feete, and often embracing him, saide: My deere and noble Father! a thousand times more deerely welcome to your Sonne *Lewes*.

Sir *Roger Mandevile*, hearing first what the Count had said, and seeing what *Perotto* afterward performed; became surprized with such extraordinary joy and admiration, that he knew not how to carry himselfe in this case. Neverthelesse, giving credite to his words, and being somewhat ashamed, that he had not used the Count in more respective manner, & remembring beside, the unkinde language of his furious Father to him: he kneeled downe, humbly craving pardon, both for his fathers rudenes and his owne, which was courteously granted by the Count, embracing him lovingly in his armes.

When they had a while discoursed their severall fortunes, sometime in teares, and then againe in joy, *Perotto* and Sir *Roger*, would have the Count to be garmented in better manner, but in no wise he would suffer it; for it was his onely desire, that Sir *Roger* should be assured of the promised reward, by presenting him in the Kings presence, and in the homely habit which he did then weare, to touch him with the more sensible shame, for his rash beleefe, and injurious proceeding. Then Sir *Roger Mandevile*, guiding the Count by the hand, and *Perotto* following after, came before the King, offering to present the Count and his children, if the reward promised in the Proclamation might be performed. The king immediately commanded, that a reward of inestimable vales should be produced; desiring Sir *Roger* upon the sight thereof, to make good his offer, for forthwith presenting the Count and his children. Which hee made no longer delay of, but turning himselfe about, delivered the aged Count, by the title of his servant, and presenting *Perotto* next, said. Sir, heere I deliver you the Father and his Son, his daughter who is my wife, cannot so conveniently be heere now, but shortly, by the permission of heaven, your Majesty shall have a sight of her.

When the King heard this, stedfastly he looked on the Count; and, notwithstanding his wonderfull alteration, both from his wonted feature and forme: yet, after he had very seriously viewed him, he knew him perfectly; and the teares trickling downe his cheekes, partly with remorsefull shame, and joy also for his so happy recovery, he tooke up the Count from kneeling, kissing, and embracing him very kindly, welcomming *Perotto* in the selfesame manner. Immediately also he gave commaund, that the Count should be restored to his honours, apparrell, servants, horses, and furniture, answerable to his high estate and calling, which was as speedily performed. Moreover, the King greatly honoured Sir *Roger Mandevile*, desiring to be made acquainted with all their passed fortunes.

When Sir *Roger* had received the royall reward, for thus surrendring the Count and his Sonne, the Count calling him to him, saide. Take that Princely remuneration of my soveraigne Lord the King, and commending me to your unkinde Father, tell him that your Children are no beggars brats, neither basely borne by their Mothers side. Sir *Roger* returning home with his bountifull reward, soone after brought his Wife and Mother to *Paris*, and so did *Perotto* his Wife, where in great joy and triumph, they continued a long while with the noble Count; who had all his goods and honours restored to him, in farre greater measure then ever they were before: his Sonnes in Law returning home with their Wives into *England*, left the Count with the King at *Paris*, where he spent the rest of his dayes in great honour and felicity.

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***Bernardo, a Merchant of Geneway, being deceived by another Merchant, named Ambroginolo, lost a great part of his goods. And commanding his innocent Wife to be murdered, shee escaped, and (in the habite of a man) became servant to the Soldane. The deceiver being found at last, shee compassed such meanes, that her Husband Bernardo came into Alexandria, and there, after due punishment inflicted on the false deceiver, shee resumed the garments againe of a woman, and returned home with her Husband to Geneway.***

## **The ninth Novell.**

***Wherein is declared, that by over-liberall commending the chastity of Women, it falleth out (oftentimes) to be very dangerous, especially by the meanes of treacherers, who yet (in the ende) are justly punished for their treachery.***

Madam *Eliza* having ended her compassionate discourse, which indeede had moved all the rest to sighing; the Queene, who was faire, comely of stature, and carrying a very majesticall countenance, smiling more familiarly then the other, spake to them thus. It is very necessary, that the promise made to *Dioneus*, should carefully be kept, and because now there remaineth

none, to report any more Novels, but onely he and my selfe: I must first deliver mine, and he (who takes it for an honour) to be the last in relating his owne, last let him be for his owne deliverance. Then pausing a little while, thus shee began againe. Many times among vulgar people, it hath passed as a common Proverbe: That the deceiver is often trampled on, by such as he hath deceived. And this cannot shew it selfe (by any reason) to be true, except such accidents as awaite on treachery, doe really make a just discovery thereof. And therefore according to the course of this day observed, I am the woman, that must make good what I have saide for the approbation of that Proverbe; no way (I hope) distastfull to you in the hearing, but advantageable to preserve you from any such beguiling.

There was a faire and good Inne in *Paris*, much frequented by many great *Italian* Merchants, according to such variety of occasions and businesse, as urged their often resorting thither. One night among many other, having had a merry Supper together, they began to discourse on divers matters, and falling from one relation to another; they communed in very friendly manner, concerning their wives, left at home in their houses. Quoth the first, I cannot well imagine what my wife is now doing, but I am able to say for my selfe, that if a pretty female should fall into my company: I could easily forget my love to my wife, and make use of such an advantage offered.

A second replied; And trust me, I should do no lesse, because I am perswaded, that if my wife be willing to wander, the law is in her owne hand, and I am farre enough from home: dumbe walles blab no tales, & offences unknowne are sildome or never called in question. A thirde man jumpt in censure, with his former fellowes of the Jury; and it plainly appeared, that al the rest were of the same opinion, condemning their wives over-rashly, and alledging, that when husbands strayed so far from home, their wives had wit enough to make use of their time.

Onely one man among them all, named *Bernardo Lomellino*, & dwelling in *Geneway*, maintained the contrary; boldly avouching, that by the especiall favour of Fortune, he had a wife so perfectly compleat in al graces and vertues, as any Lady in the world possibly could be, and that *Italy* scarsely contained her equall. For, she was goodly of person, and yet very young, quicke, quaint, milde, and courteous, and not any thing appertaining to the office of a wife, either for domesticke affayres, or any other employment whatsoever, but in woman-hoode shee went beyond all other. No Lord, Knight, Esquire, or Gentleman, could bee better served at his table, then himselfe dayly was, with more wisdom, modesty and discretion. After all this, hee praised her for riding, hawking, hunting, fishing, fowling, reading, writing, enditing, and most absolute keeping his Bookes of accounts, that neither himselfe, or any other Merchant could therein excell her. After infinite other commendations, he came to the former point of their argument, concerning the easie falling of women into wantonnesse, maintaining (with a solemne oath) that no woman possibly could be more chaste and honest then she: in which respect, he was verily perswaded, that if he stayed from her ten yeares space, yea (all his life time) out of his house; yet never would shee falsifie her faith to him, or be lewdly allured by any other man.

Among these Merchants thus communing together, there was a young proper man, named *Ambroginolo* of *Placentia*, who began to laugh at the last praises, which *Bernardo* had used of his wife, and seeming to make a mockerie thereat, demaunded, if the Emperour had given him this priviledge, above all other married men? *Bernardo* being somewhat offended, answered: No Emperour hath done it, but the especiall blessing of heaven, exceeding all the Emperours on the earth in grace, and thereby have received this favour; whereto *Ambroginolo* presently thus replied. *Bernardo*, without all question to the contrary, I beleve that what thou hast said, is true, but, for ought I can perceive, thou hast slender judgement in the nature of things: because, if thou didst observe them well, thou couldst not be of so grosse understanding; for, by comprehending matters in their true kinde and nature, thou wouldst speake of them more correctly then thou doest. And to the end, thou mayest not imagine, that wee who have spoken of our wives, doe thinke any otherwise of them, then as well and honestly as thou canst of thine, nor that any thing else did urge these speeches of them, or falling into this kinde of discourse, but onely by a naturall instinct and admonition; I will proceede familiarly a little further with thee, upon the matter already propounded.

I have ever more understood, that man was the most noble creature, formed by God to live in this world, and woman in the next degree to him: but man, as generally is beleevd, and as is discerned by apparant effects, is the most perfect of both. Having then the most perfection in him, without all doubt, he must be so much the more firme and constant. So in like manner, it hath beene, and is universally graunted, that woman is more various and mutable, and the reason thereof may be approved, by many naturall circumstances, which were needlesse now to make any mention of. If a man then be possessed of the greater stability, and yet cannot containe himselfe from condescending, I say not to one that entreats him, but to desire any other that may please him, and beside, to covet the enjoying of his owne pleasing contentment (a thing not chancing to him once in a moneth, but infinite times in a dayes space.) What can you then conceive of a fraile woman, subject (by nature) to entreaties, flatteries, gifts, perswasions, and a thousand other enticing meanes, which a man (that is affected to her) can use? Doest thou think then that shee hath any power to containe? Assuredly, though thou shouldst rest so resolved, yet cannot I be of the same opinion. For I am sure thou beleevest, and must needs confesse it, that thy wife is a woman, made of flesh and blood, as other women are: if it be so, shee cannot be without the same desires, and the weakenesse or strength as other women have, to resist such naturall appetites as her owne are. In regard whereof, it is meerey impossible (although shee be most honest) but she must needs do that which other women do; for there is nothing else possible, either to be denied or affirmed to the contrary, as thou most unadvisedly hast done.

*Bernardo* answered in this manner. I am a Merchant, and no Philosopher, and like a Merchant I

meane to answer thee. I am not to learne, that these accidents by thee related, may happen to fooles, who are void of understanding or shame: but such as are wise, and endued with vertue, have alwayes such a precious esteeme of their honour, that they will containe those principles of constancie, which men are meereley carelesse of, and I justifie my wife to be one of them. Beleeve me *Bernardo* (replied *Ambroginolo*) if so often as thy wives minde is addicted to wanton folly, a badge of scorne should arise on thy forehead, to render testimonie of her female frailty; I beleeve the number of them would be more, then willingly you would wish them to be. And among all married men, in every degree, the notes are so secret of their wives imperfections, that the sharpest sight is not able to discern them; and the wiser sort of men are willing not to know them; because shame and losse of honour is never imposed, but in cases evident and apparant.

Perswade thy selfe then *Bernardo*, that, what women may accomplish in secret, they will rarely faile to doe: or if they abstaine, it is through feare and folly. Wherefore, hold it for a certaine rule, that that woman is onely chaste, that never was solicited personally, or if she endured any such sute, either shee answered yea, or no. And albeit I know this to be true, by many infallible and naturall reasons, yet could I not speake so exactly as I doe; if I had not tried experimentally, the humours and affections of divers women. Yea, and let me tell thee more *Bernardo*, were I in private company with thy wife, howsoever pure and precise thou presumest her to be: I should account it a matter of no impossibility, to finde in her the selfe same frailty.

*Bernardoes* blood began now to boile, and patience being a little put downe by choller, thus hee replied. A combat of words requires over-long continuance, for I maintaine the matter, which thou deniest, and all this sorts to nothing in the end. But seeing thou presumest, that all women are so apt and tractable, and thy selfe so confident of thine owne power: I willingly yeeld (for the better assurance of my wifes constant loyalty) to have my head smitten off, if thou canst winne her to any such dishonest act, by any meanes whatsoever thou canst use unto her; which if thou canst not doe, thou shalt onely loose a thousand duckets of gold. Now began *Ambroginolo* to be heated with these words, answering thus. *Bernardo*, if I had won the wager, I know not what I should doe with thy head; but if thou be willing to stand upon the prooffe, pawne downe five thousand Duckets of gold, (a matter of much lesse value then thy head) against a thousand Duckets of mine, granting me a lawfull limitted time, which I require to be no more then the space of three moneths, after the day of my departing hence. I will stand bound to goe for *Geneway*, and there winne such kinde consent of thy Wife, as shall be to mine owne consent. In witness whereof, I will bring backe with me such private and especiall tokens, as thou thy selfe shalt confesse that I have not failed. Provided, that thou doe first promise upon thy faith, to absent thy selfe thence during my limitted time, and be no hinderance to me by thy Letters, concerning the attempt by me undertaken.

*Bernardo* saide, be it a bargaine, I am the man that will make good my five thousand Duckets; and albeit the other Merchants then present, earnestly laboured to breake the wager, knowing great harme must needs ensue thereon: yet both the parties were so hot and fiery, as all the other men spake to no effect, but writings were made, sealed, and delivered under either of their hands, *Bernardo* remaining at *Paris*, and *Ambroginolo* departing for *Geneway*. There he remained some few dayes, to learne the streetes name where *Bernardo* dwelt, as also the conditions and qualities of his Wife, which scarcely pleased him when he heard them; because they were farre beyond her Husbands relation, and shee reputed to be the onely wonder of women; whereby he plainly perceived, that he had undertaken a very idle enterprise, yet would he not give it over so, but proceeded therein a little further.

He wrought such meanes, that he came acquainted with a poore woman, who often frequented *Bernardoes* house, and was greatly in favour with his wife; upon whose poverty he so prevailed, by earnest perswasions, but much more by large gifts of money, that he won her to further him in this manner following. A faire and artificiall Chest he caused to be purposely made, wherein himselfe might be aptly contained, and so conveyed into the House of *Bernardoes* Wife, under colour of a formall excuse; that the poore woman should be absent from the City two or three dayes, and shee must keepe it safe till he returne. The Gentlewoman suspecting no guile, but that the Chest was the receptacle of all the womans wealth; would trust it in no other roome, then her owne Bed-chamber, which was the place where *Ambroginolo* most desired to bee.

Being thus conveyed into the Chamber, the night going on apace, and the Gentlewoman fast asleepe in her bed, a lighted Taper stood burning on the Table by her, as in her Husbands absence shee ever used to have: *Ambroginolo* softly opened the Chest, according as cunningly hee had contrived it; and stepping forth in his sockes made of cloath, observed the scituation of the Chamber, the paintings, pictures, and beautifull hangings, with all things else that were remarkable, which perfectly he committed to his memory. Going neere to the bed, he saw her lie there sweetly sleeping, and her young Daughter in like manner by her, shee seeming then as compleate and pleasing a creature, as when shee was attired in her best bravery. No especiall note or marke could hee descrie, whereof he might make credible report, but onely a small wart upon her left pappe, with some few haire growing thereon, appearing to be as yellow as gold.

Sufficient had he seene, and durst presume no further; but taking one of her Rings, which lay upon the Table, a purse of hers, hanging by on the wall, a light wearing Robe of silke, and her girdle, all which he put into the Chest; and being in himselfe, closed it fast as it was before, so continuing there in the Chamber two severall nights, the Gentlewoman neither mistrusting or missing any thing. The third day being come, the poore woman, according as formerly was concluded, came to have home her Chest againe, and brought it safely into her owne house; where *Ambroginolo* comming forth of it, satisfied the poore woman to her own liking, returning (with all the forenamed things) so fast as conveniently he could to *Paris*.



Being arrived there long before his limited time, he called the Merchants together, who were present at the passed words and wager; avouching before *Bernardo*, that he had won his five thousand Duckets, and performed the taske he undertooke. To make good his protestation, first he described the forme of the Chamber, the curious pictures hanging about it, in what manner the bed stood, and every circumstance else beside. Next he shewed the severall things, which he brought away thence with him, affirming that he had received them of her selfe. *Bernardo* confessed, that his description of the Chamber was true, and acknowledged moreover, that these other things did belong to his Wife: But (quoth he) this may be gotten, by corrupting some servant of mine, both for intelligence of the Chamber, as also of the Ring, Purse, and what else is beside; all which suffice not to win the wager, without some other more apparant and pregnant token. In troth, answered *Ambrogino*, me thinks these should serve for sufficient proofes; but seeing thou art so desirous to know more: I plainely tell thee, that faire *Genevra* thy Wife, hath a small round wart upon her left pappe, and some few little golden haire growing thereon.

When *Bernardo* heard these words, they were as so many stabs to his heart, yea, beyond all compasse of patient sufferance, and by the changing of his colour, it was noted manifestly, (being unable to utter one word) that *Ambrogino* had spoken nothing but the truth. Within a while after, he saide; Gentlemen, that which *Ambrogino* hath saide, is very true, wherefore let him come when he will, and he shall be paide; which accordingly he performed on the very next day, even to the utmost penny, departing then from *Paris* towards *Geneway*, with a most malicious intention to his Wife: Being come neere to the City, he would not enter it, but rode to a Countrey house of his, standing about tenne miles distant thence. Being there arrived, he called a servant, in whom hee reposed especiall trust, sending him to *Geneway* with two Horses, writing to his Wife, that he was returned, and shee should come thither to see him. But secretly he charged his servant, that so soone as he had brought her to a convenient place, he should there kill her, without any pittie or compassion, and then returne to him againe.

When the servant was come to *Geneway*, and had delivered his Letter and message, *Genevra* gave him most joyful welcome, and on the morrow morning mounting on Horse-backe with the servant, rode merrily towards the Countrey house; divers things shee discoursed on by the way, till they descended into a deepe solitary valey, very thickly beset with high and huge spreading Trees, which the servant supposed to be a meete place, for the execution of his Masters command. Suddenly drawing forth his Sword, and holding *Genevra* fast by the arme, he saide; Mistresse, quickly commend your soule to God, for you must die, before you passe any further. *Genevra* seeing the naked Sword, and hearing the words so peremptorily delivered, fearefully answered; Alas deare friend, mercy for Gods sake; and before thou kill me, tell me wherein I have offended thee, and why thou must kill me? Alas good Mistresse replied the servant, you have not any way offended me, but in what occasion you have displeased your Husband, it is utterly unknowne to me: for he hath strictly commanded me, without respect of pittie or compassion, to kill you by the way as I bring you, and if I doe it not, he hath sworne to hang me by the necke. You know good Mistresse, how much I stand obliged to him; and how impossible it is for me, to contradict any thing that he commandedeth. God is my witsse, that I am truly compassionate of you, and yet (by no meanes) may I let you live.

*Genevra* kneeling before him weeping, wringing her hands, thus replied. Wilt thou turne Monster, and be a murtherer of her that never wronged thee, to please another man, and on a bare command? God, who truly knoweth all things, is my faithfull witsse, that I never committed any offence, whereby to deserve the dislike of my Husband, much lesse so harsh a recompence as this is. But flying from mine owne justification, and appealing to thy manly mercy, thou mayest (wert thou but so well pleased) in a moment satisfie both thy Master and me, in such manner as I will make plaine and apparant to thee. Take thou my garments, spare me onely thy doublet, and such a Bonnet as is fitting for a man, so returne with my habite to thy Master, assuring him, that the deede is done. And here I sweare to thee, by that life which I enjoy but by thy mercy, I will so strangely disguise my selfe, and wander so farre off from these Countries, as neither he or thou, nor any person belonging to these parts, shall ever heare any tydings of me.

The servant, who had no great good will to kill her, very easily grew pittifull, tooke off her upper garments, and gave her a poore ragged doublet, a sillie Chapperone, and such small store of money as he had, desiring her to forsake that Countrey, and so left her to walke on foote out of the vally. When he came to his Maister, and had delivered him her garments, he assured him, that he had not onely accomplished his commaund, but also was most secure from any discovery: because he had no sooner done the deede, but foure or five very ravenous Wolfes, came presently running to the dead body, and gave it buriall in their bellies. *Bernardo* soone after returning to *Geneway*, was much blamed for such unkinde cruelty to his wife; but his constant avouching of her treason to him (according then to the Countries custome) did cleare him from all pursuite of law.

Poore *Genevra*, was left thus alone and disconsolate, and night stealing fast upon her, shee went to a silly village neere adjoining, where (by the meanes of a good olde woman) she got such provision as the place afforded, making the doublet fit to her body, and converting her petticoate to a paire of breeches, according to the Mariners fashion: then cutting her haire, and quaintly disguised like to a Sayler, shee went to the Sea coast. By good fortune, she met there with a Gentleman of *Cathalogna*, whose name was *Signior Enchararcho*, who came on land from his Ship, which lay hulling there about *Albagia*, to refresh himselfe at a pleasant Spring. *Enchararcho* taking her to be a man, as shee appeared no otherwise by her habite; upon some conference passing betweene them, shee was entertained into his service, and being brought aboard the Ship, she went under the name of *Sicurano da Finale*. There shee had better apparell

bestowne on her by the Gentleman, and her service proved so pleasing and acceptable to him, that hee liked her care and diligence beyond all comparison.

It came to passe within a short while after, that this Gentleman of *Cathalogna* sayled (with some charge of his) into *Alexandria*, carying thither certaine peregrine Faulcons, which hee presented to the Soldane: who oftentimes welcommed this Gentleman to his table, where hee observed the behaviour of *Sicurano*, attending on his Maisters trencher, and therewith was so highly pleased; that he requested to have him from the Gentleman, who (for his more advancement) willingly parted with his so lately entertained servant. *Sicurano* was so ready and discrete in his dayly services; that he grew in as great grace with the Soldane, as before he had done with *Enchararcho*.

At a certaine season in the yeare, as customarie order (there observed) had formerly beene, in the Citie of *Acres*, which was under the Soldanes subjection: there yearely met a great assembly of Merchants, as Christians, Moores, Jewes, Sarrazines, and many other Nations beside, as at a common Mart or Fayre. And to the end, that the Merchants (for the better sale of their goods) might be there in the safer assurance; the Soldane used to send thither some of his ordinarie Officers, and a strong guard of Souldiers beside, to defend them from all injuries and molestation, because he reaped thereby no meane benefit. And who should be now sent about this businesse, but his new elected favourite *Sicurano*; because she was skilfull and perfect in the languages.

*Sicurano* being come to *Acres*, as Lord and Captaine of the Guard for the Merchants, and for the safety of their Merchandizes: she discharged her office most commendably, walking with her traine through every part of the Fayre, where shee observed a worthy company of Merchants, Sicilians, Pisanes, Genewayes, Venetians, and other Italians, whom the more willingly shee noted, in remembrance of her native Countrey. At one especiall time, among other, chancing into a Shop or Boothe belonging to the Venetians; she espied (hanging up with other costly wares) a Purse and a Girdle, which suddainly shee remembred to be sometime her owne, whereat she was not a little abashed in her mind. But, without making any such outward shew, courteously she requested to know, whose they were, and whether they should be sold, or no.

*Ambroginolo* of *Placentia*, was likewise come thither, and great store of Merchandizes hee had brought with him, in a Carrack appertaining to the Venetians, and hee, hearing the Captaine of the Guard demaund, whose they were; stepped forth before him, and smiling, answered: That they were his, but not to be solde, yet if hee liked them gladly, hee would bestowe them on him. *Sicurano* seeing him smile, suspected, least himselfe had (by some unfitting behaviour) beene the occasion thereof: and therefore, with a more settled countenance, hee said. Perhaps thou smilest, because I that am a man, professing Armes, should question after such womanish toys. *Ambroginolo* replied. My Lord, pardon me, I smile not at you, or your demaund; but at the manner how I came by these things.

*Sicurano*, upon this answere, was ten times more desirous then before, and said. If Fortune favoured thee in friendly manner, by the obtaining of these things: if it may be spoken, tell me how thou hadst them. My Lord (answered *Ambroginolo*) these things (with many more beside) were given me by a Gentlewoman of *Geneway*, named Madame *Genevra*, the wife to one *Bernardo Lomellino*, in recompence of one nights lodging with her, and she desired me to keepe them for her sake. Now, the maine reason of my smiling, was the remembrance of her husbands folly, in waging five thousand Duckets of golde, against one thousand of mine, that I should not obtaine my will of his wife, which I did, and thereby wone the wager. But hee, who better deserved to be punished for his folly, then shee, who was but sicke of all womens disease: returning from *Paris* to *Geneway*, caused her to be slaine, as afterward it was reported by himselfe.

When *Sicurano* heard this horrible lye, immediatly shee conceived, that this was the occasion of her husbands hatred to her, and all the hard haps which she had since suffered: whereupon, shee reputed it for more then a mortall sinne, if such a villaine should passe without due punishment. *Sicurano* seemed to like well this report, and grew into such familiarity with *Ambroginolo*, that (by her perswasions) when the Fayre was ended, she tooke him higher with her into *Alexandria*, and all his Wares along with him, furnishing him with a fit and convenient Shop, where he made great benefit of his Merchandizes, trusting all his monies in the Captaines custody, because it was the safest course for him; and so he continued there with no meane contentment.

Much did shee pittie her Husbands perplexity, devising by what good and warrantable meanes, she might make knowne her innocency to him; wherein her place and authority did greatly sted her, and shee wrought with divers gallant Merchants of *Geneway*, that then remained in *Alexandria*, and by vertue of the *Soldans* friendly Letters, beside to bring him thither upon an especiall occasion. Come he did, albeit in poore and meane order, which soone was better altered by her appointment, and he very honourably (though in private) entertained by divers of her worthy friends, till time did favour what shee further intended.

In the expectation of *Bernardoes* arrivall, shee had so prevailed with *Ambroginolo*, that the same tale which he formerly tolde to her, he delivered againe in presence of the *Soldane*, who seemed to be well pleased with it: But after shee had once seene her Husband, shee thought upon her more serious businesse; providing her selfe of an apt opportunity, when shee entreated such favour of the *Soldane*, that both the men might be brought before him, where if *Ambroginolo* would not confesse (without constraint) that which he had made his vaunt of concerning *Bernardoes* Wife, he might be compelled thereto perforce.

*Sicuranoes* word was a Law with the *Soldane*, so that *Ambroginolo* and *Bernardo* being brought

face to face, the *Soldane*, with a sterne and angry countenance, in the presence of a most Princely Assembly; commanded *Ambroginolo* to declare the truth, yea, upon peril of his life, by what means he won the wager, of the five thousand golden Duckets he received of *Bernardo*. *Ambroginolo* seeing *Sicurano* there present, upon whose favour he wholly relied, yet perceiving her looks likewise to be as dreadfull as the *Soldanes*, and hearing her threaten him with most greivous torments, except he revealed the truth indeede: you may easily guesse (faire company) in what condition he stood at that instant.

Frownes and fury he beheld on either side, and *Bernardo* standing before him, with a world of famous witnesses, to heare his lie confounded by his owne confession, and his tongue to denie what it had before so constantly avouched. Yet dreaming on no other paine or penalty, but restoring backe the five thousand Duckets of gold, and the other things by him purloyned, truly he revealed the whole forme of his falshood. Then *Sicurano* according as the *Soldane* had formerly commanded him, turning to *Bernardo*, saide. And thou, upon the suggestion of this foule lie, what didst thou to thy Wife? Being (quoth *Bernardo*) overcome with rage, for the losse of my money, and the dishonour I supposed to receive by my Wife; I caused a servant of mine to kill her, and as he credibly avouched, her body was devoured by ravenous Wolves in a moment after.

These things being thus spoken and heard, in the presence of the *Soldane*, and no reason (as yet) made knowne, why the case was so seriously urged, and to what end it would succede: *Sicurano* spake in this manner to the Soldane. My gracious Lord, you may plainely perceive, in what degree that poore Gentlewoman might make her vaunt, being so well provided, both of a loving friend, and a husband. Such was the friends love, that in an instant, and by a wicked lye, hee robbed her both of her renowne and honour, and bereft her also of her husband. And her husband, rather crediting anothers falshood, then the invincible trueth, whereof he had faithfull knowledge, by long and very honourable experience; caused her to be slaine, and made foode for devouring Wolves. Beside all this, such was the good will and affection, borne to that woman both by friend and husband, that the longest continuer of them in her company, makes them alike in knowledge of her. But because your great wisdom knoweth perfectly, what each of them have worthily deserved: if you please (in your ever knowne gracious benignity) to permit the punishment of the deceiver, and pardon the party so deceived; I will procure such meanes, that she shall appeare here in your presence, and theirs.

The Soldane, being desirous to give *Sicurano* all manner of satisfaction, having followed the course so industriously: bad him to produce the woman, and hee was well contented. Whereat *Bernardo* stode much amazed, because he verily beleevved that she was dead. And *Ambroginolo* foreseeing already a preparation for punishment, feared, that the repayment of the money would not now serve his turne: not knowing also what he should further hope or suspect, if the woman her selfe did personally appeare, which hee imagined would be a miracle. *Sicurano* having thus obtayned the Soldanes permission, in teares, humbling her selfe at his feete, in a moment shee lost her manly voyce and demeanour, as knowing, that she was now no longer to use them, but must truly wnesse what she was indeede, and therefore thus spake.

Great Soldane, I am the miserable and unfortunate *Genevra*, that, for the space of sixe whole yeares, have wandered through the world, in the habite of a man, falsly and most maliciously slaundered, by this villainous traytour *Ambroginolo*, and by this unkinde cruell husband, betrayed to his servant to be slaine, and left to be devoured by savage beasts. Afterward, desiring such garments as better fitted for her, and shewing her brests; she made it apparant, before the Soldane and his assistants, that she was the very same woman indeede. Then turning her selfe to *Ambroginolo*, with more then manly courage, she demaunded of him, when, and where it was, that he lay with her, as (villainously) he was not ashamed to make his vaunt. But hee, having already acknowledged the contrarie, being stricken dumbe with shamefull disgrace, was not able to utter one word.

The Soldane, who had alwayes reputed *Sicurano* to be a man, having heard and seene so admirable an accident: was so amazed in his minde, that many times he was very doubtfull, whether this was a dreame, or an absolute relation of trueth. But, after hee had more seriously considered thereon, and found it to be reall and infallible: with extraordinary gracious praises, he commended the life, constancie, conditions and vertues of *Genevra*, whom (till that time) he had alwayes called *Sicurano*. So committing her to the company of honourable Ladies, to be changed from her manly habite: he pardoned *Bernardo* her husband (according to her request formerly made) although hee had more justly deserved death; which likewise himselfe confessed, and falling at the feete of *Genevra*, desired her (in teares) to forgive his rash transgression, which most lovingly she did, kissing and embracing him a thousand times.

Then the Soldane strictly commaunded, that on some high and eminent place of the Citie, *Ambroginolo* should be bound and impaled on a Stake, having his naked body annoited all over with honey, and never to be taken off, untill (of it selfe) it fell in pieces, which, according to the sentence, was presently performed. Next, he gave expresse charge, that all his mony and goods should be given to *Genevra*, which valued above ten thousand double Duckets. Forth-with a solemne feast was prepared, wherein, much honour was done to *Bernardo*, being the husband of *Genevra*: and to her, as to a most worthy woman, and matchlesse wife, he gave in costly Jewels, as also vessels of gold and silver plate, so much as amounted to above ten thousand double Duckets more.

When the feasting was finished, he caused a Ship to be furnished for them, granting them licence to depart for *Geneway* when they pleased: whither they returned most rich and joyfully, being welcommed home with great honour, especially Madame *Genevra*, whom every one supposed to be dead, and alwayes after, so long as shee lived, shee was most famous for her

manifold vertues. But as for *Ambrogino*, the very same day that he was impaled on the Stake, annointed with honey, and fixed in the place appointed, to his no meane torment: he not onely died, but likewise was devoured to the bare bones, by Flyes, Waspes and Hornets, whereof the Countrey notoriously aboundeth. And his bones, in full forme and fashion, remained strangely blacke for a long while after, knit together by the sinewes; as a witnesse to many thousands of people, which afterward beheld his carkasse of his wickednesse against so good and vertuous a woman, that had not so much as a thought of any evill towards him. And thus was the Proverbe truly verified, that shame succeedeth after ugly sinne, and the deceiver is trampled and trod, by such as himselfe hath deceived.

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***Pagamino da Monaco, a roving Pirate on the Seas, caried away the faire Wife of Signior Ricciardo di Chinzica, who understanding where shee was, went thither; and falling into friendship with Pagamino, demanded his Wife of him; whereto he yeelded, provided, that shee would willingly goe away with him. She denied to part thence with her Husband, and Signior Ricciardo dying; she became the Wife of Pagamino.***

## The tenth Novell.

***Wherein olde men are wittily reprehended, that will match themselves with younger women, then is fit for their yeares and insufficiencie; never considering, what afterward may happen to them.***

Every one in this honest and gracious assembly, most highly commended the Novell recounted by the Queene: but especially *Dioneus*, who remained, to finish that dayes pleasure with his owne discourse; and after many praises of the former tale were past, thus he began. Faire Ladies, part of the Queenes Novell, hath made an alteration of my minde, from that which I intended to proceede next withall, and therefore I will report another. I cannot forget the unmanly indiscretion of *Bernardo*, but much more the base arrogancie of *Ambrogino*, how justly deserved shame fell upon him; as well it may happen to all other, that are so vile in their owne opinions, as he apparantly approved himselfe to be. For, as men wander abroad in the world, according to their occasions in diversity of Countries, and observation of the peoples behaviour: so are their humours as variously transported. And if they finde women wantonly disposed abroad, the like judgement they give of their wives at home; as if they had never knowne their birth and breeding, or made proofe of their loyall carriage towards them. Wherefore, the Tale that I purpose to relate, will likewise condemne all the like kinde of men; but more especially such, as suppose themselves to be endued with more strength, then Nature ever meant to bestow upon them, foolishly beleeving, that they can cover and satisfie their owne defects, by fabulous demonstrations; and thinking to fashion other of their owne complexions, that are meere strangers to such grosse follies.

Let me tell you then, that there lived in *Pisa* (about some hundred yeeres before *Tuscanie* & *Liguria* came to embrace the Christian Faith) a Judge better stored with wisdom and ingenuity, then corporall abilities of the body, he being named *Signior Ricciardo di Cinzica*. He being more then halfe perswaded, that he could content a woman with such satisfaction as he daily bestowed on his studies, being a widdower, and extraordinarily wealthy; laboured (with no meane paines and endeavour) to enjoy a faire and youthfull wife in marriage: both which qualities he should much rather have avoyded, if he could have ministred as good counsell to himselfe, as he did to others, resorting to him for advice.

Upon this his amorous and diligent inquisition, it came so to passe, that a worthy Gentlewoman, called *Bertolomea*, one of the very fairest and choysiest young Maides in *Pisa*, whose youth did hardly agree with his age; but mucke was the motive of this mariage, and no expectation of mutuall contentment. The Judge being married, and the Bride brought solemnly home to his house, we need make no question of brave cheare & banqueting, wel furnished by their friends on either side: other matters were now hammering in the Judges head, for though he could please all his Clyents with counsell; yet now such a sute was commenced against himself, and in Beauties Court of continual requests, that the Judge failing in plea for his owne defence, was often non-suited by lacke of answer; yet he wanted neither good wines, drugges, and all restauratives, to comfort the heart, and encrease good blood; but all avayled not in this case.

But well fare a good courage, where performance faileth, he could liberally commend his passed joviall dayes, and make a promise of as faire felicities yet to come; because his youth would renew it selfe, like to the Eagle, and his vigour in as full force as before. But beside all these idle allegations, he would needs instruct his wife in an Almanack or Calender, which (long before) he had bought at *Ravenna*, and wherein he plainly shewed her, that there was not any one day in the yeere, but it was dedicated to some Saint or other. In reverence of whom, and for their sakes, he approved by divers arguments & reasons, that a man & his wife ought to abstaine from bedding together. Hereto he added, that those Saints dayes had their fasts & feasts, beside the foure seasons of the yeere, the vigils of the Apostles, and a thousand other holy dayes, with Fridayes, Saturdayes, & Sundayes, in honour of our Lords rest, and all the sacred time of Lent; as also certaine observations of the Moone, & infinite other exceptions beside; thinking perhaps, that it was as convenient for men to refraine from their wives conversation, as he did often times

from sitting in the Court. These were his daily documents to his young wife, wherewith (poore soule) she became so tired, as nothing could be more irksome to her; and very carefull he was, lest any other should teach her what belonged to working daies, because he would have her know none but holidayes.

Afterward it came to passe, that the season waxing extremely hot, *Signior Ricciardo* would goe recreate himselfe at his house in the Countrey, neere unto the black Mountaine, where for his faire wives more contentment, he continued divers dayes together. And for her further recreation, he gave order, to have a day of fishing; he going aboard a small Pinnace among the Fishers, and shee was in another, consorted with divers other Gentlewomen, in whose company shee shewed her selfe very well pleased. Delight made them launch further into the Sea, then either the Judge was willing they should have done, or agreed with respect of their owne safety. For suddenly a Galliot came upon them, wherein was one *Pagamino*, a Pyrate very famous in those dayes, who espying the two Pinnaces, made out presently to them, and seized on that wherein the women were. When he beheld there so faire a young woman, he coveted after no other purchase; but mounting her into his Galliot, in the sight of *Signior Ricciardo*, who (by this time) was fearefully landed, he caried her away with him. When *Signior Judge* had seene this theft (he being so jealous of his wife, as scarcely he would let the ayre breathe on her) it were a needlesse demand, to know whether he was offended, or no. He made complaint at *Pisa*, and in many other places beside, what injury he had sustained by those Pyrates, in carying his wife thus away from him: but all was in vaine, he neither (as yet) knew the man, nor whether he had conveyed her from him. *Pagamino* perceiving what a beautifull woman she was, made the more precious esteeme of his purchase, and being himselfe a bachelor, intended to keepe her as his owne; comforting her with kind and pleasing speeches, not using any harsh or uncivill demeanor to her, because shee wept and lamented grievously. But when night came, her husbands Calendar falling from her girdle, and all the fasts & feasts quite out of her remembrance; she received such curteous consolations from *Pagamino*, that before they could arrive at *Monaco*, the Judge & his Law cases, were almost out of her memory, such was his affable behaviour to her, and she began to converse with him in more friendly manner, and he entreating her as honourably, as if shee had beene his espoused wife.

Within a short while after, report had acquainted *Ricciardo* the Judge, where, & how his wife was kept from him; whereupon he determined, not to send any one, but rather to go himselfe in person, & to redeem her from the Pyrate, with what sums of mony he should demand. By Sea he passed to *Monaco*, where he saw his wife, and shee him, as (soone after) shee made known to *Pagamino*. On the morrow following, *Signior Ricciardo* meeting with *Pagamino*, made means to be acquainted with him, & within lesse then an houres space, they grew into familiar & private conference: *Pagamino* yet pretending not to know him, but expected what issue this talke would sort to. When time served, the Judge discoursed the occasion of his comming thither, desiring him to demand what ransome he pleased, & that he might have his wife home with him; whereto *Pagamino* thus answered.

My Lord Judge, you are welcome hither, and to answer you breiefely very true it is, that I have a yong Gentlewoman in my house, whome I neither know to be your wife, of any other mans else whatsoever: for I am ignorant both of you and her, albeit she hath remained a while here with me. If you bee her husband, as you seeme to avouch, I will bring her to you, for you appeare to be a worthy Gentleman, and (questionles) she cannot chuse but know you perfectly. If she do confirme that which you have said, and be willing to depart hence with you: I shall rest well satisfied, and will have no other recompence for her ransome (in regard of your grave and reverent yeares) but what your selfe shall please to give me. But if it fall out otherwise, and prove not to be as you have affirmed: you shall offer me great wrong, in seeking to get her from me; because I am a young man, and can as well maintaine so faire a wife, as you, or any man else that I know. Beleeve it certainly, replied the Judge, that she is my wife, and if you please to bring me where she is, you shall soone perceive it: for, she will presently cast her armes about my neck, and I durst adventure the utter losse of her, if shee denie to doe it in your presence. Come on then, said *Pagamino*, and let us delay the time no longer.

When they were entred into *Pagaminoes* house, and sate downe in the Hall, he caused her to be called, and shee, being readily prepared for the purpose, came forth of her Chamber before them both, where friendly they sate conversing together; never uttering any one word to *Signior Ricciardo*, or knowing him from any other stranger, that *Pagamino* might bring in to the house with him. Which when my Lord the Judge beheld, (who expected to finde a farre more gracious welcome) he stode as a man amazed, saying to himselfe. Perhaps the extraordinary grieffe and melancholly, suffered by me since the time of her losse; hath so altred my wonted complexion, that shee is not able to take knowledge of me. Wherefore, going neerer to her, hee said. Faire Love, dearely have I bought your going on fishing, because never man felt the like afflictions, as I have done since the day when I lost you: but by this your uncivill silence, you seeme as if you did not know me. Why dearest Love, seest thou not that I am thy husband *Ricciardo*, who am come to pay what ransome this Gentleman shall demaund, even in the house where now we are: so to convey thee home againe, upon his kinde promise of thy deliverance, after the payment of thy ransome?

*Bertolomea* turning towards him, and seeming as if shee smiled to her selfe, thus answered. Sir, speake you to me? Advise your selfe well, least you mistake me for some other, because, concerning my selfe, I doe not remember, that ever I did see you till now. How now quoth *Ricciardo*? consider better what you say, looke more circumspectly on me, and then you will remember, that I am your loving husband, and my name is *Ricciardo di Cinzica*. You must pardon

me Sir, replied *Bertolomea*, I know it not so fitting for a modest woman (though you (perhaps) are so perswaded) to stand gazing in the faces of men: and let mee looke upon you never so often, certaine I am, that (till this instant) I have not seene you.

My Lord Judge conceived in his mind, that thus she denied all knowledge of him, as standing in feare of *Pagamino*, and would not confesse him in his presence. Wherefore hee entreated of *Pagamino*, to afford him so much favour, that he might speake alone with her in her Chamber. *Pagamino* answered, that he was well contented therewith, provided, that he should not kisse her against her will. Then he requested *Bertolomea*, to goe with him alone into her Chamber, there to heare what he could say, and to answere him as shee found occasion. When they were come into the Chamber, and none there present but he and shee, *Signior Ricciardo* began in this manner. Heart of my heart, life of my life, the sweetest hope that I have in this world; wilt thou not know thine owne *Ricciardo*, who loveth thee more then he doth himselfe? Why art thou so strange? Am I so disfigured, that thou knowest me not? Behold me with a more pleasing eye, I pray thee.

*Bertolomea* smiled to her selfe, and without suffering him to proceed any further in speech, returned him this answere. I would have you to understand Sir, that my memory is not so oblivious, but I know you to be *Signior Ricciardo di Cinzica*, and my husband by name or title; but during the time that I was with you, it very ill appeared that you had any knowledge of me. For if you had been so wise and considerate, as (in your own judgement) the world reputed you to be, you could not be voide of so much apprehension, but did apparantly perceive, that I was young, fresh, and cheerefully disposed; and so (by consequent) meet to know matters requisite for such young women, beside allowance of food & garments, though bashfulnesse & modesty forbid to utter it. But if studying the Lawes were more welcome to you then a wife, you ought not to have married, & you loose the worthy reputation of a Judge, when you fall from that venerable profession, and make your selfe a common proclaimer of feasts and fasting dayes, lenten seasons, vigils, & solemnities due to Saints, which prohibite the houshold conversation of husbands and wives.

Here am I now with a worthy Gentleman, that entertained mee with very honourable respect, and here I live in this chamber, not so much as hearing of any feasts or fasting daies; for, neither Fridaies, Saturdaies, vigils of Saints, or any lingering Lents, enter at this doore: but here is honest and civill conversation, better agreeing with a youthfull disposition, then those harsh documents wherewith you tutord me. Wherefore my purpose is to continue here with him, as being a place sutable to my mind & youth, referring feasts, vigils, & fasting dayes, to a more mature & stayed time of age, when the body is better able to endure them, & the mind may be prepared for such ghostly meditations: depart therefore at your owne pleasure, and make much of your Calender, without enjoying any company of mine, for you heare my resolved determination.

The Judge hearing these words, was overcome with exceeding griefe, & when she was silent, thus he began. Alas deare Love, what an answer is this? Hast thou no regard of thine owne honour, thy Parents, & friends? Canst thou rather affect to abide here, for the pleasures of this man, and so sin capitally, then to live at *Pisa* in the state of my wife? Consider deare heart, when this man shall waxe weary of thee, to thy shame & his owne disgrace, he will reject thee. I must and shall love thee for ever, and when I dye, I leave thee Lady and commandresse of all that is mine. Can an inordinate appetite, cause thee to be carelesse of thine honour, and of him that loves thee as his owne life? Alas, my fairest hope, say no more so, but returne home with me, and now that I am acquainted with thy inclination; I will endeavour heereafter to give thee better contentment. Wherefore (deare heart) doe not denie me, but change thy minde, and goe with me, for I never saw merry day since I lost thee.

Sir (quoth she) I desire no body to have care of mine honour, beside my selfe, because it cannot be here abused. And as for my parents, what respect had they of me, when they made me your wife: if then they could be so carelesse of mee, what reason have I to regard them now? And whereas you taxe me, that I cannot live here without capitall sin; farre is the thought thereof from me, for, here I am regarded as the wife of *Pagamino*, but at *Pisa*, you reputed me not worthy your society: because, by the point of the Moone, and the quadratures of Geometrie; the Planets held conjunction betweene you and me, whereas here I am subject to no such constellations. You say beside, that hereafter you will strive to give me better contentment then you have done: surely, in mine opinion it is no way possible, because our complexions are so farre different, as Ice is from fire, or gold from drosse. As for your allegation, of this Gentlemans rejecting me, when his humour is satisfied; should if it prove to be so (as it is the least part of my feare) what fortune soever shall betide me, never will I make any meanes to you, what miseries or misadventures may happen to me; but the world will afford me one resting place or other, and more to my contentment, then if I were with you. Therefore I tell you once againe, to live secured from all offence to holy Saints, and not to injury their feasts, fasts, vigills, and other ceremonious seasons: here is my demourance, and from hence I purpose not to part.

Our Judge was now in a wofull perplexity, and confessing his folly, in marrying a wife so yong, and far unfit for his age and abilitie: being halfe desperate, sad and displeased, he came forth of the Chamber, using divers speeches to *Pagamino*, whereof he made little or no account at all, and in the end, without any other successe, left his wife there, & returned home to *Pisa*. There, further afflictions fell upon him, because the people began to scorne him, demanding dayly of him, what was become of his gallant young wife, making hornes, with ridiculous pointings at him: whereby his sences became distracted, so that he ran raving about the streetes, and afterward died in very miserable manner. Which newes came no sooner to the eare of *Pagamino*, but, in the honourable affection hee bare to *Bertolomea*, he married her, with great solemnity; banishing all Fasts, Vigils,

and Lents from his house, and living with her in much felicity. Wherefore (faire Ladies) I am of opinion, that *Bernardo* of *Geneway*, in his disputation with *Ambroginolo*, might have shewne himselfe a great deale wiser, and spared his rash proceeding with his wife.

This tale was so merrily entertained among the whole company, that each one smiling upon another, with one consent commended *Dioneus*, maintaining that he spake nothing but the truth, & condemning *Bernardo* for his cruelty. Upon a generall silence commanded, the Queene perceiving that the time was now very farre spent, and every one had delivered their severall Novels, which likewise gave a period to her Royalty: shee gave the Crowne to Madam *Neiphila*, pleasantly speaking to her in this order. Heereafter, the government of these few people is committed to your trust and care, for with the day concludeth my dominion. Madam *Neiphila*, blushing at the honour done unto her, her cheekes appeared of a vermillion tincture, her eyes glittering with gracefull desires, and sparkling like the morning Starre. And after the modest murmure of the Assistants was ceased, and her courage in chearfull manner settled, seating her selfe higher then she did before, thus she spake.

Seeing it is so, that you have elected me your Queene, to varie somewhat from the course observed by them that went before me, whose government you have all so much commended: by approbation of your counsell, I am desirous to speake my mind, concerning what I wold have to be next followed. It is not unknown to you all, that to morrow shal be Friday, and Saturday the next day following, which are daies somewhat molestuous to the most part of men, for preparation of their weekly food & sustenance. Moreover, Friday ought to be reverently respected, in remembrance of him, who died to give us life, and endured his bitter passion, as on that day; which makes me to hold it fit and expedient, that wee should mind more weighty matters, and rather attend our prayers & devotions, then the repetition of tales or Novels. Now concerning Saturday, it hath bin a custom observed among women, to bath & wash themselves from such immundities as the former weekes toile hath imposed on them. Beside, it is a day of fasting, in honour of the ensuing Sabath, whereon no labour may be done, but the observation of holy exercises.

By that which hath bin saide, you may easily conceive, that the course which we have hitherto continued, cannot bee prosecuted, in one and the same manner: wherefore, I would advice and do hold it an action wel performed by us, to cease for these few dayes, from recounting any other Novels. And because we have remained here foure daies already, except we would allow the enlarging of our company, with some other friends that may resort unto us: I think it necessary to remove from hence, & take our pleasure in another place, which is already by me determined. When we shal be there assembled, and have slept on the discourses formerly delivered, let our next argument be still the mutabilities of Fortune, but especially to concerne such persons, as by their wit and ingenuity, industriously have attained to some matter earnestly desired, or else recovered againe, after the losse. Heereon let us severally study and premeditate, that the hearers may receive benefit thereby, with the comfortable maintenance of our harmlesse recreations; the priviledge of *Dioneus* alwayes reserved to himselfe.

Every one commended the Queens deliberation, concluding that it shold be accordingly prosecuted: and thereupon, the master of the houshold was called, to give him order for that evenings Table service, and what else concerned the time of the Queenes Royalty, wherein he was sufficiently instructed: which being done, the company arose, licensing every one to doe what they listed. The Ladies and Gentlemen walked to the Garden, and having sported themselves there a while; when the houre of supper came, they sate downe, and fared very daintily. Being risen from the Table, according to the Queenes command, Madam *Æmilia* led the dance, and the ditty following, was sung by Madam *Pampinea*, being answered by all the rest, as a Chorus.

*The Song.*

*And if not I, what Lady else can sing,  
Of those delights, which kind contentment bring?  
Come, come, sweet Love, the cause of my chiefe good,  
Of all my hopes, the firme and full effect;  
Sing we together, but in no sad moode,  
Of sighes or teares, which joy doth counterchecke:  
Stolne pleasures are delightfull in the taste,  
But yet Loves fire is often times too fierce;  
Consuming comfort with ore-speedy haste,  
Which into gentle hearts too far doth pierce.  
And if not I, &c.*

*The first day that I felt this fiery heate,  
So sweete a passion did possesse my soule,  
That though I found the torment sharpe, and great;  
Yet still me thought t'was but a sweete controule.  
Nor could I count it rude, or rigorous,  
Taking my wound from such a piercing eye:  
As made the paine most pleasing, gracious,  
That I desire in such assaults to die.  
And if not I, &c.*

*Grant then great God of Love, that I may still  
Enjoy the benefit of my desire;  
And honour her with all my deepest skill,  
That first enflamde my heart with holy fire.  
To her my bondage is free liberty,  
My sicknesse health, my tortures sweet repose;  
Say shee the word, in full felicity,  
All my extreames joyne in an happy close.  
Then if not I, what Lover else can sing,  
Of those delights which kind contentment bring.*

After this Song was ended, they sung divers other beside, and having great variety of instruments, they played to them as many pleasing dances. But the Queene considering that the meete houre for rest was come, with their lighted Torches before them they all repaired to their Chambers; sparing the other dayes next succeeding, for those reasons by the Queene alleaged, and spending the Sunday in solemne devotion.

### ***The ende of the second Day.***

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## **The Third Day.**

***Upon which Day, all matters to be discoursed on, doe passe under the regiment of Madam Neiphila: concerning such persons as (by their wit and industry) have attained to their long wished desires, or recovered something, supposed to be lost.***

### ***The Induction to the ensuing Discourses.***

The morning put on a vermillion countenance, and made the Sunne to rise blushing red, when the Queene (and all the faire company) were come abroade forth of their Chambers; the Seneshall or great Master of the Houshold, having (long before) sent all things necessary to the place of their next intended meeting. And the people which prepared there every needfull matter, suddainely when they saw the Queen was setting forward, charged all the rest of their followers, as if it had been preparation for a Campe; to make hast away with the carriages, the rest of the Familie remaining behind, to attend upon the Ladies and Gentlemen.

With a milde, majesticke, and gentle peace, the Queen rode on, being followed by the other Ladies, and the three young Gentlemen, taking their way towards the West; conducted by the musicall notes of sweete singing Nightingales, and infinite other pretty Birds beside, riding in a tract not much frequented, but richly abounding with faire hearbes and floures, which by reason of the Sunnes high mounting, beganne to open their bosome, and fill the fresh Ayre with their odoriferous perfumes. Before they had travelled two small miles distance, all of them pleasantly conversing together; they arrived at another goodly Palace, which being somewhat mounted above the plaine, was seated on the side of a little rising hill.

When they were entred there into, and had seene the great Hall, the Parlours, and beautifull Chambers, every one stupendiously furnished, with all convenient commodities to them belonging, and nothing wanting, that could be desired; they highly commended it, reputed the Lord thereof for a most worthy man, that had adorned it in such Princely manner. Afterward, being descended lower, and noting the most spacious and pleasant Court, the Sellars stored with the choysiest Wines, and delicate Springs of water every where running, their prayses then exceeded more and more. And being weary with beholding such variety of pleasures, they sate downe in a faire Gallery, which took the view of the whole Court, it being round engirt with trees and floures, whereof the season then yeilded great plenty. And then came the discreete Master of the Houshold, with divers servants attending on him, presenting them with Comfits, and other Banquetting, as also very singular Wines, to serve in sted of a breakfast.

Having thus reposed themselves a while, a Garden gate was set open to them, coasting on one side of the Pallace, and round inclosed with high mounted walles. Whereinto when they were entred, they found it to be a most beautifull Garden, stored with all varieties that possibly could be devised; and therefore they observed it the more respectively. The walkes and allyes were long and spacious, yet directly strait as an arrow, environed with spreading vines, whereon the grapes hung in copious clusters; which being come to their full ripenesse, gave so rare a smell throughout the Garden, with other sweete savours intermixed among, that they supposed to feele the fresh spiceries of the East.

It would require large length of time, to describe all the rarities of this place, deserving much more to be commended, then my best faculties will affoord me. In the middest of the Garden, was a square plot, after the resemblance of a Meadow, flourishing with high grasse, hearbes, and plants, beside a thousand diversities of floures, even as if by the art of painting they had beene there deputed. Round was it circled with very verdant Orange and Cedar Trees, their branches plentifully stored with fruite both old and new, as also the floures growing freshly among them, yeielding not onely a rare aspect to the eye, but also a delicate savour to the smell.

In the middest of this Meadow, stood a Fountaine of white Marble, whereon was engraven most



admirable workemanship, and within it (I know not whether it were by a naturall veine, or artificiall) flowing from a figure, standing on a Collomne in the midst of the Fountaine, such abundance of water, and so mounting up towards the Skies, that it was a wonder to behold. For after the high ascent, it fell downe againe into the wombe of the Fountaine, with such a noyse and pleasing murmur, as the streame that glideth from a mill. When the receptacle of the Fountaine did overflow the bounds, it streamed along the Meadow, by secret passages and chanel, very faire and artificially made, returning againe into every part of the Meadow, by the like wayes of cunning conveighance, which allowed it full course into the Garden, running swiftly thence down towards the plaine; but before it came thether, the very swift current of the streame, did drive two goodly Milles, which brought in great benefit to the Lord of the soile.

The sight of this Garden, the goodly grafts, plants, trees, hearbes, frutages, and flowers, the Springs, Fountaines, and prety rivolets streaming from it, so highly pleased the Ladies and Gentlemen, that among other infinite commendations, they spared not to say: if any Paradise remayned on the earth to be seene, it could not possibly bee in any other place, but onely was contained within the compasse of this Garden. With no meane pleasure and delight they walked round about it, making Chaplets of flowers, and other faire branches of the trees, continually hearing the Birds in mellodious notes, echoing and warbling one to another, even as if they envied each others felicities.

But yet another beauty (which before had not presented it selfe unto them) on a sodaine they perceyved; namely divers prety creatures in many parts of the Gardens. In one place Conies tripping about; in another place Hares: in a third part Goats browsing on the hearbes, & little yong Hindes feeding every where: yet without strife or warring together, but rather living in such a Domesticke and pleasing kinde of company, even as if they were appoynted to enstruct the most noble of all creatures, to imitate their sociable conversation.

When their senses had sufficiently banquetted on these several beauties, the tables were sodainly prepared about the Fountaine, where first they sung sixe Canzonets; and having paced two or three dances, they sate downe to dinner, according as the Queene ordained, being served in very sumptuous manner, with all kinde of costly and delicate viands, yet not any babling noise among them. The Tables being withdrawne, they played againe upon their instruments, singing and dancing gracefully together: till, in regard of the extreame heate, the *Queene* commanded to give over, and permitted such as were so pleased, to take their ease and rest. But some, as not satisfied with the places pleasures, gave themselves to walking: others fell to reading the lives of the Romanes; some to the Chesse, and the rest to other recreations.

But, after the dayes warmth was more mildely qualified, and everie one had made benefit of their best content: they went (by order sent from the *Queene*) into the Meadow where the Fountaine stood, and being set about it, as they used to do in telling their Tales (the argument appointed by the *Queene* being propounded) the first that had the charge imposed, was *Philostratus*, who began in this manner.

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***Massetto di Lamporechio, by counterfetting himselfe to be dumbe, became a Gardiner in a Monastery of Nunnes, where he had familiar conversation with them all.***

## **The first Novell.**

***Wherein is declared, that virginity is very hardly to be kept, in all places.***

Most woorthy Ladies, there wantes no store of men and women, that are so simple, as to credit for a certainty, that so soon as a yong virgin hath the veile put on hir head (after it is once shorn and filleted) & the blacke Cowle given to cover her withall: shee is no longer a woman, nor more sensible of feminine affections, then as if in turning Nun, shee became converted to a stone. And if (perchance) they heard some matters, contrary to their former settled perswasion; then they growe so furiously offended, as if one had committed a most foul and enormous sinne, directly against the course of nature. And the torrent of this opinion hurries them on so violently, that they will not admit the least leisure to consider, how (in such a full scope of liberty) they have power to do what they list, yea beyonde all meanes of sufficient satisfying; never remembering withall, how potent the priviledge of idlenesse is, especially when it is backt by solitude.

In like manner, there are other people now, who do verily believe, that the Spade and Pickaxe, grosse feeding and labour, do quench all sensuall and fleshly concupiscences, yea, in such as till and husband the grounds, by making them dull, blockish, and (almost) meere senslesse of understanding. But I will approve (according as the Queene hath commanded me, and within the compasse of her direction) and make it apparant to you al, by a short and pleasant Tale; how greatly they are abused by error, that build upon so weake a foundation.

Not far from *Alexandria*, there was (and yet is) a great & goodly Monastery, belonging to the Lord of those parts, who is termed the Admirall. And therein, under the care and trust of one woman, divers virgins were kept as recluses or Nunnes, vowed to chastity of life; out of whose number, the Soldan of *Babylon* (under whom they lived in subjection) at every three yeares end, had usually three of these virgins sent him. At the time whereof I am now to speak, there remained in the Monastery, no more but eight religious Sisters only, beside the Governesse or

Lady Abbesse, and an honest poore man, who was a Gardiner, and kept the garden in commendable order.

His wages being small, and he not well contented therewith, would serve there no longer: but making his accounts even, with the *Factotum* or Bayliffe belonging to the house, returned thence to the village of *Lamporechio*, being a native of the place. Among many other that gave him welcom home, was a yong Hebrew pezant of the country, sturdy, strong, and yet comely of person, being named *Masset*. But because he was born not farre off from *Lamporechio*, and had there bin brought up all his yonger dayes, his name of *Masset* (according to their vulgar speech) was turned to *Massetto*, and therefore he was usually called and knowne, by the name of *Massetto of Lamporechio*.

*Massetto*, falling in talke with the honest poore man, whose name was *Lurco*, demanded of him what services hee had done in the Monasterie, having continued there so long a time? Quoth *Lurco* I laboured in the Garden, which is very faire and great; then I went to the Forest to fetch home wood, and cleft it for their Chamber fuell, drawing uppe all their water beside, with many other toilesom services else: but the allowance of my wages was so little, as it would not pay for the shooes I wore. And that which was worst of all, they being all yong women, I thinke the devill dwels among them, for a man cannot doe any thing to please them. When I have bene busie at my worke in the Garden, one would come & say, Put this heere, put that there; and others would take the dibble out of my hand, telling me, that I did not performe any thing well, making me so weary of their continuall trifling, as I have lefte all businesse, gave over the Garden, and what for one molestation, as also many other; I intended to tarry no longer there, but came away, as thou seest. And yet the *Factotum* desired me at my departing, that if I knew any one, who would undertake the aforesaid labours, I should send him thither, as (indeed) I promised to do; but let mee fall sicke and dye, before I helpe to send them any.

When *Massetto* had heard the Words of *Lurco*, hee was so desirous to dwell among the Nunnes, that nothing else now hammered in his head: for he meant more subtilly, then poore *Lurco* did, and made no doubt, to please them sufficiently. Then considering with himselfe, how best he might bring his intent to effect; which appeared not easily to be done, he could question no further therein with *Lurco*, but onely demanded other matters of him, and among them said. Introth thou didst well *Lurco*, to come away from so tedious a dwelling; had he not need to be more then a man that is to live with such women? It were better for him to dwell among so many divels, because they understand not the tenth part that womens wily wits can dive into.

After their conference was ended, *Massetto* began to beat his braines, how he might compasse to dwell among them, & knowing that he could well enough performe all the labours, whereof *Lurco* had made mention: he cared not for any losse he should sustaine thereby: but onely stode in doubt of his entertainment, because he was too yong and sprightly. Having pondered on many imaginations, he saide to himselfe. The place is farre enough distant hence, and none there can take knowledge of mee; if I have wit sufficient, cleanly to make them beleeeve that I am dumbe, then (questionlesse) I shall be received. And resolving to prosecute this determination, he tooke a Spade on his shoulder, and without revealing to any body, whether he went, in the disguise of a poore labouring countryman, he travelled to the Monastery.

When he was there arrived, he found the great gate open, and entering in boldly, it was his good hap to espy the *Fac-totum* in the court, according as *Lurco* had given description of him. Making signes before him, as if he were both dumbe and deafe; he manifested, that he craved an Almes for Gods sake, making shewes beside, that if need required, he could cleave wood, or do any reasonable kinde of service. The *Fac-totum* gladly gave him food, and afterward shewed him divers knotty logs of wood, which the weake strength of *Lurco* had left uncloven; but this fellow being more active and lusty, quickly rent them all to pieces. Now it so fell out, that the *Fac-totum* must needs go to the Forrest, and tooke *Massetto* along with him thither: where causing him to fell divers Trees, by signes he had him to lade the two Asses therewith, which commonly carried home all the wood, and so drive them to the Monasterie before him, which *Massetto* knew well enough how to do, and performed it very effectually.

Many other servile offices were there to bee done, which caused the *Fac-totum* to make use of his paines divers other dayes beside: in which time, the Lady Abbesse chancing to see him, demanded of the *Fac-totum* what he was? Madam (quoth hee) a poore labouring man, who is both deafe and dumbe: hither he came to crave an almes the other day, which in charity I could do no lesse but give him; for which hee hath done many honest services about the house. It seemes beside, that hee hath some pretty skill in Gardening, so that if I can perswade him to continue here, I make no question of his able services: for the old silly man is gone, and we have neede of such a stout fellow, to do the businesse belonging unto the Monastery, and one fitter for the turne, comes sildome hither. Moreover, in regard of his double imperfections, the Sisters can sustaine no impeachment by him. Whereto the Abbesse answered, saying; By the faith of my body, you speake but the truth: understand then, if hee have any knowledge in Gardening, and whether hee will dwell heere, or no: which compasse so kindly as you can. Let him have a new paire of shoes, fill his belly daily full of meate, flatter, and make much of him, for wee shall finde him worke enough to do. All which, the *Fac-totum* promised to fulfill sufficiently.

*Massetto*, who was not farre off from them all this while, but seemed seriously busied, about sweeping and making cleane the Court, hearde all these speeches; and being not a little joyfull of them, saide to himselfe. If once I come to worke in your Garden, let the prooffe yeelde praise of my skill and knowledge. When the *Fac-totum* perceived, that he knew perfectly how to undergo his businesse, and had questioned him by signes, concerning his willingnesse to serve there still, and received the like answer also, of his dutifull readinesse thereto; he gave him order, to worke

in the Garden, because the season did now require it; and to leave all other affayres for the Monastery, attending now onely the Gardens preparation.

As *Massetto* was thus about his Garden employment, the Nunnes began to resort thither, and thinking the man to bee dumbe and deafe indeede, were the more lavish of their language, mocking and flowting him very immodestly, as being perswaded, that he heard them not. And the Lady Abbesse, thinking he might as well be an Eunuch, as deprived both of hearing and speaking, stood the lesse in feare of the Sisters walks, but referred them to their owne care and providence. On a day, *Massetto* having laboured somewhat extraordinarily, lay downe to rest him selfe awhile under the trees, and two delicate yong Nunnes, walking there to take the aire, drew neere to the place where he dissembled sleeping; and both of them observing his comelinesse of person, began to pity the poverty of his condition, but much more the misery of his great defectes. Then one of them, who had a little livelier spirit then the other, thinking *Massetto* to be fast asleepe, began in this manner.

Sister (quoth she) if I were faithfully assured of thy secrecie, I would tell thee a thing which I have often thought on, and it may (perhaps) redound to thy profit. [Example, at least excuses formed to that intent prevaieth much with such kind of religious women.] Sister, replied the other Nun, speake your minde boldly, and beleve it (on my Maiden-head) that I will never reveale it to any creature living. Encouraged by this solemne answer, the first Nun thus prosecuted her former purpose, saying. I know not Sister, whether it hath entred into thine understanding or no, how strictly we are here kept and attended, never any man daring to adventure among us, except our good and honest *Fac-totum*, who is very aged; and this dumbe fellow, maimed, and made imperfect by nature, and therefore not woorthy the title of a man. Ah Sister, it hath oftentimes bin told me, by Gentle-women comming hither to visite us, that all other sweetes in the world, are meere mockeries, to the incomparable pleasures of man and woman, of which we are barred by our unkind parents, binding us to perpetuall chastity, which they were never able to observe themselves.

A Sister of this house once told me, that before her turne came to be sent to the Soldane, she fell in frailty, with a man that was both lame and blinde, and discovering the same to her Ghostly Father in confession; he absolved her of that sinne; affirming, that she had not transgressed with a man, because he wanted his rationall and understanding parts. Behold Sister, heere lyes a creature, almost formed in the selfe-same mold, dumb and deafe, which are two the most rational and understanding parts that do belong to any man, and therefore no Man, wanting them. If folly & frailty should be committed with him (as many times since hee came hither it hath run in my minde) hee is by Nature, sworne to such secrecie, that he cannot (if he would) be a blabbe thereof. Beside, the Lawes and constitutions of our Religion doth teach us, that a sinne so assuredly concealed, is more then halfe absolved.

*Ave Maria* Sister (said the other Nunne) what kinde of words are these you utter? Doe not you know, that wee have promised our virginity to God? Oh Sister (answered the other) how many things are promised to him every day, and not one of a thousand kept or performed? If wee have made him such a promise, and some of our weaker witted Sisters do performe it for us, no doubt but he will accept it in part of payment. Yea but Sister, replied the second Nunne againe, there is another danger lying in our way: If wee prove to be with childe, how shall we doe then? Sister (quoth our couragious Wench) thou art afraid of a harme, before it happen, if it come so to passe, let us consider on it then: thou art but a Novice in matters of such moment, and wee are provided of a thousand meanes, whereby to prevent conception. Or, if they should faile, wee are so surely fitted, that the world shall never know it: let it suffice, our lives must not be (by any) so much as suspected, our Monasterie questioned, or our Religion rashly scandalized. Thus shee schooled her younger Sister in wit, albeit as forward as she in will, and longed as desirously, to know what kinde a creature a man was.

After some other questions, how this intention of theirs might be safely brought to full effect: the sprightly Nunne, that had wit at will, thus answered. You see Sister (quoth she) it is now the hour of midday, when all the rest of our Sisterhood are quiet in their Chambers, because we are then allowed to sleepe, for our earlier rising to morning Mattins. Here are none in the Garden now but our selves, and, while I awake him, be you the watch, and afterward follow me in my fortune, for I will valiantly leade you the way. *Massetto* imitating a dogges sleepe, heard all this conspiracie intended against him, and longed as earnestly, till shee came to awake him. Which being done, he seeming very simply sottish, and she chearing him with flattering behaviour: into the close Arbour they went, which the Sunnes bright eye could not pierce into, and there I leave it to the Nunnes owne approbation, whether *Massetto* was a man rationall, or no. Ill deedes require longer time to contrive, then act, and both the Nunnes, having beene with *Massetto* at this new forme of confession, were enjoyned (by him) such an easie and silent penance, as brought them the oftner to shrift, and made him to proove a perfect Confessour.

Desires obtained, but not fully satisfied, doe commonly urge more frequent accesse, then wisdomes thinkes expedient, or can continue without discoverie. Our two Joviall Nunnes, not a little proud of their private stolne pleasures, so long resorted to the close Arbour; till an other Sister, who had often observed their haunt thither, by meanes of a little hole in her window; that shee began to suspect them with *Massetto*, and imparted the same to two other Sisters, all three concluding, to accuse them before the Lady Abbesse. But upon a further conference had with the offenders, they changed opinion, tooke the same oath as the forewoman had done, and because they would be free from any taxation at all: they revealed their adventures to the other three ignorants, and so fell all eight into one formall confederacie, but by good and warie observation, least the Abbesse her selfe should descry them; finding poore *Massetto* such plenty of Garden-

worke, as made him very doubtfull in pleasing them all.

It came to passe in the end, that the Lady Abbesse, who all this while imagined no such matter, walking all alone in the Garden on a day, found *Massetto* sleeping under an Almond tree, having then very little businesse to doe, because he had wrought hard all the night before. Shee observed him to be an handsome man, young, lusty, well limbde, and proportioned, having a mercifull commisseration of his dumbnesse and deafenesse, being perswaded also in like manner, that if he were an Eunuch too, he deserved a thousand times the more to be pittied. The season was exceeding hot, and he lay downe so carelesly to sleepe, that something was noted, wherein shee intended to be better resolved, almost falling sicke of the other Nunnes disease. Having awaked him, she commanded him (by signes) that he should follow her to her chamber, where he was kept close so long, that the Nunnes grew offended, because the Gardener came not to his dayly labour.

Well may you imagine that *Massetto* was no misse-proud man now, to be thus advanced from the Garden to the Chamber, and by no worse woman, then the Lady Abbesse her selfe, what signes, shewes, or what language he speaks there, I am not able to expresse; onely it appeard that his behaviour pleased her so well, as it procured his daily repairing thither; and acquainted her with such familiar conversation, as shee would have condemned in the Nuns her daughters, but that they were wise enough to keepe it from her. Now began *Massetto* to consider with himselfe, that he had undertaken a taske belonging to great *Hercules*, in giving contentment to so many, and by continuing dumbe in this manner, it would redound to his no meane detriment. Whereupon, as hee was one night sitting by the Abbesse, the string that restrained his tongue from speech, brake on a sodaine, and thus he spake.

Madam, I have often heard it said, that one Cocke may doe service to ten severall Hennes, but ten men can (very hardly) even with all their best endeavour, give full satisfaction every way to one woman; and yet I am tied to content nine, which is farre beyond the compasse of my power to doe. Already have I performed so much Garden and Chamber-worke, that I confesse my selfe starke tired, and can travaile no further; and therefore let me entreate you to lysence my departure hence, or finde some meanes for my better ease. The Abbesse hearing him speake, who had so long served there dumbe; being stricken into admiration, and accounting it almost a miracle, saide. How commeth this to passe? I verily beleevved thee to be dumbe. Madam (quoth *Massetto*) so I was indeed, but not by Nature; onely I had a long lingering sicknesse, which bereft me of speech, and which I have not onely recovered againe this night, but shall ever remaine thankfull to you for it.

The Abbesse verily credited his answer, demanding what he meant, in saying, that he did service to nine? Madam, quoth he, this were a dangerous question, and not easily answered before all the eight Sisters. Upon this reply, the Abbesse plainly perceived, that not onely shee had fallen into folly, but all the Nunnes likewise cried guilty too: wherefore being a woman of sound discretion, she would not grant that *Massetto* should depart, but to keepe him still about the Nunnes businesse, because the Monastery should not be scandalized by him. And the *Fac-totum* being dead a little before, his strange recovery of speech revealed, and some things else more neerely concerning them: by generall consent, & with the good liking of *Massetto*, he was created the *Fac-totum* of the Monasterie.

All the neighbouring people dwelling thereabout, who knew *Massetto* to be dumbe, by fetching home wood daily from the Forrest, and divers employments in other places; were made to beleevve that by the Nunnes devoute prayers and discipline, as also the merits of the Saint, in whose honour the Monastery was built and erected, *Massetto* had his long restrained speech restored, and was now become their sole *Fac-totum*, having power now to employ others in drudgeries, and ease himselfe of all such labours. And albeit he make the Nunnes to be fruitfull, by encreasing some store of yonger Sisters; yet all matters were so close & cleanly carried, as it was never talkt of, till after the death of the Ladie Abbesse, when *Massetto* beganne to grow in good yeares, and desired, to returne home to his Native abiding, which (within a while after) was granted him.

Thus *Massetto*, being rich and old, returned home like a wealthy Father, taking no care for the nursing of his children, but bequeathed them to the place where they were bred and born, having (by his wit and ingenious apprehension) made such a benefit of his youthfull years, that now he merrily tooke ease in his age.

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***A Query of the Stable, belonging to Agilulffo; King of the Lombards, found the meanes of access to the Queenes bed, without any knowledge or consent in her. This being secretly discovered by the King, and the party knowne, he gave him a marke, by shearing the haire of his head. Whereupon, he that was so shorne, sheared likewise the heads of all his fellowes in the lodging, and so escaped the punishment intended towards him.***

## **The second Novell.**

***Wherein is signified, the providence of a wise man, when he shall have reason to use revenge. And the cunning craft of another, when hee compasseth meanes to defend***

*himselfe from perill.*

When the Novell of *Philostratus* was concluded, which made some of the Ladies blush, and the rest to smile: it pleased the Queene, that Madam *Pampinea* should follow next, to second the other gone before; when she, smiling on the whole assembly, began thus. There are some men so shallow of capacity, that they will (neverthelesse) make shew of knowing and understanding such things, as neither they are able to doe, nor appertaine to them: whereby they will sometimes reprehend other mens errors, and such faults as they have unwillingly committed, thinking thereby to hide their owne shame, when they make it much more apparant and manifest. For prooffe whereof, faire company, in a contrary kinde I will shew you the subtill cunning of one, who (perhaps) might be reputed of lesse reckoning then *Massetto*; and yet hee went beyond a King, that thought himselfe to be a much wiser man.

*Agilulffo*, King of *Lombardie*, according as his Predecessours had done before him, made the principall seate of his Kingdome, in the Citie of *Pavia*, having embraced in mariage, *Tendelinga*, the late left widdow of *Vetario*, who likewise had beene King of the *Lombards*; a most beautifull, wise and vertuous Lady, but made unfortunate by a mischance. The occurrences and estate of the whole Realme, being in an honourable, quiet and well settled condition, by the discreete care and providence of the King; a Querrie appertaining to the Queenes Stable of Horse, being a man but of meane and lowe quality, though comely of person, and of equall stature to the King; became immeasurably amorous of the Queene. And because his base and servile condition, had endued him with so much understanding, as to know infallibly, that his affection was mounted, beyond the compasse of conveniencie; wisely hee concealed it to himselfe, not acquainting any one therewith, or daring so much, as to discover it either by lookes, or any other affectionate behaviour.

And although hee lived utterly hopelesse, of ever attaining to his hearts desires; yet notwithstanding, hee proudly gloried, that his love had soared so high a pitch, as to be enamoured of a Queene. And dayly, as the fury of his flame encreased; so his carriage was farre above his fellowes and companions, in the performing of all such serviceable duties, as any way he imagined might content the Queene. Whereon ensued, that whensoever shee roade abroad to take the ayre, shee used oftner to mount on the Horse, which this Querrie brought when shee made her choise, then any of the other that were led by his fellowes. And this did he esteeme as no meane happinesse to him, to order the stirrope for her mounting, and therefore gave dayly his due attendance: so that, to touch the Stirrope, but (much more) to put her foote into it, or touch any part of her garments, he thought it the onely heaven on earth.

But, as we see it oftentimes come to passe, that by how much the lower hope declineth, so much the higher love ascendeth; even so fell it out with this poore Querry; for, most irkesome was it to him, to endure the heavy waight of his continuall oppressions, not having any hope at all of the very least mitigation. And being utterly unable to relinquish his love divers times he resolved on some desperate conclusion, which might yet give the world an evident testimony, that he dyed for the love he bare to the Queene. And upon this determination, hee grounded the successe of his future fortune, to dye in compassing some part of his desire, without either speaking to the Queene, or sending any missive of his love; for to speake or write, were meerely in vaine, and drew on a worse consequence then death, which he could bestow on himselfe more easily, and when he listed.

No other course now beleagers his braines, but onely for secret accesse to the Queenes bed, and how he might get entrance into her Chamber, under colour of the King, who (as he knew very well) slept manie nights together from the Queene. Wherefore, to see in what manner, & what the usuall habit was of the King, when he came to keepe companie with his Queene: he hid himselfe divers nights in a Gallery, which was betweene both their lodging Chambers. At length, he saw the King come forth of his Chamber, himselfe all alone, with a faire night-mantle wrapt about him, carrying a lighted Taper in the one hand, and a small white Wand in the other, so went he on to the Queenes lodging; and knocking at the doore once or twice with the wand, and not using any word, the doore opened, the light was left without, and he entered the Chamber, where he stayed not long, before his returning backe againe, which likewise very diligently he observed.

So familiar was he in the Wardrobe, by often fetching and returning the King and Queenes furnitures; that the fellowe to the same Mantle, which the King wore when he went to the Queene, very secretly he conveyed away thence with him, being provided of a Light, and the verie like Wand. Now bestowes he costly bathings on his body, that the least sent of the Stable might not be felt about him; and finding a time sutable to his desire, when he knew the King to be at rest in his owne Lodging, and all else sleeping in their beds; closely he steals into the Gallery, where alighting his Taper, with Tinder purposely brought thither, the Mantle folded about him, and the Wand in his hand, valiantly he adventures upon his lives perill. Twice hee knockt softly at the doore, which a wayting woman immediatly opened, and receyving the Light, went forth into the Gallery, while the supposed King, was conversing with the Queene.

Alas good Queene, heere is sinne committed, without any guiltie thought in thee, as (within a while after) it plainly appeared. For, the Querry having compassed what he most coveted, and fearing to forfeite his life by delay, when his amorous desire was indifferently satisfied: returned backe as he came, the sleepy waiting woman not so much as looking on him, but rather glad, that she might get her to rest againe. Scarcely was the Querrie stept into his bed, unheard or discerned by any of his fellowes, divers of them lodging both in that and the next Chamber: but it pleased the King to visite the Queene, according to his wonted manner, to the no little mervaile

of the drowsie wayting woman, who was never twice troubled in a night before. The King being in bed, whereas alwayes till then, his resort to the Queene, was altogether in sadnesse and melancholly, both comming and departing without speaking one word: now his Majestie was become more pleasantly disposed, whereat the Queene began not a little to mervaile. Now trust mee Sir, quoth shee, this hath been a long wished, and now most welcome alteration, vouchsafing twice in a night to visite me, and both within the compasse of one houre; for it cannot be much more, since your being here, and now comming againe.

The King hearing these words, sodainly presumed, that by some counterfeit person or other, the Queene had been this night beguiled: wherefore (very advisedly) hee considered, that in regard the party was unknowne to her, and all the women about her; to make no outward appearance of knowing it, but rather concealed it to himselfe. Farre from the indiscretion of some hare-braind men, who presently would have answered and sworne; I came not hither this night, till now. Whereupon many dangers might ensue, to the dishonour and prejudice of the Queene; beside, hir error being discovered to hir, might afterward be an occasion, to urge a wandring in her appetite, and to covet after change againe. But by this silence, no shame redounded to him or her, whereas prating, must needes be the publisher of open infamie: yet was hee much vexed in his minde, which neither by lookes or words hee would discover, but pleasantly said to the Queene. Why Madame, although I was once heere before to night, I hope you mislike not my second seeing you, nor if I should please to come againe. No truely Sir, quoth she, I only desire you to have care of your health. Well, said the King, I will follow your counsaile, and now returne to mine owne lodging againe, committing my Queene to her good rest.

His blood boyling with rage and distemper, by such a monstrous injurie offered him; he wrapt his night-mantle about him, and leaving his Chamber, imagining, that whatsoever he was, needes he must be one of his owne house: he tooke a light in his hand, and convayed it into a little Lanthorne, purposing to be resolved in his suspection. No guests or strangers were now in his Court, but onely such as belonged to his household, who lodged altogether about the Escurie and Stables, being there appointed to divers beds. Now, this was his conceite, that whosoever had beene so lately familiar with the Queene, his heart and pulse could (as yet) be hardly at rest, but rather would be troubled with apparant agitation, as discovering the guilt of so great an offender. Many Chambers had hee passed thorow, where all were soundly sleeping, and yet he felt both their brests and pulses.

At last he came to the lodging of the man indeede, that had so impudently usurped his place, who could not as yet sleepe, for joy of his atchieved adventure. When he espied the King come in, knowing well the occasion of his search, he began to waxe very doubtfull, so that his heart and pulse beating extremely, he felt a further addition of feare, as being confidently perswaded, that there was now no other way but death, especially if the King discovered his agony. And although many considerations were in his braine, yet because he saw that the King was unarmed, his best refuge was, to make shew of sleepe, in expectation what the King intended to doe. Among them all he had sought, yet could not find any likelihood, whereby to gather a grounded probability; untill he came to this Querry, whose heart and pulses laboured so sternely, that he said to himselfe; yea mary, this is the man that did the deede.

Neverthesse, purposing to make no apparance of his further intention, he did nothing else to him, but drawing foorth a paire of sheares, which purposely he brought thither with him, he clipped away a part of his lockes, which (in those times) they used to weare very long, to the end that he might the better know him the next morning, and so returned backe to his lodging againe. The Querry, who partly saw, but felt what was done to him; perceived plainely (being a subtil ingenious fellow) for what intent he was thus marked. Wherefore, without any longer dallying, up he rose, and taking a paire of sheares, wherewith they used to trim their Horses; softly he went from bed to bed, where they all lay yet soundly sleeping, and clipt away each mans locke from his right eare, in the selfe same manner as the King had done his, and being not perceived by any one of them, quietly he laide him downe againe.

In the morning, when the King was risen, he gave command that before the Pallace gates were opened, all his whole Family should come before him, as instantly his will was fulfilled. Standing all uncovered in his presence, he began to consider with himselfe, which of them was the man that he had marked. And seeing the most part of them to have their lockes cut, all after one and the selfe same manner; marvailing greatly, he saide to himselfe. The man whom I seeke for, though he be but of meane and base condition, yet it plainely appeareth, that he is of no deject or common understanding. And seeing, that without further clamour and noyse, he could not find out the party he looked for; he concluded, not to win eternall shame, by compassing a poore revenge: but rather (by way of admonition) to let the offender know in a word, that he was both noted and observed. So turning to them all, he saide; He that hath done it, let him be silent, and doe so no more, and now depart about your businesse.

Some other turbulent spirited man, no imprisonments, tortures, examinations, and interrogatories, could have served his turne; by which course of proceeding, he makes the shame to be publicly knowne, which reason requireth to keepe concealed. But admit that condigne vengeance were taken, it diminisheth not one title of the shame, neither qualifieth the peoples bad affections, who will lash out as liberally in scandall, and upon the very least babling rumor. Such therefore as heard the Kings words, few though they were, yet truly wise; marvelled much at them, and by long examinations among themselves, questioned, but came far short of his meaning; the man onely excepted, whom indeede they concerned, and by whom they were never discovered, so long as the King lived, neither did he dare at any time after, to hazard his life in the like action, under the frownes or favour of Fortune.

***Under colour of Confession, and of a most pure conscience, a faire young Gentlewoman, being amourosly affected to an honest man; induced a devoute and solemne religious Friar, to advise her in the meanes (without his suspition or perceiving) how to enjoy the benefit of her friend, and bring her desires to their full effect.***

## **The third Novell.**

***Declaring, that the leude and naughty qualities of some persons, doe oftentimes misguide good people, into very great and greevous errors.***

When Madam *Pampinea* sate silent, and the Querries boldnesse equalled with his crafty cunning, and great wisdom in the King had passed among them with generall applause; the Queene, turning her selfe to Madam *Philomena*, appointed her to follow next in order, and to hold rancke with her discourse, as the rest had done before her: whereupon *Philomena* graciously began in this manner.

It is my purpose, to acquaint you with a notable mockery, which was performed (not in jest, but earnest) by a faire Gentlewoman, to a grave and devoute religious Friar, which will yeelde so much the more pleasure and recreation, to every secular understander, if but diligently he or shee doe observe; how commonly those religious persons (at least the most part of them) like notorious fooles, are the inventers of new courses and customes, as thinking themselves more wise and skilful in all things then any other; yet prove to be of no worth or validity, addicting the very best of all their devises, to expresse their owne vilenesse of minde, and fatten themselves in their sties, like to pampered Swine. And assure your selves worthy Ladies, that I doe not tell this Tale onely to follow the order enjoyed me; but also to informe you that such Saint-like holy Sirs, of whom we are too opinative and credulous, may be, yea, and are (divers times) cunningly met withall, in their craftinesse, not onely by men, but likewise some of our owne sexe, as I shall make it apparant to you.

In our owne City (more full of craft and deceit, then love or faithfull dealing) there lived not many yeeres since a Gentlewoman, of good spirit, highly minded, endued with beauty and all commendable qualities, as any other woman (by nature) could be. Her name, or any others, concerned in this Novell, I meane not to make manifest, albeit I know them, because some are yet living, and thereby may be scandalized; and therefore it shall suffice to passe them over with a smile. This Gentlewoman, seeing her selfe to be descended of very great parentage, and (by chance) married to an Artezen, a Clothier or Drapier, that lived by the making and selling of Cloth: shee could not (because he was a Trades-man) take downe the height of her minde; conceiving, that no man of meane condition (how rich soever) was worthy to enjoy a Gentlewoman in marriage. Observing moreover, that with all his wealth and treasure, he understood nothing better, then to open skeines of yarne, fill shuttles, lay webbes in Loomes, or dispute with his Spinsters, about their businesse.

Being thus over-swayed with her proud opinion, shee would no longer be embraced, or regarded by him in any manner, saving onely because she could not refuse him; but would find some other for her better satisfaction, who might seeme more worthy of her respect, then the Drapier her Husband did. Hereupon shee fell so deepe in love, with a very honest man of our City also, and of indifferent yeeres; as what day shee saw him not, shee could take no rest the night ensuing. The man himselfe knew nothing hereof, and therefore was the more neglect and carelesse, and she being curious, nice, yet wisely considerate; durst not let him understand it, neither by any womans close conveyed message, nor yet by Letters, as fearing the perils which happen in such cases. But her eye observing his daily walkes and resorts, gave her notice of his often conversing with a religious Friar, who albeit he was a fat and corpulent man, yet notwithstanding, because he seemed to leade a sanctimonious life, and was reported to be a most honest man; she perswaded her selfe, that he might be the best meanes, betweene her and her friend.

Having considered with her selfe, what course was best to be observed in this case; upon a day, apt and convenient, shee went to the Convent, where he kept, and having caused him to be called, shee told him, that if his leysure so served, very gladly shee would be confessed, and onely had made her choyce of him. The holy man seeing her, and reputed her to be a Gentlewoman, as indeede shee was no lesse; willingly heard her, and when shee had confessed what shee could, shee had yet another matter to acquaint him withall, and thereupon thus she began.

Holy Father, it is no more then convenient, that I should have recourse to you, to be assisted by your help and councell, in a matter which I will impart unto you. I know, that you are not ignorant of my parents and husband, of whom I am affected as dearely as his life, for prooffe whereof, there is not any thing that I can desire, but immediatly I have it of him, he being a most rich man, and may very sufficiently afford it. In regard whereof, I love him equally as my selfe, and, setting aside my best endeavours for him; I must tell you one thing, if I should do anything contrary to his liking and honour, no woman can more worthily deserve death, then my selfe. Understand then, good Father, that there is a man, whose name I know not, but hee seemeth to be honest, and of good worth; moreover (if I am not deceived) hee resorteth oftentimes to you, being faire and comely of person, going alwayes in blacke garments of good price and value. This man, imagining (perhaps) no such minde in me, as truely there is; hath often attempted mee, and never can I be at my doore, or window, but hee is alwayes present in my sight, which is not a

little displeasing to me; he watcheth my walkes, and much I mervaile, that he is not now here.

Let me tell you holy Sir, that such behaviours, doe many times lay bad imputations upon very honest women, yet without any offence in them. It hath often run in my minde, to let him have knowledge thereof by my brethren: but afterward I considered, that men (many times) deliver messages in such sort, as draw on very ungentle answeres, whereon grow words, and words beget actions. In which respect, because no harme or scandall should ensue, I thought it best to be silent; determining, to acquaint you rather therewith, then any other, as well because you seeme to be his friend, as also in regard of your office, which priviledgeth you, to correct such abuses, not onely in friends, but also in strangers. Enowe other women there are, (more is the pittie) who (perhaps) are better disposed to such suites, then I am, and can both like and allowe of such courting, otherwise then I can doe; as being willing to embrace such offers, and (happily) loath to yeeld deniall. Wherefore, most humbly I entreat you, good Father (even for our blessed Ladies sake) that you would give him a friendly reprehension, and advise him, to use such unmanly meanes no more hereafter. With which words, shee hung downe her head in her bosome, cunningly dissembling, as if shee wept, wiping her eyes with her Handkerchife, when not a teare fell from them, but indeed were dry enough.

The holy Religious man, so soone as he heard her description of the man, presently knew whom shee meant, and highly commending the Gentlewoman, for her good and vertuous seeming disposition, beleevd faithfully all that shee had said: promising her, to order the matter so well and discreetly, as shee should not be any more offended. And knowing her to be a woman of great wealth (after all their usuall manner, when they cast forth their fishing nets for gaine:) liberally he commended Almes-deedes, and dayly workes of charity, recounting to her (beside) his owne perticular necessities. Then, giving him two pieces of gold, she said. I pray you (good Father) to be mindfull of me, and if he chance to make any deniall: tell him boldly, that I spake it my selfe to you, and by the way of a sad complaint her confession being ended, and penance easie enough enjoyned her, shee promised to make her parents bountifull benefactours to the Convent, and put more money into his hand, desiring him in his Masses, to remember the soules of her deceased friends, and so returned home to her house.

Within a short while after her departure, the Gentleman, of whom she had made this counterfeit complaint, came thither, as was his usuall manner, and having done his duty to the holy Father; they sate downe together privately, falling out of one discourse into another. At the length, the Frier (in very loving and friendly sort) mildly reprov'd him, for such amorous glaunces, and other pursutes, which (as he thought) hee dayly used to the Gentlewoman, according to her owne speeches. The Gentleman mervailed greatly thereat, as one that had never seene her, and very sildome passed by the way where she dwelt, which made him the bolder in his answeres; wherein the Confessour interrupting him, said. Never make such admiration at the matter, neither waste more words in these stout denials, because they cannot serve thy turne: I tell thee plainly, I heard it not from any neighbours, but even of her owne selfe, in a very sorrowfull and sad complaint. And though (perhaps) hereafter, thou canst very hardly refraine such follies; yet let mee tell thee so much of her (and under the seale of absolute assurance) that she is the onely woman of the world, who (in my true judgement) doth hate and abhorre all such base behaviour. Wherefore, in regard of thine owne honour, as also not to vexe & prejudice so vertuous a Gentlewoman: I pray thee refrain such idlenes henceforward, & suffer hir to live in peace.

The Gentleman, being a little wiser then his ghostly Father, perceived immediatly (without any further meditating on the matter) the notable pollicie of the woman: whereupon, making somewhat bashfull appearance of any error already committed; hee said, hee would afterward be better advised. So, departing from the Frier, he went on directly, to passe by the house where the Gentlewoman dwelt, and she stood alwayes ready on her watch, at a little window, to observe, when hee should walke that way: And seeing him comming, she shewed her selfe so joyfull, and gracious to him, as he easily understood, whereto the substance of the holy Fathers chiding tended. And, from that time forward, hee used dayly, though in covert manner (to the no little liking of the Gentlewoman and himselfe) to make his passage through that streete, under colour of some important occasions there, concerning him.

Soone after, it being plainly discerned on either side, that the one was as well contented with these walkes, as the other could be: shee desired to enflame him a little further, by a more liberall illustration of her affection towards him, when time and place afforded convenient opportunity. To the holy Father againe shee went, (for shee had been too long from shrift) and kneeling downe at his feete, intended to begin her confession in teares; which the Frier perceiving, sorrowfully demanded of her, what new accident had happened? Holy Father (quoth shee) no novell accident, but onely your wicked and ungracious friend, by whom (since I was here with you, yea, no longer agoe then yesterday) I have beene so wronged, as I verily beleeve that hee was borne to be my mortall enemy, and to make me doe something to my utter disgrace for ever; and whereby I shall not dare to be seene any more of you, my deare Father. How is this? answered the Frier, hath he not refrained from afflicting you so abusively?

Pausing a while, and breathing forth many a dissembled sigh, thus shee replied. No truly, holy Father, there is no likelyhood of his abstaining; for since I made my complaint to you, he belike taking it in evill part, to be contraried in his wanton humours, hath (meerely in despight) walked seaven times in a day by my doore, whereas formerly, he never used it above once or twice. And well were it (good Father) if he could be contented with those walkes, and gazing glaunces which hee dartes at me: but growne he is so bolde and shamelesse, that even yesterday, (as I tolde you) he sent a woman to me, one of his *Pandoraes*, as it appeared, and as if I had wanted either Purses or Girdles, he sent me (by her) a Purse and a Girdle. Whereat I grew so grievously offended, as



had it not beene for my due respect and feare of God, and next the sacred reverence I beare to you my ghostly Father; doubtlesse, I had done some wicked deede. Neverthelesse, happily I withstood it, and will neither say or doe any thing in this case, till first I have made it knowne to you.

Then I called to minde, that having redelivered the Purse and Girdle to his shee messenger, (which brought them) with lookes sufficient to declare my discontentment: I called her backe againe, fearing least shee would keepe them to her selfe, and make him beleieve, that I had received them (as I have heard such kind of women use to doe sometimes) and in anger I snatcht them from her, and have brought them hither to you, to the end that you may give him them againe; and tell him, I have no neede of any such things, thankes be to Heaven and my husband, as no woman can be better stored then I am. Wherefore good Father, purposely am I now come to you, and I beseech you accept my just excuse, that if he will not abstaine from thus molesting me, I will disclose it to my Husband, Father, and Brethren, whatsoever shall ensue thereon: for I had rather he should receive the injury (if needs it must come) then I to be causelesly blamed for him; wherein good Father tell me, if I doe not well. With many counterfet sobbes, sighes, and teares, these wordes were delivered; and drawing foorth from under her gowne, a very faire and rich purse, as also a Girdle of great worth, shee threw them into the Friars lap.

He verily beleeving all this false report, being troubled in his minde thereat beyond measure, tooke the Gentlewoman by the hand, saying: Daughter, if thou be offended at these impudent follies, assuredly I cannot blame thee, not will any wise man reprove thee for it; and I commend thee for following my counsell. But let me alone for schooling of my Gentleman: ill hath he kept his promise made to mee; wherefore, in regard of his former offence, as also this other so lately committed, I hope to set him in such a heate, as shall make him leave off from further injuring thee. And in Gods name, suffer not thy selfe to be conquered by choler, in disclosing this to thy kindred or husband, because too much harme may ensue thereon. But feare not any wrong to thy selfe; for, both before God and men, I am a true witness of thine honesty and vertue.

Now began she to appeare somewhat better comforted; & forbearing to play on this string any longer, as wel knowing the covetousnes of him and his equals, she said. Holy Father, some few nights past, me thought in my sleepe, that divers spirits of my kindred appeared to me in a vision, who (me thought) were in very great paines, and desired nothing els but Almes; especially my God-mother, who seemed to bee afflicted with such extreme poverty, that it was most pittifull to behold. And I am half perswaded, that her torments are the greater, seeing mee troubled with such an enemy to goodnesse. Wherefore (good Father) to deliver her soule and the others, out of those fearfull flames; among your infinite other devout prayers, I would have you to say the fortie Masses of S. *Gregory*, as a meanes for their happy deliverance, and so she put ten ducates into his hand. Which the holy man accepted thankfully, and with good words, as also many singular examples, confirmed her bountifull devotion: and when he had given her his benediction, home she departed.

After that the Gentlewoman was gone, hee sent for his friend, whom she so much seemed to be troubled withall; and when he was come, hee beholding his Holy Father to looke discontentedly: thought, that now he should heare some newes from his Mistresse, and therefore expected what he would say. The Frier, falling into the course of his former reprehensions, but yet in more rough and impatient manner, sharply checkt him for his immodest behaviour towards the Gentlewoman, in sending her the Purse and Girdle. The Gentleman, who as yet could not guesse whereto his speeches tended; somewhat coldly and temperately, denied the sending of such tokens to her, to the end that he would not be utterly discredited with the good man, if so bee the Gentlewoman had shewne him any such things. But then the Frier, waxing much more angry, sternly said. Bad man as thou art, how canst thou deny a manifest trueth? See sir, these are none of your amorous tokens? No, I am sure you doe not know them, nor ever saw them till now.

The Gentleman, seeming as if he were much ashamed, saide. Truly Father I do know them, and confesse that I have done ill, and very greatly offended: but now I will sweare unto you, seeing I understande how firmly she is affected, that you shall never heare any more complaints of me. Such were his vowes and protestations, as in the end the ghostly Father gave him both the Purse and Girdle: then after he had preached, & severely conjured him, never more to vexe her with any gifts at all, and he binding himselfe thereto by a solemne promise, he gave him license to depart. Now grew the Gentleman very jocond, being so surely certified of his Mistresses love, and by tokens of such worthy esteeme; wherefore no sooner was hee gone from the Frier, but hee went into such a secret place, where he could let her behold at her Window, what precious tokens he had receyved from her, whereof she was extraordinarily joyfull, because her devices grew still better and better; nothing now wanting, but her husbands absence, upon some journey from the City, for the full effecting of her desire.

Within a few dayes after, such an occasion hapned, as her husband of necessity must journey to *Geneway*; and no sooner was hee mounted on horsebacke, taking leave of her and all his friends: but she, being sure hee was gone, went in all hast to her Ghostly Father; and, after a few faigned outward shewes, thus she spake. I must now plainly tell you, holy father, that I can no longer endure this wicked friend of yours; but because I promised you the other day, that I would not do any thing, before I had your counsell therein, I am now come to tell you, the just reason of my anger, and full purpose to avoid all further molestation.

Your friend I cannot terme him, but (questionles) a very divel of hell. This morning, before the breake of day, having heard (but how, I know not) that my husband was ridden to *Geneway*: got over the wall into my Garden, and climbing up a tree which standeth close before my chamber window, when I was fast asleepe, opened the Casement, and would have entred in at the window.

But, by great good fortune, I awaked, and made shew of an open out-cry: but that he entreated mee, both for Gods sake and yours, to pardon him this error, and never after he would presume any more to offend me. When he saw, that (for your sake) I was silent, he closed fast the window againe, departed as he came, and since I never saw him, or heard any tidings of him. Now judge you, holy Father, whether these be honest courses, or no, and to be endured by any civil Gentlewoman; neither would I so patiently have suffered this, but onely in my dutifull reverence to you.

The Ghostly Father hearing this, became the sorrowfullest man in the world, not knowing how to make her any answer, but only demanded of her divers times, whether she knew him so perfectly, that she did not mistake him for some other? Quoth she, I would I did not know him from any other. Alas deere daughter (replied the Frier) what can more be sayd in this case, but that it was over-much boldnesse, and very il done; & thou shewedst thy selfe a worthy wise woman, in sending him away so mercifully, as thou didst. Once more I would entreat thee (deare and vertuous daughter) seeing grace hath hitherto kept thee from dishonour, and twice already thou hast credited my counsell, let me now advise thee this last time. Spare speech, or complaining to any other of thy friends, and leave it to me, to try if I can overcome this unchained divel, whom I tooke to be a much more holy man. If I can recall him from this sensuall appetite, I shall account my labour well employed; but if I cannot do it, henceforward (with my blessed benediction) I give thee leave to do, even what thy heart will best tutor thee to. You see Sir (said shee) what manner of man he is, yet would I not have you troubled or disobeyed, only I desire to live without disturbance, which work (I beseech you) as best you may: for I promise you, good Father, never to sollicite you more upon this occasion: And so, in a pretended rage, shee returned backe from the ghostly Father.

Scarsely was she gone forth of the Church, but in commeth the man that had (supposedly) so much transgressed; and the Fryer taking him aside, gave him the most injurious words that could be used to a man, calling him disloyall, perjured, and a traitor. Hee who had formerly twice perceived, how high the holy mans anger mounted, did nothing but expect what he wold say; and, like a man extreamly perplexed, strove how to get it from him, saying; Holy Father, how come you to be so heinously offended? What have I done to incense you so strangely? Heare mee dishonest wretch answered the Frier, listen what I shall say unto thee. Thou answerest me, as if it were a yeare or two past, since so foule abuses were by thee committed, & they almost quite out of thy remembrance. But tell me wicked man, where wast thou this morning, before breake of the day? Wheresoever I was, replied the Gentleman, mee thinkes the tidings come very quickly to you. It is true, said the Frier, they are speedily come to me indeed, and upon urgent necessity.

After a little curbing in of his wrath, somewhat in a milder strain, thus he proceeded. Because the Gentlewomans husband is journeyed to *Geneway*, proves this a ladder to your hope, that to embrace her in your armes, you must climbe over the Garden wall, like a treacherous robber in the night season, mount up a tree before her Chamber window, open the Casement, as hoping to compasse that by importunity, which her spotlesse chastity will never permit. There is nothing in the world, that possibly she can hate more then you, and yet you will love her whether she will or no. Many demonstrations her selfe hath made to you, how retrograde you are to any good conceit of her, & my loving admonishments might have had better successe in you, then as yet they shewe by outward apparence. But one thing I must tell you, her silent sufferance of your injuries all this while, hath not bin in any respect of you, but at my earnest entreaties, and for my sake. But now shee will be patient no longer, and I have given her free license, if ever heereafter you offer to attempt her any more, to make her complaint before her Brethren, which will redound to your no meane danger.

The Gentleman, having wisely collected his Love-lesson out of the Holy Fathers angry words, pacified the good old man so wel as he could with very solemne promises and protestations, that he should heare (no more) any misbehaviour of his. And being gone from him, followed the instructions given in her complaint, by climbing over the Garden Wall, ascending the Tree, and entering at the Casement, standing ready open to welcome him. Thus the Friers simplicity, wrought on by her most ingenuous subtiltie, made way to obtaine both their longing desires.

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***A yong Scholler, named Felice, enstructed Puccio di Rinieri, how to become rich in a very short time. While Puccio made experience of the instructions taught him; Felice obtained the favour of his Daughter.***

## **The fourth Novell.**

***Wherein is declared, what craft and subtilty some wily wits can devise, to deceive the simple, and compasse their owne desires.***

After that *Philomena* had finished her Tale, she sate still; and *Dioneus* with faire and pleasing Language, commended the Gentlewomans quaint cunning, but smiled at the Confessors witlesse simplicity. Then the *Queen*, turning with chearefull looks towards *Pamphilus*, commaunded him to continue on their delight; who gladly yeilded, and thus began. Madame, many men there are, who while they strive to climbe from a good estate, to a seeming better; doe become in much worse condition then they were before. As happened to a neighbour of ours, and no long time

since, as the accident will better acquaint you withall.

According as I have heard it reported, neere to Saint *Brancazio*, there dwelt an honest man, and some-what rich, who was called *Puccio di Rinieri*, and who addicted all his paines and endeavours to Alchimy: wherefore, he kept no other family, but onely a widdowed daughter, and a servant; and because he had no other Art or exercise, hee used often to frequent the market place. And in regard he was but a weake witted man, and a gourmand or grosse feeder; his language was the more harsh and rude, like to our common Porters or loutish men, and his carriage also absurd, boore-like, and clownish. His daughter, being named *Monna Isabetta*, aged not above eight and twenty, or thirty yeers; was a fresh indifferent faire, plumpe, round woman, cherry cheekt, like a Queene-Apple; and, to please her Father, fed not so sparingly, as otherwise she wold have done, but when she communed or jested with any body, she would talke of nothing, but onely concerning the great vertue in Alchimy, extolling it above all other Arts.

Much about this season of the yeare, there returned a young Scholler from *Paris*, named *Felice*, faire of complexion, comely of person, ingeniously witted, and skilfully learned, who (soone after) grew into familiarity with *Puccio*: now because he could resolve him in many doubts, depending on his profession of Alchimy, (himselpe having onely practise, but no great learning) he used many questions to him, shewed him very especiall matters of secrecy, entertaining him often to dinners and suppers, whensoever he pleased to come and converse with him; and his daughter likewise, perceiving with what favour her Father respected him, became the more familiar with him, allowing him good regard and reverence.

The young man continuing his resort to the House of *Puccio*, and observing the widow to be faire, fresh, and prettily formall; he began to consider with himselpe, what those things might be, wherein shee was most wanting; and (if he could) to save anothers labour, supply them by his best endeavours. Thus not alwayes carrying his eyes before him, but using many backe and circumspect regards, he proceeded so farre in his wylie apprehensions, that (by a few sparkes close kept together) he kindled part of the same fire in her, which began to flame apparantly in him. And he very wittily observing the same, as occasion first smiled on him, and allowed him favourable opportunity, so did hee impart his intention to her.

Now albeit he found her plyant enough, to gaine physick for her owne grieffe, as soone as his; yet the meanes and manner were (as yet) quite out of all apprehension. For shee in no other part of the World, would trust her selfe in the young mans company, but onely in her Fathers house; and that was a place out of all possibility, because *Puccio* (by a long continued custome) used to watch well neere all the night, as commonly he did, each night after other, never stirring forth of the roomes, which much abated the edge of the young mans appetite. After infinite intricate revolvings, wheeling about his busied braine, he thought it not altogether an *Herculian* taske, to enjoy his happinesse in the house, and without any suspition, albeit *Puccio* kept still within doores, and watched as hee was wont to doe.

Upon a day as he sate in familiar conference with *Puccio*, he began to speake unto him in this manner; I have many times noted, kinde friend *Puccio*, that all thy desire and endeavour is, by what meanes thou mayest become very rich, wherein (me thinkes) thou takest too wide a course, when there is a much neere and shorter way, which *Mighell*, *Scotus*, and other his associates, very diligently observed and followed, yet were never willing to instruct other men therein; whereby the misterie might be drowned in oblivion, and prosecuted by none but onely great Lords, that are able to undergoe it. But because thou art mine especiall friend, and I have received from thee infinite kind favours; whereas I never intended, that any man (by me) should be acquainted with so rare a secret; if thou wilt imitate the course as I shall shew thee, I purpose to teach it thee in full perfection. *Puccio* being very earnestly desirous to understand the speediest way to so singular a mysterie, first began to entreat him (with no meane instance) to acquaint him with the rules of so rich a Science; and afterward sware unto him, never to disclose it to any person, except hee gave his consent thereto; affirming beside, that it was a rarity, not easie to be comprehended by very apprehensive judgements. Well (quoth *Felice*) seeing thou hast made me such a sound and solemne promise, I will make it knowne unto thee.

Know then friend *Puccio*, the Philosophers do hold, that such as covet to become rich indeed, must understand how to make the Stone: as I will tell thee how, but marke the manner very heedfully. I do not say, that after the Stone is obtained, thou shalt be even as rich as now thou art; but thou shalt plainly perceive, that the very grosest substance, which hitherto thou hast seene, all of them shal be made pure golde, and such as afterward thou makest, shall be more certaine, then to go or come with *Aqua fortis*, as now they do. Most expedient is it therefore, that when a man will go diligently about this businesse, and purposeth to prosecute such a singular labour, which will and must continue for the space of 40 nights, he must give very carefull attendance, wholly abstaining from sleepe, slumbering, or so much as nodding all that while.

Moreover, in some apt and convenient place of thy house, there must be a forge or furnace erected, framed in decent and formall fashion, and neere it a large table placed, ordered in such sort, as standing upright on thy feete, and leaning the reines of thy backe against it; thou must stande stedfastly in that manner every night, without the least motion or stirring, untill the breake of day appeareth, and thine eyes still uppon the Furnace fixed, to keepe ever in memory, the true order which I have prescribed. So soone as the morning is seene, thou mayst (if thou wilt) walke, or rest a little upon thy bed, and afterward go about thy businesse, if thou have any. Then go to dinner, attending readily till the evenings approach, preparing such things as I will readily set thee downe in writing, without which there is not any thing to be done; and then returne to the same taske againe, not varying a jot from the course directed. Before the time be fully expired, thou shalt perceive many apparant signes, that the stone is still in absolute

forwardnesse, but it will bee utterly lost if thou fayle in the least of all the observances. And when the experience hath crowned thy labour, thou art sure to have the Philosophers stone, and thereby shalt be able to enrich all, and worke wonders beside.

*Puccio* instantly replied. Now trust me Sir, there is no great difficultie in this labour; neither doth it require any extraordinary length of time: but it may very easily be followed and performed, and (by your friendly favour, in helping to direct the Furnace and Table, according as you imagine most convenient) on Sunday at night next, I will begin my task. The Scholler being gone, he went to his daughter, and tolde her all the matter, and what he had determined to do: which shee immediately understood sufficiently, and what would ensue on his nightly watching in that manner, returning him answer, that whatsoever he liked and allowed of, it became not her any way to mislike. Thus they continued in this kinde concordance, till Sunday night came. When *Puccio* was to begin his experience, and *Felice* to set forward upon his adventure. Concluded it was, that every night the Scholler must come to Supper, partly to bee a witness of his constant performance, but more especially for his owne advantage.

The place which *Puccio* had chosen, for his hopefull attaining to the Philosophers Stone, was close to the Chamber where his daughter lay, having no other separation or division, but an old ruinous tottring wall. So that, when the Scholler was playing his prize, *Puccio* heard an unwonted noise in the house, which he had never observed before, neither knew the wall to have any such motion: wherefore, not daring to stirre from his standing, least all should be marrd in the very beginning, he called to his daughter, demanding, what busie labour she was about? The widdow, being much addicted to frumping, according as questions were demanded of her, and (perhaps) forgetting who spake to her, pleasantly replied: Whoop Sir, where are we now? Are the Spirits of Alchimy walking in the house, that we cannot lye quietly in our beds?

*Puccio* mervailing at this answer, knowing she never gave him the like before; demanded againe, what she did? The subtle wench, remembring that she had not answered as became her, said: Pardon mee Father, my wits were not mine owne, when you demanded such a sodaine question; and I have heard you say an hundred times, that when folke go supperles to bed, either they walke in their sleepe, or being awake, talke very idely, as (no doubt) you have discernde by me. Nay daughter (quoth he) it may be, that I was in a waking dreame, and thought I heard the olde wall totter: but I see I was deceived, for now it is quiet and still enough. Talke no more good Father, saide she, least you stirre from your place, and hinder your labour: take no care for mee, I am able enough to have care of my selfe.

To prevent any more of these nightly disturbances, they went to lodge in another part of the house, where they continued out the time of *Puccioes* paines, with equal contentment to them both, which made her divers times say to *Felice*: You teach my father the cheefe grounds of Alchimy, while we helpe to waste away his treasure. Thus the Scholler being but poore, yet well forwarded in Learning, made use of *Puccioes* folly, and found benefit thereby, to keepe him out of wants, which is the bane and overthrow of numberlesse good wits. And *Puccio* dying, before the date of his limitted time, because hee failed of the Philosophers Stone, *Isabetta* joyned in marriage with *Felice*, to make him amends for enstructing her father, by which meanes he came to be her husband.

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***Ricciardo, surnamed the Magnifico, gave a Horse to Signior Francesco Vergellisi, upon condition, that (by his leave and lisenche) he might speake to his Wife in his presence; which he did, and shee not returning him any answere, made answer to himselfe on her behalfe, and according to his answer, so the effect followed.***

## **The fifth Novell.**

***Wherein is described the frailty of some Women, and folly of such Husbands, as leave them alone to their owne disposition.***

*Pamphilus* having ended the Novell of *Puccio* the Alchimyist, the Queene fixing her eye on Madam *Eliza*, gave order, that shee should succede with hers next. When shee looking somewhat more austerely, then any of the rest, not in any spleen, but as it was her usuall manner, thus began. The World containeth some particular people who doe beleeve (because themselves know something) that others are ignorant in all things; who for the most part, while they intend to make a scorne of other men, upon the prooffe, doe finde themselves to carry away the scorne. And therefore I account it no meane follie in them, who (upon no occasion) will tempt the power of another mans wit or experience. But because all men and women (perhaps) are not of mine opinion; I meane that you shall perceive it more apparantly, by an accident happening to a Knight of *Pistoia*, as you shall heare by me related.

In the Towne of *Pistoia*, bordering upon *Florence*, there lived not long since, a Knight named Signior *Francesco*; descended of the lineage or family of the *Vergellisi*, a man very rich, wise, and in many things provident, but gripple, covetous, and too close handed, without respect to his worth and reputation. He being called to the Office of *Podesta* in the City of *Millaine*, furnished himselfe with all things (in honourable manner) beseeming such a charge; only, a comely horse (for his owne saddle) excepted, which he knew not by any meanes how to compasse, so loath he was to lay out money, albeit his credit much depended thereon.

At the same time, there lived in *Pistoya* likewise, a young man, named *Ricciardo*, derived of meane birth, but very wealthy, quicke witted, and of commendable person, alwayes going so neate, fine, and formall in his apparrell, that he was generally tearmed the *Magnifico*, who had long time affected, yea, and closely courted, (though without any advantage or successe) the Lady and Wife of *Signior Francesco*, who was very beautifull, vertuous, and chaste. It so chanced, that this *Magnifico* had the very choysest and goodliest ambling Gelding in all *Tuscanie*, which he loved dearely, for his faire forme, and other good parts. Upon a flying rumor throughout *Pistoria*, that he daily made love to the fore-said Lady: some busie body, put it into the head of *Signior Francesco*, that if he pleased to request the Gelding, the *Magnifico* would frankly give it him, in regard of the love he bare to his Wife.

The base minded Knight, coveting to have the Horse, and yet not to part with any money, sent for the *Magnifico*, desiring to buy his faire Gelding of him, because he hoped to have him of free gift. The *Magnifico* hearing his request, was not a little joyfull hereof, and thus answered; Sir, if you would give me all the wealth which you possesse in this World, I will not sell you my Horse, rather I will bestow him on you as a Gentlemanly gift; but yet upon this condition, that before you have him delivered, I may with your liscence, and in your presence speake a few words to your vertuous Ladie, and so farre off in distance from you, as I may not be heard by any, but onely her selfe. *Signior Francesco*, wholly conducted by his base avaricious desire, and meaning to make a scorne at the *Magnifico*, made answeere; that he was well contented, to let him speake with her when he would, and leaving him in the great Hall of the house, he went to his Wives Chamber, and told her, how easily he might enjoy the Horse; commanding her forth-with, to come and heare what he could say to her, onely shee should abstaine, and not returne him any answer. The Lady with a modest blush, much condemned this folly in him, that his covetousnesse should serve as a cloake, to cover any unfitting speeches, which her chaste eares could never endure to heare: neverthesse, being to obey her Husbands will, shee promised to doe it, and followed him downe into the House, to heare what the *Magnifico* would say. Againe, he there confirmed the bargaine made with her Husband, and sitting downe by her in a corner of the Hall, farre enough off from any ones hearing, taking her curteously by the hand, thus he spake.

Worthy Lady, it appeareth to me for a certainty, that you are so truly wise, as you have (no doubt) a long while since perceived, what unfained affection your beauty (farre excelling all other womens that I know) hath compelled me to beare you. Setting aside those commendable qualities, and singular vertues, gloriously shining in you, and powerfull enough to make a conquest of the very stoutest courage: I held it utterly needlesse, to let you understand by words, how faithfull the love is I beare you, were it not much more fervent and constant, then ever any other man can expresse to a woman. In which condition it shall still continue, without the least blemish or impaire, so long as I enjoy life or motion; yea, and I dare assure you, that if in the future World, affection may containe the same powerfull dominion, as it doth in this; I am the man, borne to love you perpetually. Whereby you may rest confidently perswaded, that you enjoy not any thing, how poore or precious soever it be, which you can so solemnely account to be your owne, and in the truest title of right, as you may my selfe, in all that I have, or for ever shall be mine.

To confirme your opinion in this case, by any argument of greater power, let me tell you, that I should repute it as my fairest and most gracious fortune, if you would command me some such service, as consisteth in mine ability to performe, and in your courteous favour to accept, yea, if it were to travaile thorow the whole world, right willing am I, and obedient. In which regard, faire Madame, if I be so much yours, as you heare I am, I may boldly adventure (and not without good reason) to acquaint your chaste eares with my earnest desires, for on you onely dependeth my happinesse, life and absolute comfort, and as your most humble servant, I beseech you (my dearest good, and sole hope of my soule) that rigour may dwell no longer in your gentle brest, but Lady-like pittie and compassion: whereby I shal say, that as your divine beauty enflamed mine affections, even so it extended such a mercifull qualification, as exceeded all my hope, but not the halfe part of your pittie.

Admit (miracle of Ladies) that I should die in this distresse: Alas, my death would be but your dishonour; I cannot be termed mine owne murtherer, when the Dart came from your eye that did it, and must remaine a witnesse of your rigour. You cannot then chuse but call to minde, and say within your owne soule: Alas! what a sinne have I committed, in being so unmercifull to my *Magnifico*. Repentance then serves to no purpose, but you must answer for such unkinde cruelty. Wherefore, to prevent so blacke a scandall to your bright beauty, beside the ceaselesse acclamations, which will dogge your walkes in the day time, and breake your quiet sleepes in the night season, with fearefull sights and gastly apparitions, hovering and haunting about your bed; let all these move you to milde mercy, and spill not life, when you may save it.

So the *Magnifico* ceasing, with teares streaming from his eyes, and sighes breaking from his heart, he sate still in exspectation of the Ladies answeere, who made neither long or short of the matter, neither Tilts not Tourneying, nor many lost mornings and evenings, nor infinite other such like offices, which the *Magnifico* (for her sake) from time to time had spent in vaine, without the least shew of acceptation, or any hope at all to winne her love: Moved now in this very houre, by these solemne protestations, or rather most prevailing asseverations; she began to finde that in her, which (before) she never felt, namely Love. And although (to keepe her promise made to her husband) shee spake not a word: yet her heart heaving, her soule throbbing, sighes intermixing, and complexion altering, could not hide her intended answeere to the *Magnifico*, if promise had beene no hinderance to her will. All this while the *Magnifico* sate as mute as she, and seeing she would not give him any answeere at all; he could not chuse but wonder thereat, yet

at length perceived, that it was thus cunningly contrived by her husband. Notwithstanding, observing well her countenance, that it was in a quite contrary temper, another kinde of fire sparkling in her eye, other humours flowing, her pulses strongly beating, her stomack rising, and sighes swelling; all these were arguments of a change, and motives to advance his hope. Taking courage by this tickling perswasion, and instructing his minde with a new kinde of counsell: he would needs answere himselfe on her behalfe, and as if she had uttered the words, he spake in this manner.

*Magnifico*, and my friend, surely it is a long time since, when I first noted thine affection towards me, to be very great and most perfect: but now I am much more certaine thereof, by thine owne honest and gentle speeches, which content me as they ought to doe. Neverthelesse, if heretofore I have seemed cruell and unkinde to thee, I would not have thee thinke, that my heart was any way guilty of my outward severity; but did evermore love thee, and held thee dearer then any man living. But yet it became me to doe so, as well in feare of others, as for the renowne of mine owne reputation. But now the time is at hand, to let thee know more clearely, whether I doe affect thee or no: as a just guerdon of thy constant love, which long thou hast, and still doest beare to me. Wherefore comfort thy selfe, and dwell upon this undoubted hope, because *Signior Francesco* my husband, is to be absent hence for many dayes, being chosen *Podesta* at *Millaine*, as thou canst not chuse but heare, for it is common through the Country.

I know (for my sake) thou hast given him thy goodly ambling Gelding, and so soone as hee is gone, I promise thee upon my word, and by the faithfull love I beare thee: that I will have further conference with thee, and let thee understand somewhat more of my minde. And because this is neither fitting time nor place, to discourse on matters of such serious moment; observe heereafter, as a signall, when thou seest my crimson skarfe hanging in the window of my Chamber, which is upon the Garden side; that evening (so soone as it is night) come to the Garden gate, with wary respect, that no eye doe discover thee, and there thou shalt finde me walking, and ready to acquaint thee with other matters, according as I shall finde occasion.

When the *Magnifico*, in the person of the Lady, had spoken thus, then hee returned her this answere. Most vertuous Lady, my spirits are so transported with extraordinary joy, for this your gracious and welcome answere; that my senses so fayle mee, and all my faculties quite forsake me, as I cannot give you such thanks as I would. And if I could speake equally to my desire, yet the season suetes not therewith, neither were it convenient that I should be so troublesome to you. Let me therefore humbly beseech you, that the desire I have to accomplish your will (which words availe not to expresse) may remaine in your kinde consideration. And, as you have commaunded me, so will I not faile to performe it accordingly, and in more thankfull manner, then as yet I am able to let you know. Now there resteth nothing else to doe, but, under the protection of your gracious pardon, I to give over speech, and you to attend your worthy husband.

Notwithstanding all that hee had spoken, yet shee replied not one word, wherefore the *Magnifico* arose, and returned to the Knight, who went to meete him, saying in a loude laughter. How now man? have I not kept my promise with thee? No Sir, answered the *Magnifico*, for you promised I should speake with your wife, and you have made mee talke to a marble Statue. This answere was greatly pleasing to the Knight, who, although hee had an undoubted opinion of his wife; yet this did much more strengthen his believe, and hee said. Now thou confessest thy Gelding to bee mine? I doe, replied the *Magnifico*, but if I had thought, that no better successe would have ensued on the bargaine; without your motion for the horse, I would have given him you: and I am sorie that I did not, because now you have bought my horse, and yet I have not sold him. The Knight laughed heartily at this answere, and being thus provided of so faire a beast, he rode on his journey to *Millaine*, and there entred into his authority of *Podesta*.

The Lady remained now in liberty at home, considering on the *Magnificoes* words, and likewise the Gelding, which (for her sake) was given to her husband. Oftentimes shee saw him passe to and fro before her windowe, still looking when the Flagge of defiance should be hanged forth, that hee might fight valiantly under her Colours. The Story saith, that among many of her much better meditations, she was heard to talke thus idely to herselfe. What doe I meane? Wherefore is my youth? The olde miserable man is gone to *Millaine*, and God knoweth when hee comes backe againe, ever, or never. Is dignity preferred before wedlockes holy duty, and pleasures abroad, more then comforts at home? Ill can age pay youths arrerages, when time is spent, and no hope sparde. Actions omitted, are often times repented, but done in due season, they are sildome sorrowed for. Upon these un-Lady-like private consultations, whether the window shewed the signall or no; it is no matter belonging to my charge: I say, husbands are unwise, to graunt such ill advantages, and wives much worse, if they take hold of them, onely judge you the best, and so the Tale is ended.

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**Ricciardo Minutolo fell in love with the Wife of Philippello Fighinolfi, and knowing her to be very jealous of her Husband, gave her to understand, that he was greatly enamoured of his wife, and had appointed to meete her privately in a Bathing house, on the next day following: Where she hoping to take him tardie with his close compacted Mistresse, found herselfe to be deceived by the said Ricciardo.**

## The sixth Novell.

***Declaring, how much perseverance, and a courageous spirit is available in love.***

No more remained to be spoken by Madame *Eliza*, but the cunning of the *Magnifico*, being much commended by all the company: the Queene commanded Madame *Fiammetta*, to succede next in order with one of her Novels, who (smilingly) made answer that she would, and began thus. Gracious Ladies, me thinkes wee have spoken enough already, concerning our owne Citie, which as it aboundeth copiously in all commodities, so is it an example also to every convenient purpose. And as Madam *Eliza* hath done, by recounting occasions happening in another World, so must we now leape a little further off, even so farre as *Naples*, to see how one of those Saint-like Dames, that nicely seemes to shun Loves allurings, was guided by the good spirit to a friend of hers, and tasted of the fruite, before shee knew the flowers. A sufficient warning for you, to apprehend before hand, what may follow after; and to let you see beside, that when an error is committed, how to be discrete in keeping it from publike knowledge.

In the City of *Naples*, it being of great antiquity, and (perhaps) as pleasantly scituated, as any other City in all *Italie*, there dwelt sometime a young Gentleman, of noble parentage, and well knowne to be wealthy, named *Ricciardo Minutolo*, who, although hee had a Gentlewoman (of excellent beauty, and worthy the very kindest affecting) to his wife; yet his gadding eye gazed else-where, and he became enamoured of another, which (in generall opinion) surpassed all the *Neapolitane* women else, in feature, favour, and the choyssest perfections, shee being named Madam *Catulla*, wife to as gallant a young Gentleman, called *Philippello Fighinolfi*, who most dearly he loved beyond all other, for her vertue and admired chastity.

*Ricciardo* loving this Madam *Catulla*, and using all such meanes, whereby the grace and liking of a Lady might be obtained; found it yet a matter beyond possibility, to compasse the height of his desire: so that many desperate and dangerous resolutions beleagred his braine, seeming so intricate, and unlikely to affoord any hopefull issue, as he wished for nothing more then death. And death (as yet) being deafe to all his earnest imprecations, delayed him on in lingering afflictions, and continuing still in such an extreame condition, he was advised by some of his best friends, utterly to abstaine from this fond pursuite, because his hopes were meere in vaine, and Madam *Catulla* prized nothing more precious to her in the World, then unstayned loyaltie to her Husband; and yet shee lived in such extreme jealousie of him, as fearing least some bird flying in the Ayre, should snatch him from her.

*Ricciardo* not unacquainted with this her jealous humour, as well by credible hearing thereof, as also by daily observation; began to consider with himselfe, that it were best for him, to dissemble amorous affection in some other place, and (hence-forward) to set aside all hope, of ever enjoying the love of Madam *Catulla*, because he was now become the servant to another Gentlewoman, pretending (in her honour) to performe many worthy actions of Armes, Jousts, Tournaments, and all such like noble exercises, as he was wont to doe for Madam *Catulla*. So that almost all the people of *Naples*, but especially Madam *Catulla*, became verily perswaded, that his former fruitlesse love to her was quite changed, and the new elected Lady had all the glory of his best endeavours, persevering so long in this opinion, as now it passed absolutely for currant. Thus seemed he now as a meere Stranger to her, whose house before he familiarly frequented; yet (as a neighbour) gave her the dayes salutations, according as he chanced to see her, or meete her.

It came to passe, that it being now the delightfull Summer season, when all Gentlemen and Gentlewomen used to meete together (according to a custome long observed in that Countrey) sporting along on the Sea Coast, dining and supping there very often. *Ricciardo Minutolo* happened to heare, that Madam *Catulla* (with a company of her friends) intended also to be present there among them, at which time, consorted with a seemely traine of his confederates, he resorted thither, and was graciously welcomed by Madam *Catulla*, where he pretended no willing long time of tarrying; but that *Catulla* and the other Ladies were faine to entreate him, discoursing of his love to his new elected Mistresse: which *Minutolo* graced with so solemne a countenance, as it ministred much more matter of conference, all coveting to know what shee was.

So farre they walked, and held on this kinde of discoursing, as every Lady and Gentlewoman, waxing weary of too long a continued argument, began to separate her selfe with such an associate as shee best liked, and as in such walking women are wont to doe; so that Madam *Catulla* having few females left with her, stayed behind with *Minutolo*, who suddenly shot forth a word, concerning her husband *Philippello*, & of his loving another woman beside her selfe. She that was overmuch jealous before, became so suddenly set on fire, to know what shee was of whom *Minutolo* spake; as shee sate silent a long while, till being able to containe no longer, shee entreated *Ricciardo*, even for the Ladies sake, whose love he had so devoutly embraced, to resolve her certainly, in this strange alteration of her Husband; whereunto thus he answered.

Madam, you have so straitly conjured me, by urging the remembrance of her; for whose sake I am not able to denie any thing you can demand, as I am ready therein to pleasure you. But first you must promise me, that neither you, or any other person for you, shall at any time disclose it to your Husband, untill you have seene by effect, that which I have tolde you proveth to be true: and when you please, I will instruct you how your selfe shall see it. The Lady was not a little joyfull, to be thus satisfied in her Husbands follie, and constantly crediting his words to be true, shee sware a solemne oath, that no one alive should ever know it. So stepping a little further aside, because no listening eare should heare him, thus he beganne.

Lady, if I did love you now so effectually, as heretofore I have done, I should be very circumspect, in uttering any thing which I imagined might distaste you. I know not whether your Husband

*Philippello*, were at any time offended; because I affected you, or beleev'd, that I received any kindness from you: but whether it were so or no, I could never discern it by any outward appearance. But now awaiting for the opportunity of time, which he conceived should afford me the least suspicion; he seeks to compass that, which (I doubt) he fears I would have done to him, in plain terms Madam, to have his pleasure of my wife. And as by some carriages I have observed, within few days past, he hath solicited and pursued his purpose very secretly, by many Ambassages, and other means, as (indeed) I have learned from her selfe, and always shee hath returned in such answers, as shee received by my direction.

And no longer agoe Madam, then this very morning, before my coming hither, I found a woman messenger in my House, in very close conference with my Wife, when growing doubtfull of that which was true indeede, I called my Wife, enquiring, what the woman would have with her; and shee tolde me it was another pursuite of *Philippello Fighinolfi*, who (quoth shee) upon such answers as you have caused me to send him from time to time, perhaps doth gather some hope of prevailing in the ende, which maketh him still to importune me as he doth. And now he adventureth so farre, as to understand my finall intention, having thus ordered his complot, that when I please, I must meete him secretly in an house of this City, where he hath prepared a Bath ready for me, and hopeth to enjoy the ende of his desire, as very earnestly he hath solicited me thereto. But if you had not commanded me, to hold him in suspence with so many frivolous answers; I would (long ere this) have sent him such a message, as should have beene little to his liking.

With patience (Madam) I endured all before, but now (me thinkes) he proceedeth too farre, which is not any way to be suffered; and therefore I intended to let you know it, whereby you may perceive, how well you are rewarded, for the faithfull and loyall love you beare him, and for which I was even at the doore of death. Now, because you may be the surer of my speeches, not to be any lies or fables, and that you may (if you be so pleased) approve the trueth by your owne experience: I caused my Wife to send him word, that shee would meete him to morrow, at the Bathing-house appointed, about the houre of noone-day, when people repose themselves, in regard of the heates violence; with which answer the woman returned very joycondly. Let me now tell you Lady, I hope you have better opinion of my wit, then any meaning in me, to send my wife thither; I rather did it to this ende, that having acquainted you with his treacherous intent, you should supply my wifes place, by saving both his reputation and your owne, and frustrating his unkind purpose to me. Moreover, upon the view of his owne delusion, wrought by my wife in meere love to you, he shall see his foule shame, and your most noble care, to keepe the rites of marriage betweene you still unstained.

Madame *Catulla*, having heard this long and displeasing report; without any consideration, either what he was that tolde the tale, or what a treason he intended against her: immediatly (as jealous persons use to doe) she gave faith to his forgerie, and began to discourse many things to him, which imagination had often misguided her in, against her honest minded husband, and enflamed with rage, suddenly replied; that shee would doe according as he had advised her, as being a matter of no difficulty. But if he came, she would so shame and dishonour him, as no woman whatsoever should better schoole him. *Ricciardo* highly pleased herewith; & being perswaded, that his purpose would take the full effect: confirmed the Lady in her determination with many words more; yet putting her in memory, to keepe her faithfull promise made, without revealing the matter to any living person, as shee had sworne upon her faith.

On the morrow morning, *Ricciardo* went to an aunient woman of his acquaintance, who was the Mistresse of a Bathing-house, and there where he had appointed Madame *Catulla*, that the Bath should be prepared for her, giving her to understand the whole businesse, and desiring her to be favourable therein to him. The woman, who had beene much beholding to him in other matters, promised very willingly to fulfill his request, concluding with him, both what should be done and said. She had in her house a very darke Chamber, without any window to afford it the least light, which Chamber shee had made ready, according to *Ricciardoes* direction, with a rich Bed therein, so soft and delicate as possible could be, wherein he entred so soone as he had dined, to attend the arrivall of Madame *Catulla*. On the same day, as she had heard the speeches of *Ricciardo*, and gave more credit to them then became her; shee returned home to her house in wonderfull impatience. And *Philippello* her husband came home discontentedly too, whose head being busied about some worldly affaires, perhaps he looked not so pleasantly, neither used her so kindly, as he was wont to doe. Which *Catulla* perceiving, shee was ten times more suspicious then before, saying to herselfe. Now apparant trueth doth disclose it selfe, my husbands head is troubled now with nothing else, but *Ricciardoes* wife, with whom (to morrow) he purposeth his meeting; wherein he shall be disappointed, if I live; taking no rest at all the whole night, for thinking how to handle her husband.

What shall I say more? On the morrow, at the houre of mid-day, accompanied onely with her Chamber-mayde, and without any other alteration in opinion; shee went to the house where the Bath was promised; and meeting there with the olde woman, demaunded of her, if *Philippello* were come thither as yet or no? The woman, being well instructed by *Ricciardo*, answered: Are you shee that should meete him heere. Yes, replied *Catulla*. Goe in then to him (quoth the woman) for he is not farre off before you.

Madame *Catulla*, who went to seeke that which she would not finde, being brought vailed into the darke Chamber where *Ricciardo* was, entred into the Bath, hoping to finde none other there but her husband, and the custome of the Countrey, never disallowed such meetings of men with their wives, but held them to be good and commendable. In a counterfeit voyce he bad her welcome, and she, not seeming to be any other then she was indeed, entertained his embracings in as



loving manner; yet not daring to speake, least he should know her, but suffered him to proceede in his owne error.

Let passe the wanton follies passing betweene them, and come to Madame *Catulla*, who finding it a fit and convenient time, to vent forth the tempest of her spleene, began in this manner. Alas! how mighty are the misfortunes of women, and how ill requited is the loyall love, of many wives to their husbands? I, a poore miserable Lady, who, for the space of eight yeares now fully compleated, have loved thee more dearely then mine owne life, finde now (to my hearts endlesse grieffe) how thou wastest and consumest thy desires, to delight them with a strange woman, like a most vile and wicked man as thou art. With whom doest thou now imagine thy selfe to be? Thou art with her, whom thou hast long time deluded by false blandishments, feigning to affect her, when thou doatest in thy desires else-where. I am thine owne *Catulla*, and not the wife of *Ricciardo*, trayterous and unfaithfull man, as thou art. I am sure thou knowest my voyce, and I thinke it a thousand yeares, untill wee may see each other in the light, to doe thee such dishonour as thou justly deserveth, dogged, disdainfull, and villainous wretch. By conceiving to have another woman in thy wanton embraces, thou hast declared more joviall disposition, and demonstrations of farre greater kindnesse, then domesticke familiarity. At home thou lookest sower, sullen or surly, often froward, and sildome well pleased. But the best is, whereas thou intendest this husbandrie for another mans ground, thou hast (against thy will) bestowed it on thine owne, and the water hath runne a contrary course, quite from the current where thou meantst it.

What answeere canst thou make, devill, and no man? What, have my words smitten thee dumbe? Thou mayest (with shame enough) hold thy peace, for with the face of a man, and love of an husband to his wife, thou art not able to make any answeere.

*Ricciardo* durst not speake one word, but still expressed his affable behaviour towards her, bestowing infinite embraces and kisses on her: which so much the more augmented her rage and anger, continuing on her chiding thus. If by these flatteries and idle follies, thou hopest to comfort or pacifie me, thou runnest quite byas from thy reckoning: for I shall never imagine my selfe halfe satisfied, untill in the presence of my parents, friends, and neighbours, I have revealed thy base behaviour. Tell mee, treacherous man, am not I as faire, as the wife of *Ricciardo*? Am I not as good a Gentlewoman borne, as shee is? What canst thou more respect in her, then is in mee? Villaine, monster, why doest thou not answeere mee? I will send to *Ricciardo*, who loveth mee beyond all other women in *Naples*, and yet could never vaunt, that I gave him so much as a friendly looke: he shall know, what a dishonour thou hadst intended towards him; which both he and his friends will revenge soundly upon thee.

The exclamations of the Lady were so tedious and irksome, that *Ricciardo* perceiving, if she continued longer in these complaints, worse would ensue thereon, then could be easily remedied: resolved to make himselfe knowne to her, to reclaime her out of this violent extasie, and holding her somewhat strictly, to prevent her escaping from him, he said. Madam, afflict your selfe no further, for, what I could not obtaine by simply loving you, subtilty hath better taught me, and I am your *Ricciardo*, which she hearing, and perfectly knowing him by his voyce; shee would have leapt out of the Bath, but shee could not, and to avoyde her crying out, he layde his hand on her mouth, saying. Lady, what is done, cannot now be undone, albeit you cried out all your lifetime. If you exclaime, or make this knowne openly by any meanes; two unavoydable dangers must needes ensue thereon. The one (which you ought more carefully to respect) is the wounding of your good renowne and honour, because, when you shall say, that by treacherie I drew you hither: I will boldly maintaine the contrary, avouching, that having corrupted you with gold, and not giving you so much as covetously you desired; you grew offended, and thereon made the out-cry, and you are not to learne, that the world is more easily induced to beleieve the worst, then any goodnesse, be it never so manifest. Next unto this, mortall hatred must arise betweene your husband and me, and (perhaps) I shall as soone kill him, as he mee; whereby you can hardly live in any true contentment after. Wherefore, joy of my life, doe not in one moment, both shame your selfe, and cause such perill betweene your husband and me: for you are not the first, neither can be the last, that shall be deceived. I have not beguiled you, to take any honour from you, but onely declared, the faithfull affection I beare you, and so shall doe for ever, as being your bounden and most obedient servant; and as it is a long time agoe, since I dedicated my selfe and all mine to your service, so hence-forth must I remaine for ever. You are wise enough (I know) in all other things; then shew your selfe not to be silly or simple in this.

*Ricciardo* uttered these words, teares streaming abundantly downe his cheekes, and Madame *Catulla* (all the while) likewise showed forth her sorrowes equally to his, now, although she was exceedingly troubled in minde, and saw what her owne jealous folly had now brought her to, a shame beyond all other whatsoever: in the midst of her tormenting passions, she considered on the words of *Ricciardo*, found good reason in them, in regard of the unavoydable evils, whereupon shee thus spake. *Ricciardo*, I know not how to beare the horrible injurie, and notorious treason used by thee against me, grace and goodnesse having so forsaken me, to let me fall in so foule a manner. Nor becommeth it me, to make any noyse or out-cry heere, whereto simplicity, or rather devillish jealousie, did conduct me. But certaine I am of one thing, that I shall never see any one joyfull day, till (by one meanes or other) I be revenged on thee. Thou hast glutted thy desire with my disgrace, let me therefore goe from thee, never more to looke upon my wronged husband, or let any honest woman ever see my face.

*Ricciardo* perceiving the extremity of her perplexed minde, used all manly and milde perswasions, which possibly he could devise to doe, to turne the torrent of this high tide, to a calmer course; as by outward shew shee made apparance of, untill (in frightfull feares shunning

every one shee met withall, as arguments of her guiltinesse) shee recovered her owne house, where remorse so tortured her distressed soule, that shee fell into so fierce a melancholy, as never left her till shee died. Upon the report whereof, *Ricciardo* becomming likewise a widdower, and grieving extraordinarily for his haynous transgression, penitently betooke himselfe to live in a wilderness, where (not long after) he ended his dayes.

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**Thebaldo Elisei, having received an unkinde repulse by his beloved, departed from Florence, and returning thither againe (a long while after) in the habite of a Pilgrime; he spake with her, and made his wrongs knowne unto her. He delivered her Father from the danger of death, because it was proved, that he had slaine Thebaldo: he made peace with his brethren, and in the ende, wisely enjoyed his hearts desire.**

## The seaventh Novell.

**Wherein is signified the power of Love, and the diversity of dangers, whereinto men may daily fall.**

So ceased *Fiammetta* her discourse, being generally commended, when the Queene, to prevent the losse of time, commanded *Æmillia* to follow next, who thus began. It liketh me best (gracious Ladies) to returne home againe to our owne City, which it pleased the former two discoursers to part from: And there I will shew you, how a Citizen of ours, recovered the kindnesse of his Love, after he had lost it.

Sometime there dwelt in *Florence* a young gentleman, named *Thebaldo Elisei*, descended of a noble House, who became earnestly enamored of a Widdow, called *Hermelina*, the daughter to *Aldobrandino Palermini*: well deserving, for his vertues and commendable qualities, to enjoy of her whatsoever he could desire. Secretly they were espoused together, but Fortune, the enemy to Lovers felicities, opposed her malice against them, in depriving *Thebaldo* of those deare delights, which sometime he held in free possession, and making him as a stranger to her gracious favours. Now grew shee contemptibly to despise him, not onely denying to heare any message sent from him, but scorning also to vouchsafe so much as a sight of him, causing in him extreme grieffe and melancholy, yet concealing all her unkindnesse so wisely to himselfe, as no one could understand the reason of his sadnesse.

After he had laboured by all hopefull courses, to obtaine that favour of her, which he had formerly lost, without any offence in him, as his innocent soule truly witnessed with him, and saw that all his further endeavours were fruitlesse and in vaine; he concluded to retreat himselfe from the World, and not to be any longer irkesome in her eye, that was the onely occasion of his unhappinesse. Hereupon, storing himselfe with such summes of money, as suddenly he could collect together, secretly he departed from *Florence*, without speaking any word to his friends or kindred; except one kind companion of his, whom he acquainted with most of his secrets, and so travelled to *Ancona*, where he termed himselfe by the name of *Sandolescio*. Repairing to a wealthy Merchant there, he placed himselfe as his servant, and went in a Ship of his with him to *Cyprus*; his actions and behaviour proved so pleasing to the Merchant, as not onely he allowed him very sufficient wages, but also grew into such association with him; as he gave the most of his affaires into his hands, which he guided with such honest and discrete care, that he himselfe (in few yeeres compasse) proved to be a rich Merchant, and of famous report.

While matters went on in this successefull manner, although he could not chuse, but still he remembred his cruell Mistresse, and was very desperately transported for her love, as coveting (above all things else) to see her once more; yet was he of such powerfull constancy, as 7 whole yeeres together, he vanquished all those fierce conflicts. But on a day it chanced he heard a song sung in *Cyprus*, which he himselfe had formerly made, in honour of the love he bare to his Mistresse, and what delight he conceived, by being daily in her presence; whereby he gathered, that it was impossible for him to forget her, and proceeded on so desirously, as he could not live, except he had a sight of her once more, and therefore determined on his returne to *Florence*. Having set all his affaires in due order, accompanied with a servant of his onely, he passed to *Ancona*, where when he was arrived, he sent his Merchandises to *Florence*, in name of the Merchant of *Ancona*, who was his especiall friend and partner; travayling himselfe alone with his servant, in the habite of a Pilgrime, as if he had beene newly returned from *Jerusalem*.

Being come to *Florence*, he went to an Inne kept by two bretheren, neere neighbours to the dwelling of his Mistresse, and the first thing he did, was passing by her doore, to get a sight of her if he were so happie. But he found the windowes, doores, and all parts of the house fast shut up, whereby he suspected her to be dead, or else to be changed from her dwelling: wherefore (much perplexed in minde) he went on to the two brothers Inne, finding foure persons standing at the gate, attired in mourning, whereat he marvelled not a little; knowing himselfe to be so transfigured, both in body and habite, farre from the manner of common use at his parting thence, as it was a difficult matter to know him: he stept boldly to a Shoo-makers shop neere adjoining, and demanded the reason of their wearing mourning. The Shoo-maker made answer thus; Sir, those men are clad in mourning, because a brother of theirs, being named *Thebaldo* (who hath beene absent hence a long while) about some fiftene dayes since was slaine. And they having heard, by prooffe made in the Court of Justice, that one *Aldobrandino Palermini* (who is

kept close prisoner) was the murderer of him, as he came in a disguised habite to his daughter, of whom he was most affectionately enamoured; cannot chuse, but let the World know by their outward habites, the inward affliction of their hearts, for a deede so dishonourably committed.

*Thebaldo* wondered greatly hereat, imagining, that some man belike resembling him in shape, might be slaine in this manner, and by *Aldobrandino*, for whose misfortune he grieved marvellously. As concerning his Mistresse, he understood that shee was living, and in good health; and night drawing on apace, he went to his lodging, with infinite molestations in his minde, where after supper, he was lodged in a Corne-loft with his man. Now by reason of many disturbing imaginations, which incessantly wheeled about his braine, his bed also being none of the best, and his supper (perhaps) somewhat of the coursest; a great part of the night was spent, yet could he not close his eyes together. But lying still broade awake, about the dead time of night, he heard the treading of divers persons over his head, who discended downe a paire of stayres by his Chamber, into the lower parts of the house, carrying a light with them, which he discerned by the chinkes and crannies in the wall. Stepping softly out of his bed, to see what the meaning hereof might be, he espied a faire young woman, who carried the light in her hand, and three men in her company, descending downe the stayres together, one of them speaking thus to the young woman. Now we may boldly warrant our safety, because we have heard it assuredly, that the death of *Thebaldo Elisei*, hath beene sufficiently approved by the Brethren, against *Aldobrandino Palermi*, and he hath confessed the fact; whereupon the sentence is already set downe in writing. But yet it behoveth us notwithstanding, to conceale it very secretly, because if ever hereafter it should be knowne, that we are they who murdered him, we shall be in the same danger, as now *Aldobrandino* is.

When *Thebaldo* had heard these words, hee began to consider with himselfe, how many and great the dangers are, wherewith mens minds may daily be molested. First, he thought on his owne brethren in their sorrow, and buried a stranger in steed of him, accusing afterward (by false opinion, and upon the testimony of as false witnesses) a man most innocent, making him ready for the stroke of death. Next, he made a strict observation in his soule, concerning the blinded severity of Law, and the Ministers thereto belonging, who pretending a diligent and carefull inquisition for trueth, doe oftentimes (by their tortures and torments) heare lies avouched (onely for ease of paine) in the place of a true confession, yet thinking themselves (by doing so) to be the Ministers of God and Justice, whereas indeede they are the Divels executioners of his wickednesse. Lastly, converting his thoughts to *Aldobrandino*, the imagined murderer of a man yet living, infinite cares beleagured his soule, in devising what might best be done for his deliverance.

So soone as he was risen in the morning, leaving his servant behinde him in his lodging, he went (when he thought it fit time) all alone toward the house of his Mistresse, where finding by good fortune the gate open, he entred into a small Parlour beneath, and where he saw his Mistresse sitting on the ground, wringing her hands, and wofully weeping, which (in meere compassion) moved him to weepe likewise; and going somewhat neere her, he saide. Madam, torment your selfe no more, for your peace is not farre off from you. The Gentlewoman hearing him say so, lifted up her head, and in teares spake thus. Good man, thou seemest to me to be a Pilgrim stranger; what doest thou know, either concerning my peace, or mine affliction? Madam (replied the Pilgrime) I am of *Constantinople*, and (doubtlesse) am conducted hither by the hand of Heaven, to convert your teares into rejoycing, and to deliver your Father from death. How is this? answered shee: If thou be of *Constantinople*, and art but now arrived here; doest thou know who we are, either I, or my Father?

The Pilgrime discoursed to her, even from one end to the other, the history of her Husbands sad disasters, telling her, how many yeeres since shee was espoused to him, and many other important matters, which wel shee knew, and was greatly amazed thereat, thinking him verily to be a Prophet, and kneeling at his feete, entreated him very earnestly, that if hee were come to deliver her Father *Aldobrandino* from death, to doe it speedily, because the time was very short. The Pilgrime appearing to be a man of great holinesse, saide. Rise up Madam, refraine from weeping, and observe attentively what I shall say; yet with this caution, that you never reveale it to any person whatsoever. This tribulation whereinto you are falne, (as by revelation I am faithfully informed) is for a grievous sinne by you heretofore committed, whereof divine mercy is willing to purge you, and to make a perfect amends by a sensible feeling of this affliction; as seeking your sound and absolute recovery, least you fall into farre greater danger then before. Good man (quoth shee) I am burthened with many sinnes, and doe not know for which any amends should be made by me, any one sooner then another: wherefore if you have intelligence thereof, for charities sake tell it me, and I will doe so much as lieth in me, to make a full satisfaction for it. Madam, answered the Pilgrime; I know well enough what it is, and will demand it no more of you, to winne any further knowledge thereof, then I have already: but because in revealing it your selfe, it may touch you with the more true compunction of soule; let us goe to the point indeede, and tell me, doe you remember, that at any time you were married to an Husband, or no?

At the hearing of these words, shee breathed foorth a very vehement sigh, and was stricken with admiration at this question, beleiving that not any one had knowledge thereof. Howbeit, since the day of the supposed *Thebaldoes* buriall, such a rumour ran abroade, by meanes of some speeches, rashly dispersed by a friend of *Thebaldoes*, who (indeede) knew it; whereupon shee returned him this answer. It appeareth to me (good man) that divine ordination hath revealed unto you all the secrets of men; and therefore I am determined, not to conceale any of mine from you. True it is, that in my younger yeeres, being left a widow, I entirely affected an

unfortunate young Gentleman, who (in secret) was my Husband, and whose death is imposed on my Father. The death of him I have the more bemoaned, because (in reason) it did neerly concerne me, by shewing my selfe so savage and rigorous to him before his departure: neverthelesse, let me assure you Sir, that neither his parting, long absence from me, or his untimely death, never had the power to bereave my heart of his remembrance.

Madame, saide the Pilgrime, the unfortunate young Gentleman that is slaine, did never love you; but sure I am, that *Thebaldo Elisei* loved you dearely. But tell me, what was the occasion whereby you conceived such hatred against him? Did he at any time offend you? No trulie Sir, quoth shee; but the reason of my anger towards him, was by the wordes and threatnings of a religious Father, to whom once I revealed (under confession) how faithfully I affected him, and what private familiarity had passed betweene us. When instantly he used such dreadfull threatnings to me, and which (even yet) doe afflict my soule, that if I did not abstaine, and utterly refuse him, the Divell would fetch me quicke to Hell, and cast me into the bottome of his quenchesse and everlasting fire.

These menaces were so prevailing with me, as I refused all further conversation with *Thebaldo*, in which regard, I would receive neither letters or messages from him. Howbeit, I am perswaded, that if he had continued here still, and not departed hence in such desperate manner as he did, seeing him melt and consume daily away, even as Snowe by power of the Sunne-beames: my austere deliberation had beene long agoe quite altered, because not at any time (since then) life hath allowed me one merry day, neither did I, or ever can love any man like unto him.

At these wordes the Pilgrime sighed, and then proceeded on againe thus. Surely Madam, this one onely sin, may justly torment you, because I know for a certainty, that *Thebaldo* never offered you any injury, since the day he first became enamoured of you; and what grace or favour you afforded him, was your owne voluntary gift, and (as he tooke it) no more then in modesty might well become you; for he loving you first, you had beene most cruell and unkinde, if you should not have requited him with the like affection. If then he continued so just and loyall to you, as (of mine owne knowledge) I am able to say he did; what should move you to repulse him so rudely? Such matters ought well to be considered on before hand; for if you did imagine, that you should repente it as an action ill done, yet you could not doe it, because as he became yours, so were you likewise onely his; and he being yours, you might dispose of him at your pleasure, as being truely obliged to none but you. How could you then with-draw your selfe from him, being onely his, and not commit most manifest theft, a farre unfitting thing for you to doe, except you had gone with his consent?

Now Madam, let me further give you to understand, that I am a religious person, and a pilgrime, and therefore am well acquainted with all the courses of their dealing; if therefore I speake somewhat more amply of them, and for your good, it cannot be so unseeming for me to doe it, as it would appeare ugly in another. In which respect, I will speake the more freely to you, to the ende, that you may take better knowledge of them, then (as it seemeth) hitherto you have done. In former passed times such as professed Religion, were learned and most holy persons; but our religious professours now adayes, and such as covet to be so esteemed; have no matter at all of Religion in them, but onely the outward shew & habite. Which yet is no true badge of Religion neither, because it was ordained by religious institutions, that their garments should be made of narrow, plaine, and coursest spun cloth, to make a publike manifestation to the world, that (in meere devotion, and religious disposition) by wrapping their bodies in such base clothing, they condemned and despised all temporall occasions. But now adayes they make them large, deepe, glistening, and of the finest cloth or stuffles to be gotten, reducing those habites to so proude and pontificall a forme, that they walke Peacock-like rustling, and strouting with them in the Churches; yea, and in open publike places, as if they were ordinary secular persons, to have their pride more notoriously observed. And as the Angler bestoweth his best cunning, with one line and baite to catch many fishes at one strike; even so do these counterfeted habite-mongers, by their dissembling and crafty dealing, beguile many credulous widowes, simple women, yea, and men of weake capacity, to credit whatsoever they doe or say, and herein they doe most of all excercise themselves.

And to the end, that my speeches may not savour of any untruth against them; these men which I speake of, have not any habite at all of religious men, but onely the colour of their garments, and whereas they in times past, desired nothing more then the salvation of mens soules; these fresher witted fellowes, covet after women & wealth, and employ all their paines by their whispering confessions, and figures of painted fearefull examples, to affright and terrifie unsetled and weake consciences, by horrible and blasphemous speeches; yet adding a perswasion withall, that their sinnes may be purged by Almes-deedes and Masses. To the end, that such as credit them in these their dayly courses, being guided more by apparance of devotion, then any true compunction of heart, to escape severe penances by them enjoyed: may some of them bring bread, others wine, others coyne, all of them matter of commoditie and benefit, and simply say, these gifts are for the soules of their good friends deceased.

I make not any doubt, but Almes-deedes and prayers, are very mighty, and prevailing meanes, to appease heavens anger for some sinnes committed; but if such as bestow them, did either see or know, to whom they give them: they would more warily keepe them, or else cast them before Swine, in regard they are altogether so unworthy of them. But come we now to the case of your ghostly father, crying out in your eare, that secret mariage was a most greevous sinne: Is not the breach thereof farre greater. Familiar conversation betweene man and woman, is a concession meereley naturall: but to rob, kill, or banish anyone, proceedeth from the mindes malignity. That you did rob *Thebaldo*, your selfe hath already sufficiently witnessed, by taking that from him,

which with free consent in marriage you gave him. Next I must say, that by all the power remaining in you, you kild him, because you would not permit him to remaine with you, declaring your selfe in the very height of cruelty, that hee might destroy his life by his owne hands. In which case the Law requireth, that whosoever is the occasion of an ill act committed, hee or she is as deepe in the fault, as the party that did it. Now concerning his banishment, and wandering seaven yeares in exile thorow the world; you cannot denie, but that you were the onely occasion thereof. In all which three severall actions, farre more capitally have you offended; then by contracting of marriage in such clandestine manner.

But let us see, whether *Thebaldo* deserved all these severall castigations, or not. In trueth he did not, your selfe have confessed (beside that which I know) that hee loved you more dearely then himselfe, and nothing could be more honoured, magnified and exalted, then dayly you were by him, above all other women whatsoever. When hee came in any place, where honestly, and without suspition hee might speake to you: all his honour, and all his liberty, lay wholly committed into your power. Was he not a noble young Gentleman? Was hee (among all those parts that most adorne a man, and appertaine to the very choycest respect) inferiour to any one of best merit in your Citie? I know that you cannot make deniall to any of these demands. How could you then by the perswasion of a beast, a foole, a villaine, yea, a vagabond, envying both his happinesse and yours, enter into so cruell a minde against him? I know not what error misguideth women, in scorning and despising their husbands: but if they entred into a better consideration, understanding truly what they are, and what nobility of nature God hath endued man withall, farre above all other creatures; it would bee their highest title of glory, when they are are so preciously esteemed of them, so dearely affected by them, and so gladly embraced in all their best abilities.

This is so great a sinne, as the divine Justice (which in an equal ballance bringeth all operations to their full effect) did purpose not to leave unpunished; but, as you enforced against all reason, to take away *Thebaldo* from your selfe: even so your Father *Aldobrandino*, without any occasion given by *Thebaldo*, is in perill of his life, and you a partaker of his tribulation. Out of which if you desire to be delivered, it is very convenient that you promise one thing which I shall tell you, and may much better be by you performed. Namely, that if *Thebaldo* doe at any time returne from his long banishment, you shall restore him to your love, grace, and good acceptance; accounting him in the selfe same degree of favour and private entertainment, as he was at the first, before your wicked ghostly father so hellishly incensed you against him.

When the Pilgrime had finished his speeches, the Gentlewoman, who had listened to them very attentively (because all the alleaged reasons appeared to be plainely true) became verily perswaded, that all these afflictions had falne on her and her Father, for the ingratefull offence by her committed, and therefore thus replied. Worthy man, and the friend to goodnesse, I know undoubtedly, that the words which you have spoken are true, and also I understand by your demonstration, what manner of people some of those religious persons are, whom heretofore I have reputed to be Saints, but find them now to be far otherwise. And to speake truly, I perceive the fault to be great and grievous, wherein I have offended against *Thebaldo*, and would (if I could) willingly make amends, even in such manner as you have advised. But how is it possible to be done? *Thebaldo* being dead, can be no more recalled to this life; and therefore, I know not what promise I should make, in a matter which is not to be performed. Whereto, the Pilgrime without any longer pausing, thus answered.

Madam, by such revelations as have beene shewne to me, I know for a certainty, that *Thebaldo* is not dead, but living, in health, and in good estate; if he had the fruition of your grace and favour. Take heede what you say Sir (quoth the Gentlewoman) for I saw him lie slaine before my doore, his body having received many wounds, which I folded in mine armes, and washed his face with my brinish teares; whereby (perhaps) the scandall arose, that flew abroad to my disgrace. Beleeve me Madam, (replied the Pilgrime) say what you will, I dare assure you that *Thebaldo* is living, and if you dare make promise, concerning what hath beene formerly requested, and keepe it inviolably; I make no doubt, but you your selfe shall shortly see him. I promise it (quoth shee) and binde my selfe thereto by a sacred oath, to keepe it faithfully: for never could any thing happen, to yeeld me the like contentment, as to see my Father free from danger, and *Thebaldo* living.

At this instant *Thebaldo* thought it to be a very apt and convenient time to disclose himselfe, and to comfort the Lady, with an assured signall of hope, for the deliverance of her Father, wherefore he saide. Lady, to the ende that I may comfort you infallibly, in this dangerous perill of your Fathers life; I am to make knowne an especiall secret to you, which you are to keepe carefully (as you tender your owne life) from ever being revealed to the world. They were then in a place of sufficient privacy, and alone by themselves, because shee reposed great confidence in the Pilgrimes sanctity of life, as thinking him none other, then as he seemed to be. *Thebaldo* tooke out of his Purse a Ring, which shee gave him, the last night of their conversing together, and he had kept with no meane care, and shewing it to her, he saide. Doe you know this Ring Madam? So soone as shee saw it, immediately shee knew it, and answered. Yes Sir, I know the Ring, and confesse that heretofore I gave it unto *Thebaldo*.

Hereupon the Pilgrime stood up, and suddenly putting off his poore linnen Frocke, as also the Hood from his head; using then his *Florentine* tongue, he saide. Then tell me Madam, doe you not know me? When shee had advisedly beheld him, and knew him indeede to be *Thebaldo*; she was stricken into a wonderfull astonishment, being as fearefull of him, as shee was of the dead body, which shee saw lying in the streete. And I dare assure you, that shee durst not goe neere him, to respect him, as *Thebaldo* so lately come from *Cyprus*: but (in terror) fled away from him; as if

*Thebaldo* had beene newly risen out of his grave, and came thither purposely to affright her; wherefore he saide. Be not afraide Madam, I am your *Thebaldo*, in health, alive, and never as yet died, neither have I received any wounds to kill mee, as you and my bretheren have formerly imagined.

Some better assurance getting possession of her soule, as knowing him perfectly by his voyce, and looking more stedfastly on his face, which constantly avouched him to be *Thebaldo*; the teares trickling amaine downe her faire cheekes, shee ran to embrace him, casting her armes about his necke, and kissing him a thousand times, saying; *Thebaldo*, my true and faithfull Husband, nothing in the World can be so welcome to me. *Thebaldo* having most kindly kissed and embraced her, said; Sweete wife, time will not now allow us those ceremonious curtesies, which (indeede) so long a separation doe justly challenge; but I must about a more weightie businesse, to have your Father safe and soundly delivered, which I hope to doe before to morrow at night, when you shall heare tydings to your better contentment. And questionlesse, if I speede no worse then my good hope perswadeth me, I will see you againe to night, and acquaint you at better leysure, in such things as I cannot doe now at this present.

So putting on his Pilgrimes habite againe, kissing her once more, and comforting her with future good successe, he departed from her, going to the prison where *Aldobrandino* lay, whom he found more pensive, as being in hourelly expectation of death, then any hope he had to be freed from it. Being brought neerer to him by the prisoners favour, as seeming to be a man, come onely to comfort him; sitting downe by him, thus he began. *Aldobrandino*, I am a friend of thine, whom Heaven hath sent to doe thee good, in meere pitty and compassion of thine innocency. And therefore, if thou wilt grant me one small request, which I am earnestly to crave at thy hands; thou shalt heare (without any failing) before to morrow at night, the sentence of thy free absolution, whereas now thou expectest nothing but death; whereunto *Aldobrandino* thus answered. Friendly man, seeing thou art so carefull of my safety (although I know thee not, neither doe remember that ever I saw thee till now) thou must needs (as it appeareth no lesse) be some especiall kind friend of mine. And to tell thee the trueth, I never committed the sinfull deede, for which I am condemned to death. Most true it is, I have other heynous and grievous sinnes, which (undoubtedly) have throwne this heavy judgement upon me, and therefore I am the more willing to undergoe it. Neverthelesse, let me thus farre assure thee, that I would gladly, not onely promise something, which might to the glory of God, if he were pleased in this case to take mercy on me; but also would as willingly performe and accomplish it. Wherefore, demand whatsoever thou pleasest of me, for unfainedly (if I escape with life) I will truly keepe promise with thee.

Sir, replied the Pilgrime, I desire nor demand any thing of you, but that you wold pardon the foure brethren of *Thebaldo*, who have brought you to this hard extremity, as thinking you to be guilty of their brothers death, and that you would also accept them as your brethren and friends, upon their craving pardon for what they have done. Sir, answered *Aldobrandino*, no man knoweth how sweete revenge is, nor with what heate it is to be desired, but onely the man who hath been wronged. Notwithstanding, not to hinder my hope, which onely aymeth at Heaven; I freelie forgive them, and henceforth pardon them for ever; intending moreover, that if mercy give me life, and cleere me from this bloody imputation, to love and respect them so long as I shall live. This answer was most pleasing to the Pilgrime, and without any further multiplication of speeches, he entreated him to be of good comfort, for he feared not but before the time prefixed, he should heare certaine tydings of his deliverance.

At his departing from him, he went directly to the *Signoria*, and prevailed so farre, that he spake privately with a Knight, who was then one of the States chiefest Lords, to whom he saide. Sir, a man ought to bestow his best paines and diligence, that the truth of things should be apparantly knowne; especially, such men as hold the place and office as you doe: to the ende, that those persons which have committed no foule offence, should not be punished, but onely the guilty and haynous transgressors. And because it will be no meane honour to you, to lay the blame where it worthily deserveth; I am come hither purposely, to informe you in a case of most weighty importance. It is not unknowne to you, with what rigour the State hath proceeded against *Aldobrandino Palermi*, and you thinke verily he is the man that hath slaine *Thebaldo Elisei*, whereupon your law hath condemned him to dye. I dare assure you Sir, that a very unjust course hath beene taken in this case, because *Aldobrandino* is falsly accused, as you your selfe will confesse before midnight, when they are delivered into your power, that were the murderers of the man.

The honest Knight, who was very sorrowfull for *Aldobrandino*, gladly gave attention to the Pilgrime, and having conferred on many matters, appertaining to the fact committed: the two brethren, who were *Thebaldoes* Hostes, and their Chamber-mayd, upon good advise given, were apprehended in their first sleepe, without any resistance made in their defence. But when the tortures were sent for, to understand truely how the case went; they would not endure any paine at all, but each aside by himselfe, and then altogether, confessed openly, that they did the deede, yet not knowing him to bee *Thebaldo Elisei*. And when it was demanded of them, upon what occasion they did so foule an act. They answered, that they were so hatefull against the mans life, because he would luxuriously have abused one of their wives, when they both were absent from their owne home.

When the Pilgrime had heard this their voluntary confession, hee tooke his leave of the Knight, returning secretly to the house of Madame *Hermelina*, and there, because all her people were in their beds, she carefull awaited his returne, to heare some glad tydings of her father, and to make a further reconciliation betweene her and *Thebaldo*, when, sitting downe by her, hee said.

Deare Love, be of good cheare, for (upon my word) to morrow you shall have your father home safe, well, and delivered from all further danger: and to confirme her the more confidently in his words, hee declared at large the whole carriage of the businesse. *Hermelina* being wondrously joyfull, for two such suddaine and succesfull accidents to enjoy her husband alive and in health, and also to have her father freed from so great a danger; kissed and embraced him most affectionately, welcomming him lovingly into her bed, whereto so long time he had beene a stranger.

No sooner did bright day appeare, but *Thebaldo* arose, having acquainted her with such matters as were to be done, and once more earnestly desiring her, to conceale (as yet) these occurrences to her selfe. So, in his Pilgrimes habite, he departed from her house, to awaite convenient opportunity, for attending on the businesse belonging to *Aldobrandino*. At the usuall houre appointed, the Lords were all set in the *Signioria*, and had received full information, concerning the offence imputed to *Aldobrandino*: setting him at liberty by publique consent, and sentencing the other malefactors with death, who (within a fewe dayes after) were beheaded in the place where the murther was committed. Thus *Aldobrandino* being released, to his exceeding comfort, and no small joy of his daughters, kindred and friends, all knowing perfectly, that this had happened by the Pilgrimes meanes: they conducted him home to *Aldobrandinoes* house, where they desired him to continue so long as himselfe pleased, using him with most honourable and gracious respect; but especially *Hermelina*, who knew (better then the rest) on whom shee bestowed her liberall favours, yet concealing all closely to her selfe.

After two or three dayes were over-past, in these complementall entercourings of kindnesse, *Thebaldo* began to consider, that it was high time for reconciliation, to be solemnly past betweene his brethren and *Aldobrandino*. For, they were not a little amazed at his strange deliverance, and went likewise continually armed, as standing in feare of *Aldobrandino* and his friends; which made him the more earnest, for accomplishment of the promise formerly made unto him. *Aldobrandino* lovingly replied, that he was ready to make good his word. Whereupon, the Pilgrime provided a goodly Banquet, whereto he purposed to have present, *Aldobrandino*, his daughter, kindred, and their wives. But first, himselfe would goe in person, to invite them in peace to his Banquet, to performe this desired pacification, and conferred with his brethren, using many pregnant and forcible arguments to them, such as are requisite in the like discordant cases. In the end, his reasons were so wise, and prevailing with them, that they willingly condiscended, and thought it no disparagement to them, for the recoverie of *Aldobrandinoes* kindnesse againe, to crave pardon for their great error committed.

On the morrow following, about the houre of dinner time, the foure brethren of *Thebaldo*, attired in their mourning garments, with their wives and friends, came first to the house of *Aldobrandino*, who purposely attended for them, and having layd downe their weapons on the ground: in the presence of all such, as *Aldobrandino* had invited as his witnesses, they offered themselves to his mercy, and humbly required pardon of him, for the matter wherein they had offended him. *Aldobrandino*, shedding teares, most lovingly embraced them, and (to bee briefe) pardon whatsoever injuries he had received. After this, the sisters and wives, all clad in mourning, courteously submitted themselves, and were graciously welcommed by Madame *Hermelina*, as also divers other Gentlewomen there present with her. Being all seated at the Tables, which were furnished with such rarities as could be wished for; all things else deserved their due commendation, but onely sad silence, occasioned by the fresh remembrance of sorrow, appearing in the habites of *Thebaldoes* friends and kindred, which the Pilgrime himselfe plainly perceived, to be the onely disgrace to him and his feast. Wherefore, as before hee had resolved, when time served to purge away this melancholly; hee arose from the Table, when some (as yet) had scarce begun to eate, and thus spake.

Gracious company, there is no defect in this Banquet, or more debarres it of the honour it might else have, but onely the presence of *Thebaldo*, who having beene continually in your company, it seemes you are not willing to take knowledge of him, and therefore I meane my selfe to shew him. So, uncasing himselfe out of his Pilgrimes clothes, and standing in his Hose and Doublet: to their no little admiration, they all knew him, yet doubted (a good while) whether it were he or no. Which hee perceiving, hee repeated his bretherens and absent kindreds names, and what occurrences had happened betweene them from time to time, beside the relation of his owne passed fortunes, inciting teares in the eyes of his brethren, and all else there present, every one hugging and embracing him, yea, many beside, who were no kin at all to him, *Hermelina* onely excepted, which when *Aldobrandino* saw, he said unto her. How now *Hermelina*? Why doest thou not welcome home *Thebaldo*, so kindly as all here else have done?

She making a modest courtesie to her Father, and answering so loude as every one might heare her, said. There is not any in this assembly, that more willingly would give him all expression of a joyfull welcom home, and thankfull gratitude for such especiall favours received, then in my heart I could afford to do: but only in regard of those infamous speeches, noysed out against me, on the day when wee wept for him, who was supposed to be *Thebaldo*, which slander was to my great discredit. Goe on boldly, replied *Aldobrandino*, doest thou thinke that I regard any such pratlers? In the procuring of my deliverance, hee hath approved them to be manifest liars, albeit I my selfe did never credit them. Goe then I command thee, and let me see thee both kisse and embrace him. She who desired nothing more, shewed her selfe not slothfull in obeying her Father, to do but her duty to her husband. Wherefore, being risen; as all the rest had done, but yet in farre more effectual manner, she declared her unfeigned love to *Thebaldo*. These bountifull favours of *Aldobrandino*, were joyfully accepted by *Thebaldoes* brethren, as also every one else there present in company; so that all former rancour and hatred, which had caused heavy variances

betweene them, was now converted to mutuall kindnesse, and solemne friendship on every side.

When the feasting dayes were finished, the garments of sad mourning were quite layde aside, and those, becomming so generall a joy, put on, to make their hearts and habites suteable. Now, concerning the man slaine, and supposed to be *Thebaldo*, hee was one, that in all parts of body, and truenesse of complexion so neerely resembled him, as *Thebaldoes* owne brethren could not distinguish the one from the other: but hee was of *Lunigiana*, named *Fatinolo*, and not *Thebaldo*, whom the two brethren Inne-keepers maliced, about some idle suspition conceived, and having slaine him, layde his body at the doore of *Aldobrandino*, where, by the reason of *Thebaldoes* absence, it was generally reputed to be he, and *Aldobrandino* charged to doe the deede, by vehement perswasion of the brethren, knowing what love had passed betweene him and his daughter *Hermelina*. But happy was the Pilgrimes returne, first to heare those words in the Inne, the meanes to bring the murther to light; and then the discrete carriage of the Pilgrime, untill hee plainly approved himselfe, to be truly *Thebaldo*.

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***Ferando, by drinking a certaine kinde of Powder, was buried for dead. And by the Abbot, who was enamoured of his wife, was taken out of his Grave, and put into a darke prison, where they made him beleewe, that hee was in Purgatorie. Afterward, when time came that hee should bee raised to life againe; hee was made to keepe a childe, which the Abbot had got by his Wife.***

## **The eight Novell.**

***Wherein is displayed, the apparant folly of jealousy: And the subtilty of some religious carnall minded men, to beguile silly and simple married men.***

When the long discourse of Madame *Æmilia* was ended, not displeasing to any, in regard of the length, but rather held too short, because no exceptions could be taken against it, comparing the raritie of the accidents, and changes together: the Queene turned to Madame *Lauretta*, giving her such a manifest signe, as she knew, that it was her turne to follow next, and therefore shee tooke occasion to begin thus. Faire Ladies, I intend to tell you a Tale of trueth, which (perhaps) in your opinions, will seeme to sound like a lye: and yet I heard by the very last relation, that a dead man was wept and mournd for, in sted of another being then alive. In which respect, I am now to let you know, how a living man was buried for dead, and being raised againe, yet not as living, himselfe, and divers more beside, did beleewe that he came forth of his grave, and adored him as a Saint, who was the occasion thereof, and who (as a bad man) deserved justly to be condemned.

In *Tuscanie* there was sometime an Abby, seated, as now we see commonly they are, in a place not much frequented with people, and thereof a Monke was Abbot, very holy and curious in all things else, save onely a wanton appetite to women: which yet hee kept so cleanly to himselfe, that though some did suspect it, yet it was knowne to very few. It came to passe, that a rich Country Franklin, named *Ferando*, dwelt as a neere neighbour to the said Abby, hee being a man materiall, of simple and grosse understanding, yet he fell into great familiarity with the Abbot; who made use of this friendly conversation to no other end, but for divers times of recreation; when he delighted to smile at his silly and sottish behaviour.

Upon this his private frequentation with the Abbot, at last he observed, that *Ferando* had a very beautifull woman to his wife, with whom he grew so deeply in love, as hee had no other meditations either by day or night, but how to become acceptable in her favour. Nevertheless, he concealed his amorous passions privately to himselfe, and could plainly perceive, that although *Ferando* (in all things else) was meerey a simple fellow, and more like an Idiot, then of any sensible apprehension: yet was he wise enough in loving his wife, keeping her carefully out of all company, as one (indeede) very jealous, least any should kisse her, but onely himselfe, which drove the Abbot into despaire, for ever attaining the issue of his desire. Yet being subtill, crafty, and cautelous, he wrought so on the flexible nature of *Ferando*, that hee brought his wife with him divers dayes to the Monasterie; where they walked in the goodly Garden, discoursing on the beatitudes of eternall life, as also the most holy deedes of men and women, long since departed out of this life, in mervailous civill and modest manner. Yet all these were but traines to a further intention, for the Abbot must needes bee her ghostly Father, and shee come to be confessed by him; which the foole *Ferando* tooke as an especiall favour, and therefore he gave his consent the sooner.

At the appointed time, when the woman came to confession to the Abbot, and was on her knees before him, to his no small contentment, before she would say any thing else, thus she began: Sacred Father, if God had not given me such an husband as I have, or else had bestowed on me none at all; I might have beene so happy, by the meanes of your holy doctrine, very easily to have entred into the way, whereof you spake the other day, which leadeth to eternall life. But when I consider with my selfe, what manner of man *Ferando* is, and thinke upon his folly withall; I may well terme my selfe to be a widdow, although I am a married wife, because while he liveth, I cannot have any other husband. And yet (as sottish as you see him) he is (without any occasion given him) so extreamely jealous of me; as I am not able to live with him, but onely in continuall tribulation & hearts griefe. In which respect, before I enter into confession, I most humbly beseech you, that you would vouchsafe (in this distresse) to assist me with your fatherly advise



and counsell, because, if thereby I cannot attaine to a more pleasing kinde of happinesse; neither confession, or any thing else, is able to doe me any good at all.

These words were not a little welcome to my Lord Abbot, because (thereby) he halfe assured himselfe, that Fortune had laid open the path to his hoped pleasures, whereupon he said. Deare daughter, I make no question to the contrary, but it must needes be an exceeding infelicity, to so faire and goodly a young woman as you are, to be plagued with so sottish an husband, brain-sick, and without the use of common understanding; but yet subject to a more hellish affliction then all these, namely jealousie, and therefore you being in this wofull manner tormented, your tribulations are not only so much the more credited, but also as amply grieved for, & pittied. In which heavy and irksome perturbations, I see not any meanes of remedy, but onely one, being a kinde of physicke (beyond all other) to cure him of his foolish jealousie; which medicine is very familiar to me, because I know best how to compound it, alwayes provided, that you can be of so strong a capacity, as to be secret in what I shall say unto you.

Good Father (answered the Woman) never make you any doubt thereof, for I would rather endure death it selfe, then disclose any thing which you enjoyne me to keepe secret: wherefore, I beseech you Sir to tell me, how, and by what meanes it may be done. If (quoth the Abbot) you desire to have him perfectly cured, of a disease so dangerous and offensive, of necessity he must be sent into Purgatory. How may that be done, saide the woman, he being alive? He must needes die, answered the Abbot, for his more speedy passage thither; and when he hath endured so much punishment, as may expiate the quality of his jealousie, we have certaine devoute and zealous prayers, whereby to bring him backe againe to life, in as able manner as ever he was. Why then, replied the woman, I must remaine in the state of a Widdow? Very true, saide the Abbot, for a certaine time, in all which space, you may not (by any meanes) marrie againe, because the heavens will therewith be highly offended: but *Ferando* being returned to life againe, you must repesesse him as your Husband, but never to be jealous any more. Alas Sir (quoth the woman) so that he may be cured of his wicked jealousie, and I no longer live in such an hellish imprisonment, doe as you please.

Now was the Abbot (well neere) on the highest step of his hope, making her constant promise, to accomplish it: But (quoth he) what shall be my recompence when I have done it? Father, saide shee, whatsoever you please to aske, if it remaine within the compasse of my power: but you being such a vertuous and sanctified man, and I a woman of so meane worth or merit; what sufficient recompence can I be able to make you? Whereunto the Abbot thus replied. Faire Woman, you are able to doe as much for me, as I am for you, because as I doe dispose my selfe, to performe a matter for your comfort and consolation, even so ought you to be as mindfull of me, in any action concerning my life and welfare. In any such matter Sir (quoth shee) depending on your benefit so strictly, you may safely presume to command me. You must then (saide the Abbot) grant me your love, and the kinde embracing of your person; because so violent are mine affections, as I pine and consume away daily, till I enjoy the fruition of my desires, and none can help me therein but you.

When the woman heard these words, as one confounded with much amazement, this shee replied. Alas, holy Father! what a strange motion have you made to me? I beleevd very faithfully, that you were no lesse then a Saint, and is it convenient, that when silly women come to aske counsell of such sanctified men, they should returne them such unfitting answeres? Be not amazed good woman, saide the Abbot, at the motion which I have made unto you, because holinesse is not thereby impaired a jot in me; for it is the inhabitant of the soule, the other is an imperfection attending on the body: but be it whatsoever, your beauty hath so powerfully prevailed on me, that entire love hath compelled me to let you know it. And more may you boast of your beauty, then any that ever I beheld before, considering, it is so pleasing to a sanctified man, that it can draw him from divine contemplations, to regard a matter of so humble an equalitie.

Let me tell you moreover, woorthy Woman, that you see me revered here as Lord Abbot, yet am I but as other men are, and in regard I am neither aged, nor misshapen, me thinkes the motion I have made, should be the lesse offensive to you, and therefore the sooner granted. For, all the while as *Ferando* remaineth in Purgatory, doe you but imagine him to be present with you, and your perswasion will the more absolutely be confirmed. No man can, or shall be privy to our close meetings, for I carrie the same holy opinion among all men, as you your selfe conceived of me, and none dare be so saucie, as to call in question whatsoever I doe or say, because my wordes are Oracles, and mine actions more then halfe miracles; doe you not then refuse so gracious an offer. Enow there are, who would gladly enjoy that, which is francke and freely presented to you, and which (if you be a wise Woman) is meerey impossible for you to refuse. Richly am I possessed of Gold and Jewels, which shall be all yours, if you please in favour to be mine; wherein I will not be gaine-saide, except your selfe doe denie me.

The Woman having her eyes fixed on the ground, knew not wel how shee should denie him; and yet in plaine words, to say shee consented, shee held it to be over-base and immodest, and ill agreeing with her former reputation: when the Abbot had well noted this attention in her, and how silent shee stood without returning any answer; he accounted the conquest to be more then halfe his owne: so that continuing on his formall perswasions, hee never ceased, but allured her still to beleeve whatsoever he saide. And shee much ashamed of his importunity, but more of her owne flexible yeelding weakenesse, made answer, that shee would willingly accomplish his request; which yet shee did not absolutelie grant, untill *Ferando* were first sent into Purgatory. And till then (quoth the Abbot) I will not urge any more, because I purpose his speedy sending thither: but yet, so farre lend me your assistance, that either to morrow, or else the next day, he

may come hither once more to converse with me. So putting a faire gold Ring on her finger, they parted till their next meeting.

Not a little joyfull was the Woman of so rich a gift, hoping to enjoy a great many more of them, and returning home to her neighbours, acquainted them with wonderfull matters, all concerning the sanctimonious life of the Abbot, a meere miracle of men, and worthy to be truly termed a Saint. Within two dayes after, *Ferando* went to the Abbye againe, and so soone as the Abbot espied him, hee presently prepared for his sending of him into Purgatorie. He never was without a certaine kinde of drugge, which being beaten into powder, would worke so powerfully upon the braine, and all the other vitall sences, as to entrance them with a deadly sleepe, and deprive them of all motion, either in the pulses, or any other part else, even as if the body were dead indeede; in which operation it would so hold and continue, according to the quantity given and drunke, as it pleased the Abbot to order the matter. This powder or drugge, was sent him by a great Prince of the East, and therewith he wrought wonders upon his Novices, sending them into Purgatory when he pleased, and by such punishments as he inflicted on them there, made them (like credulous asses) beleieve whatsoever himselfe listed.

So much of this powder had the Abbot provided, as should suffice for three dayes entrauncing, and having compounded it with a very pleasant Wine, calling *Ferando* into his Chamber, there gave it him to drinke, and afterward walked with him about the Cloyster, in very friendly conference together, the silly sot never dreaming on the treachery intended against him. Many Monkes beside were recreating themselves in the Cloyster, most of them delighting to behold the follies of *Ferando*, on whom the potion beganne so to worke, that he slept in walking, nodding and reeling as hee went, till at the last hee fell downe, as if he had beene dead.

The Abbot pretending great admiration at this accident, called his Monkes about him, all labouring by rubbing his temples, throwing cold water and vinegar in his face, to revive him againe; alleaging that some fume or vapour in the stomacke, had thus over-awed his understanding faculties, and quite deprived him of life indeede. At length, when by tasting the pulse, and all their best employed paines, they saw that their labour was spent in vaine; the Abbot used such perswasions to the Monkes, that they all beleived him to be dead: whereupon they sent for his Wife and friends, who crediting as much as the rest did, were very sad and sorrowfull for him.

The Abbot (cloathed as he was) laide him in a hollow vault under a Tombe, such as there are used in stead of Graves; his Wife returning home againe to her House, with a young Sonne which shee had by her Husband, protesting to keepe still within her House, and never more to be seene in any company, but onely to attend her young Sonne, and be very carefull of such wealth as her Husband had left unto her.

From the City of *Bologna*, that very instant day, a well staide and governed Monke there arrived, who was a neere kinsman to the Abbot, and one whom he might securely trust. In the dead time of the night, the Abbot and this Monke arose, and taking *Ferando* out of the vault, carried him into a darke dungeon or prison, which he termed by the name of Purgatory, and where hee used to discipline his Monkes, when they had committed any notorious offence, deserving to be punished in Purgatory. There they tooke off his usuall wearing garments, and cloathed him in the habite of a Monke, even as if he had beene one of the house; and laying him on a bundle of straw, so left him untill his sences should be restored againe. On the day following, late in the evening, the Abbot, accompanied with his trusty Monke, (by way of visitation) went to see and comfort the supposed widow; finding her attired in blacke, very sad and pensive, which by his wonted perswasions, indifferently he appeased; challenging the benefit of her promise. Shee being thus alone, not hindered by her Husbands jealousy, and espying another goodly gold Ring on his finger, how frailety and folly over-ruled her, I know not, shee was a weake woman, he a divelish deluding man; and the strongest holdes by over-long battery and besieging, must needes yeeld at the last, as I feare shee did: for very often afterward, the Abbot used in this manner to visit her, and the simple ignorant Countrey people, carrying no such ill opinion of the holy Abbot, and having seene *Ferando* lying for dead in the vault, and also in the habite of a Monke; were verily perswaded, that when they saw the Abbot passe by to and fro, but most commonly in the night season, it was the ghost of *Ferando*, who walked in this manner after his death, as a just pittance for his jealousy.

When *Ferandoes* sences were recovered againe, and he found himselfe to be in such a darkesome place; not knowing where he was, he beganne to crie and make a noyse. When presently the Monke of *Bologna* (according as the Abbot had tutored him) stept into the dungeon, carrying a little waxe candle in the one hand, and a smarting whip in the other, going to *Ferando*, he stript off his cloathes, and began to lash him very soundly. *Ferando* roaring and crying, could say nothing else, but, where am I? The Monke (with a dreadfull voyce) replied: Thou art in Purgatory. How? saide *Ferando*; what? Am I dead? Thou art dead (quoth the Monke) and began to lash him lustily againe. Poore *Ferando*, crying out for his Wife and little Sonne, demanded a number of idle questions, whereto the Monke still fitted him with as fantasticke answers. Within a while after, he set both foode and wine before him, which when *Ferando* sawe, he saide; How is this? Doe dead men eate and drinke? Yes, replied the Monke, and this foode which here thou seest, thy Wife brought hither to their Church this morning, to have Masses devoutly sung for thy soule; and as to other, so must it be set before thee, for such is the command of the Patrone of this place.

*Ferando* having lyen entranced three dayes and three nights, felt his stomacke well prepared to eate, and feeding very heartily, still saide; O my good Wife, O my loving Wife, long mayest thou live for this extraordinary kindnesse. I promise thee (sweete heart) while I was alive, I cannot

remember, that ever any foode and wine was halfe so pleasing to me. O my deare Wife; O my hony Wife. Canst thou (quoth the Monke) prayse and commend her now, using her so villainously in thy life time? Then did he whip him more fiercely then before, when *Ferando* holding up his hands, as craving for mercy, demanded wherefore he was so severely punished? I am so commanded (quoth the Monke) by supreme power, and twice every day must thou be thus disciplinde. Upon what occasion? replied *Ferando*. Because (quoth the Monke) thou wast most notoriously jealous of thy Wife, shee being the very kindest woman to thee, as all the Countrey containeth not her equall. It is too true, answered *Ferando*, I was over-much jealous of her indeede: but had I knowne, that jealousie was such a hatefull sinne against Heaven, I never would have offended therein.

Now (quoth the Monke) thou canst confesse thine owne wilfull follie, but this should have beene thought on before, and whilest thou wast living in the World. But if the Fates vouchsafe to favour thee so much, as hereafter to send thee to the World once more; remember thy punishment here in Purgatory, and sinne no more in that foule sinne of jealousie. I pray you Sir tell me, replied *Ferando*, after men are dead, and put into Purgatory, is there any hope of their ever visiting the World any more? Yes, saide the Monke, if the fury of the Fates be once appeased. O that I knew (quoth *Ferando*) by what meanes they would be appeased, and let me visite the World once againe: I would be the best Husband that ever lived, and never more be jealous, never wrong so good a Wife, nor ever use one unkind word against her. In the meane while, and till their anger may be qualified; when next my Wife doth send me foode, I pray you worke so much, that some Candles may be sent me also, because I live here in uncomfortable darknesse; and what should I doe with foode, if I have no light. Shee sends Lights enow, answered the Monke, but they are burnt out on the Altar in Masse-time, and thou canst have none other here, but such as I must bring my selfe; neither are they allowed, but onely for the time of thy feeding and correcting.

*Ferando* breathing foorth a vehement sigh, desired to know what he was, being thus appointed to punish him in Purgatory? I am (quoth the Monke) a dead man, as thou art, borne in *Sardignia*, where I served a very jealous Master; and because I soothed him in his jealousie, I had this pennance imposed on me, to serve thee here in Purgatory with meate and drinke, and (twice every day) to discipline thy body, untill the Fates have otherwise determined both for thee and me. Why? saide *Ferando*, are any other persons here, beside you and I? Many thousands, replied the Monke, whom thou canst neither heare nor see, no more then they are able to doe the like by us. But how farre, saide *Ferando*, is Purgatory distant from our native Countries? About some fifty thousand leagues, answered the Monke; but yet passable in a moment, whensoever the offended Fates are pleased: and many Masses are daily saide for thy soule, at the earnest entreaty of thy Wife, in hope of thy conversion; and becoming a new man, hating to be jealous any more hereafter.

In these and such like speeches, as thus they beguiled the time, so did they observe it for a dayly course, sometime discipling, other whiles eating and drinking, for the space of ten whole moneths together: in the which time, the Abbot sildome failed to visite *Ferandoes* wife, without the least suspition in any of the neighbours, by reason of their settled opinion, concerning the nightly walking of *Ferandoes* ghost. But, as all pleasures cannot bee exempted from some following paine or other, so it came to passe, that *Ferandoes* wife proved to be conceived with childe, and the time was drawing on for her deliverance. Now began the Abbot to consider, that *Ferandoes* folly was sufficiently chastised, and hee had beene long enough in Purgatory: wherefore, the better to countenance all passed inconveniences, it was now thought high time, that *Ferando* should be sent to the world againe, and set free from the paines of Purgatory, as having payed for his jealousie dearely, to teach him better wisdom hereafter.

Late in the dead time of the night the Abbot himselfe entred into the darke dungeon, and in an hollow counterfeited voyce, called to *Ferando*, saying. Comfort thy selfe *Ferando*, for the Fates are now pleased, that thou shalt bee released out of Purgatory, and sent to live in the world againe. Thou didst leave thy wife newly conceived with childe, and this very morning she is delivered of a goodly Sonne, whom thou shalt cause to be named *Bennet*: because, by the incessant prayers of the holy Abbot, thine owne loving wife, and for sweet Saint *Bennets* sake, this grace and favour is afforded thee. *Ferando* hearing this, was exceeding joyfull, and returned this answere: For ever honoured be the Fates, the holy Lord Abbot, blessed Saint *Bennet*, and my most dearely beloved wife, whom I will faithfully love for ever, and never more offend her by any jealousie in me.

When the next foode was sent to *Ferando*, so much of the powder was mingled with the wine, as would serve onely for foure houres entrauncing, in which time, they clothed him in his owne wearing apparell againe, the Abbot himselfe in person, and his honest trusty Monke of *Bologna*, conveying and laying him in the same vault under the Tombe, where at the first they gave him buriall. The next morning following, about the breake of day, *Ferando* recovered his sences, and thorow divers chinkes and crannies of the Tombe, descried day-light, which hee had not seene in tenne moneths space before. Perceiving then plainely, that he was alive, he cried out aloud, saying: Open, open, and let mee forth of Purgatory, for I have beene heere long enough in conscience. Thrusting up his head against the cover of the Tombe, which was not of any great strength, neither well closed together; hee put it quite off the Tombe, and so got forth upon his feete: at which instant time, the Monks having ended their morning Mattins, and hearing the noyse, ran in hast thither, and knowing the voyce of *Ferando*, saw that he was come forth of the Monument.

Some of them were ancient Signiors of the house, and yet but meere Novices (as all the rest were) in these cunning and politique stratagems of the Lord Abbot, when hee intended to punish

any one in Purgatory, and therefore, being affrighted, and amazed at this rare accident; they fled away from him running to the Abbot, who making a shew to them, as if he were but new come forth of his Oratory, in a kinde of pacifying speeches, saide; Peace my deare Sonnes, bee not affraide, but fetch the Crosse and Holy-water hither; then follow me, and I will shew you, what miracle the Fates have pleased to shew in our Convent, therefore be silent, and make no more noise; all which was performed according to his command.

*Ferando* looking leane and pale, as one, that in so long time hadde not seene the light of heaven, and endured such strict discipline twice everie day: stood in a gastly amazement by the Tombes side, as not daring to adventure any further, or knowing perfectly, whether he was (as yet) truly alive, or no. But when he saw the Monkes and Abbot comming, with their lighted Torches, and singing in a solemne manner of Procession, he humbled himselfe at the Abbots feete, saying. Holy Father, by your zealous prayers (as hath bin miraculously revealed to me) and the prayers of blessed S. *Bennet*; as also of my honest, deare, and loving Wife, I have bin delivered from the paines of Purgatory, and brought againe to live in this world; for which unspeakable grace and favour, most humbly I thank the well-pleased Fates, S. *Bennet*, your Father-hood, and my kinde Wife, and will remember all your loves to me for ever. Blessed be the Fates, answered the Abbot, for working so great a wonder heere in our Monastery. Go then my good Son, seeing the Fates have bin so gracious to thee; Go (I say) home to thine owne house, and comfort thy kind wife, who ever since thy departure out of this life, hath lived in continual mourning, love, cherish, and make much of her, never afflicting her henceforth with causelesse jealousy. No I warrant you good Father, replied *Ferando*; I have bin well whipt in Purgatory for such folly, and therefore I might be called a starke foole, if I should that way offend any more, either my loving wife, or any other.

The Abbot causing *Miserere* to be devoutly sung, sprinkling *Ferando* well with Holy-water, and placing a lighted Taper in his hand, sent him home so to his owne dwelling Village: where when the Neighbourhs beheld him, as people halfe frighted out of their wits, they fledde away from him, so scared and terrified, as if they had seene some dreadfull sight, or gastly apparition; his wife being as fearfull of him, as any of the rest. He called to them kindly by their severall names, telling them, that hee was newly risen out of his grave, and was a man as he had bin before. Then they began to touch and feele him, growing into more certaine assurance of him, perceiving him to be a living man indeede: whereupon, they demanded many questions of him; and he, as if he were become farre wiser then before, tolde them tydings, from their long deceased Kindred and Friends, as if he had met with them all in Purgatory, reporting a thousand lyes and fables to them, which (neverthelesse) they beleaved.

Then he told them what the miraculous voice had said unto him, concerning the birth of another young Sonne, whom (according as he was commanded) he caused to be named *Bennet Ferando*. Thus his returne to life againe, and the daily wonders reported by him, caused no meane admiration in the people, with much commendation of the Abbots Holynesse, and *Ferandos* happy curing of his jealousy.

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***Juliet of Narbona, cured the King of France of a daungerous Fistula, in recompence whereof, she requested to enjoy as her husband in marriage, Bertrand the Count of Roussillion. Hee having married her against his will, as utterly despising her, went to Florence, where he made love to a young Gentlewoman. Juliet, by a queint and cunning policy, compassed the meanes (insted of his chosen new friend) to lye with her owne husband, by whom shee conceived, and had two Sonnes; which being afterward made knowne unto Count Bertrand, he accepted her into his favour again, and loved her as his loyall and honourable wife.***

## **The Ninth Novell.**

***Commending the good judgement and understanding in Ladies or Gentlewomen, that are of a quicke and apprehensive spirit.***

Now there remained no more (to preserve the priviledge granted to *Dioneus* uninfringed) but the Queene onely, to declare her Novell. Wherefore, when the discourse of Madam *Lauretta* was ended, without attending any motion to bee made for her next succeeding, with a gracious and pleasing disposition, thus she began to speake. Who shall tell any Tale heereafter, to carry any hope or expectation of liking, having heard the rare and wittie discourse of Madam *Lauretta*? Beleeve me, it was verie advantageable to us all, that she was not this dayes first beginner, because few or none would have had any courage to follow after her, & therefore the rest yet remaining, are the more to be feared and suspected. Neverthelesse, to avoid the breach of order, and to claime no priviledge by my place, of not performing what I ought to do: prove as it may, a Tale you must have, and thus I proceed.

There lived sometime in the kingdom of *France*, a Gentleman named *Isnarde*, being the Count of *Roussillion*, who because hee was continually weake, crazie and sickly, kept a Physitian daily in his house, who was called Master *Gerard* of *Narbona*. Count *Isnarde* had one onely Sonne, very young in yeares, yet of towardly hope, faire, comely, and of pleasing person, named *Bertrand*; with whom, many other children of his age, had their education: and among them, a daughter of

the fore-named Physitian, called *Juliet*; who, even in these tender yeares, fixed her affection upon yong *Bertrand*, with such an earnest and intimate resolution, as was most admirable in so yong a maiden, and more then many times is noted in yeares of greater discretion. Old Count *Isnard* dying, yong *Bertrand* fell as a Ward to the King, and being sent to *Paris*, remained there under his royall custodie and protection, to the no little discomfort of yong *Juliet*, who became greevously afflicted in minde, because shee had lost the company of *Bertrand*.

Within some few yeeres after, the Physitian her Father also dyed, and then her desires grew wholly addicted, to visite *Paris* her selfe in person, onely because she would see the yong Count, awaiting but time & opportunitie, to fit her stolne journey thither. But her kindred and friends, to whose care and trust she was committed, in regard of her rich dowrie, and being left as a fatherlesse Orphane: were so circumspect of her walks and daily behaviour, as she could not compasse any meanes of escaping. Her yeeres made her now almost fit for marriage, which so much more encreased her love to the Count, making refusall of many woorthie husbands, and laboured by the motions of her friends and kindred, yet all denyed, they not knowing any reason for her refusalles. By this time the Count was become a gallant goodly Gentleman, and able to make election of a wife, whereby her affections were the more violently enflamed, as fearing least some other should be preferred before her, & so her hopes be utterly disappointed.

It was noysed abroad by common report, that the King of *France* was in a very dangerous condition, by reason of a strange swelling on his stomacke, which failing of apt and convenient curing, became a Fistula, afflicting him daily with extraordinary paine and anguish, no Chirurgeon or Physitian being found, that could minister any hope of healing, but rather encreased the greefe, and drove it to more vehement extreamitie, compelling the King, as despairing utterly of all helpe, to give over any further counsell or advice. Heereof faire *Juliet* was wondrously joyful, as hoping that this accident would prove the meanes, not only of hir journey to *Paris*, but if the disease were no more then shee imagined; shee could easily cure it, and thereby compasse Count *Bertrand* to be her husband. Heereupon, quickning up her wits, with remembrance of those rules of Art, which (by long practise and experience) she had learned of her skilfull Father, shee compounded certaine hearbes together, such as she knew fitting for that kinde of infirmity, and having reduced hir compound into a powder, away she rode forthwith to *Paris*.

Being there arrived, all other serious matters set aside, first shee must needs have a sight of Count *Bertrand*, as being the onely Saint that caused her pilgrimage. Next she made meanes for her accesse to the King, humbly entreating his Majesty, to vouchsafe her the sight of his Fistula. When the King saw her, her modest lookes did plainly deliver, that she was a faire, comely, and discrete young Gentlewoman; wherefore, hee would no longer hide it, but layed it open to her view. When shee had seene and felt it, presently she put the King in comfort; affirming, that she knew her selfe able to cure his Fistula, saying: Sir, if your Highnesse will referre the matter to me, without any perill of life, or any the least paine to your person, I hope (by the helpe of heaven) to make you whole and sound within eight dayes space. The King hearing her words, beganne merrily to smile at her, saying: How is it possible for thee, being a yong Maiden, to do that which the best Physitians in Europe, are not able to performe? I commend thy kindnesse, and will not remaine unthankfull for thy forward willingnesse: but I am fully determined, to use no more counsell, or to make any further triall of Physicke or Chirurgery. Whereto faire *Juliet* thus replied: Great King, let not my skill and experience be despised, because I am young, and a Maiden; for my profession is not Physicke, neither do I undertake the ministering thereof, as depending on mine owne knowledge; but by the gracious assistance of heaven, & some rules of skilfull observation, which I learned of reverend *Gerard* of *Narbona*, who was my worthy Father, and a Physitian of no meane fame, all the while he lived.

At the hearing of these words, the King began somewhat to admire at her gracious carriage, and saide within himselfe. What know I, whether this virgin is sent to me by the direction of heaven, or no? Why should I disdain to make prooffe of her skill? Her promise is, to cure mee in a small times compasse, and without any paine or affliction to me: she shall not come so farre, to returne againe with the losse of her labour, I am resolved to try her cunning, and thereon saide. Faire Virgin, if you cause me to breake my settled determination, and faile of curing mee, what can you expect to follow thereon? Whatsoever great King (quoth she) shall please you. Let me bee strongly guarded, yet not hindred, when I am to prosecute the businesse: and then if I doe not perfectly heale you within eight daies, let a good fire be made, and therein consume my bodie unto ashes. But if I accomplish the cure, and set your Highnesse free from all further greevance, what recompence then shall remaine to me?

Much did the King commend the confident perswasion which she had of her owne power, and presently replied. Faire beauty (quoth he) in regard that thou art a Maide and unmarried, if thou keepe promise, and I finde my selfe to be fully cured: I will match thee with some such Gentleman in marriage, as shal be of honourable and worthy reputation, with a sufficient dowry beside. My gracious Sovereigne saide she, willing am I, and most heartily thankfull withall, that your Highnesse shal bestow me in marriage: but I desire then, to have such a husband, as I shal desire or demand by your gracious favour, without presuming to crave any of your Sonnes, Kindred, or Alliance, or appertaining unto your Royall blood. Whereto the King gladly granted. Young *Juliet* began to minister her Physicke, and within fewer dayes then her limited time, the King was sound and perfectly cured; which when he perceyved, hee sayd unto her. Trust me vertuous Mayde, most woorthily hast thou wonne a Husband, name him, and thou shalt have him. Royall King (quoth she) then have I won the Count *Bertrand* of *Roussillion*, whom I have most entirely loved from mine Infancy, and cannot (in my soule) affect any other. Very loath was the

King to grant her the young Count, but in regard of his solemne passed promise, and his royal word engaged, which he would not by any meanes breake; he commanded, that the Count should be sent for, and spake thus to him.

Noble Count, it is not unknowne to us, that you are a Gentleman of great honour, and it is our royall pleasure, to discharge your wardship, that you may repaire home to your owne House, there to settle your affaires in such order, as you may be the readier to enjoy a Wife, which we intend to bestow upon you. The Count returned his Highnesse most humble thankes, desiring to know of whence, and what shee was? It is this Gentlewoman, answered the King, who (by the helpe of Heaven) hath benee the meanes to save my life. Well did the Count know her, as having very often before seene her; and although shee was very faire and amiable, yet in regard of her meane birth, which he held as a disparagement to his Nobility in bloud; he made a scorne of her, and spake thus to the King. Would your Highnesse give me a Quacksalver to my Wife, one that deales in drugges and Physicarie? I hope I am able to bestow my selfe much better then so. Why? quoth the King, wouldst thou have us breake our faith; which for the recovery of our health, wee have given to this vertuous virgin, and shee will have no other reward, but onely Count *Bertrand* to be her husband? Sir, replied the Count, you may dispossesse me of all that is mine, because I am your Ward and Subject, and any where else you may bestow me: but pardon me to tell you, that this marriage cannot be made with any liking or allowance of mine, neither will I ever give consent thereto.

Sir, saide the King, it is our will that it shall be so, vertuous she is, faire and wise; she loveth thee most affectionately, and with her mayest thou leade a more Noble life, then with the greatest Lady in our Kingdome. Silent, and discontented stode the Count, but the King commaunded preparation for the marriage; and when the appointed time was come, the Count (albeit against his will) received his wife at the Kings hand; she loving him deerely as her owne life. When all was done, the Count requested of the King, that what else remained for further solemnization of the marriage, it might be performed in his owne Countrey, reserving to himselfe what else he intended. Being mounted on horseback, and humbly taking their leave of the King, the Count would not ride home to his owne dwelling, but into *Tuscany*, where he heard of a warre betweene the *Florentines* and the *Senesi*, purposing to take part with the *Florentines*, to whom he was willingly and honourably welcommed, being created Captain of a worthy Company, and continuing there a long while in service.

The poore forsaken new married Countesse, could scarcely be pleased with such dishonourable unkindnes, yet governing her impatience with no meane discretion, and hoping by her vertuous carriage, to compasse the meanes of his recall: home she rode to *Roussillion*, where all the people received her very lovingly. Now, by reason of the Counts so long absence, all things were there farre out of order; mutinies, quarrels, and civill dissentions, having procured many dissolute irruptions, to the expence of much blood in many places. But shee, like a jolly stirring Lady, very wise and provident in such disturbances, reduced all occasions to such civility againe, that the people admired her rare behaviour, and condemned the Count for his unkindnesse towards her.

After that the whole countrey of *Roussillion* (by the policy and wisdom of this worthy Lady was fully re-established) in their ancient liberties; she made choise of two discreet knights, whom she sent to the Count her husband, to let him understand, that if in displeasure to her, hee was thus become a stranger to his owne countrey: upon the return of his answer, to give him contentment, shee would depart thence, and by no meanes disturbe him. Roughly and churlishly he replied; Let her doe as she list, for I have no determination to dwel with her, or neere where she is. Tell her from me, when she shall have this Ring, which you behold heere on my finger, and a sonne in her armes begotten by me; then will I come live with her, and be her love. The Ring he made most precious and deere account of, and never tooke it off from his finger, in regard of an especial vertue and property, which he well knew to be remaining in it. And these two Knights, hearing the impossibility of these two strict conditions, with no other favour else to be derived from him; sorrowfully returned backe to their Ladie, and acquainted her with this unkinde answer, as also his unalterable determination, which wel you may conceive, must needs be verie unwelcome to her.

After she had an indifferent while considered with her selfe, her resolution became so undauntable; that she would adventure to practise such meanes, whereby to compasse those two apparant impossibilities, and so to enjoy the love of her husband. Having absolutely concluded what was to be done, she assembled all the cheefest men of the country, revealing unto them (in mournfull manner) what an attempt she had made already, in hope of recovering her husbands favour, and what a rude answer was thereon returned. In the end, she told them, that it did not sute with her unworthinesse, to make the Count live as an exile from his owne inheritance, upon no other inducement, but only in regard of her: wherefore, she had determined betweene heaven and her soule, to spend the remainder of her dayes in Pilgrimages and prayers, for preservation of the Counts soule and her owne; earnestly desiring them, to undertake the charge and government of the Countrey, and signifying unto the Count, how she had forsaken his house, and purposed to wander so far thence, that never would she visite *Roussillion* any more. In the deliverie of these words, the Lords and gentlemen wept and sighed extraordinarily, using many earnest imprecations to alter this resolve in her, but all was in vaine.

Having taken her sad and sorrowfull farewell of them all, accompanied onely with her Maide, and one of her Kinsmen, away she went, attired in a Pilgrims habite, yet well furnished with money and precious Jewels, to avoide all wants which might befall her in travaile; not acquainting any one whether she went. In no place stayed she, untill she was arrived at Florence, where

happening into a poore Widdowes house, like a poore Pilgrim, she seemed well contented therewith. And desiring to heare some tydings of the Count, the next day she saw him passe by the house on horse-backe, with his company. Now, albeit shee knew him well enough, yet she demanded of the good old Widdow, what Gentleman he was? She made answer, that he was a stranger there, yet a Nobleman, called Count *Bertrand of Roussillion*, a verie courteous Knight, beloved and much respected in the City. Moreover, that he was farre in love with a neighbour of hers, a yong Gentlewoman, but verie poore and meane in substance, yet of honest life, vertuous, and never taxed with any evill report: onely her povertie was the maine imbarment of her marriage, dwelling in house with her mother, who was a wise, honest, and worthy Lady.

The Countesse having wel observed her words, and considered thereon from point to point; debated soberly with her owne thoughts, in such a doubtfull case what was best to be done. When she had understood which was the house, the ancient Ladies name, and likewise her daughters, to whom her husband was now so affectionately devoted; she made choise of a fit and convenient time, when (in her Pilgrims habit), secretly she went to the house. There she found the mother and daughter in poore condition, and with as poore a family: whom after she had ceremoniously saluted, she told the old Lady, that shee requested but a little conference with her. The Ladie arose, and giving her courteous entertainment, they went together into a withdrawing chamber, where being both set downe, the Countesse began in this manner.

Madame, in my poore opinion, you are not free from the frownes of Fortune, no more then I my selfe am: but if you were so well pleased, there is no one that can comfort both our calamities in such manner, as you are able to do. And beleve me answered the Lady, there is nothing in the world that can bee so welcome to mee, as honest comfort. The Countesse proceeding on in her former speeches said: I have now need (good Madame) both of your trust and fidelity, whereon if I should rely, and you faile me, it will be your owne undoing as well as mine. Speake then boldly, replied the olde Ladie, and remaine constantly assured, that you shall no way be deceived by me. Heereupon, the Countesse declared the whole course of her love, from the verie originall to the instant, revealing also what she was, and the occasion of her comming thither, relating every thing so perfectly, that the Ladie verily beleevved her, by some reports which she had formerly heard, and which mooved her the more to compassion. Now, when all circumstances were at full discovered, thus spake the Countesse.

Among my other miseries and misfortunes, which hath halfe broken my heart in the meere repetition, beside the sad and afflicting sufferance; two things there are, which if I cannot compasse to have, all hope is quite frustrate for ever, of gaining the grace of my Lord and Husband. Yet those two things may I obtaine by your helpe, if all be true which I have heard, and you can therein best resolve mee. Since my comming to this City, it hath credibly bene told me, that the Count my husband, is deeply in love with your daughter. If the Count (quoth the Ladie) love my daughter, and have a wife of his owne, he must thinke, and so shall surely finde it, that his greatnesse is no priviledge for him, whereby to worke dishonour upon her poverty. But indeed, some apparances there are, and such a matter as you speake of, may be so presumed; yet so farre from a very thought of entertaining in her or me; as whatsoever I am able to do, to yeeld you any comfort and content, you shall find me therein both willing and ready: for I prize my daughters spotles poverty as at high a rate, as he can do the pride of his honour.

Madam, quoth the Countesse, most heartily I thanke you. But before I presume any further on your kindnesse, let me first tell you, what faithfully I intend to do for you, if I can bring my purpose to effect. I see that your daughter is beautifull, and of sufficient yeares for marriage; and is debarred thereof (as I have heard) onely by lack of a competent dowry. Wherefore Madame, in recompence of the favour I expect from you, I will enrich her with so much ready money as you shall thinke sufficient to match her in the degree of honour. Poverty made the poore Lady, very well to like of such a bountifull offer, and having a noble heart she said: Great Countesse say, wherein am I able to do you any service, as can deserve such a gracious offer? If the action bee honest, without blame or scandall to my poore, yet undejected reputation, gladly I will do it; and it being accomplished, let the requitall rest in your owne noble nature.

Observe me then Madam, replied the Countesse. It is most convenient for my purpose, that by some trusty and faithfull messenger, you should advertise the Count my husband, that your daughter is, and shall be at his command: but because she may remain absolutely assured, that his love is constant to her, and above all other: shee must entreate him, to send her (as a testimony thereof) the Ring which he weareth upon his little finger, albeit she hath heard, that he loveth it dearly. If he send the Ring, you shal give it me, & afterward send him word, that your daughter is readie to accomplish his pleasure; but, for the more safety and secrecie, he must repaire hither to your house, where I being in bed insted of your daughter, faire Fortune may so favour mee, that (unknowne to him) I may conceive with childe. Upon which good successe, when time shall serve, having the Ring on my finger, and a child in my armes begotten by him, his love and liking may bee recovered, and (by your meanes) I continue with my Husband, as everie vertuous Wife ought to doe.

The good old Ladie imagined, that this was a matter somewhat difficult, and might lay a blamefull imputation on her daughter: Neverthelesse, considering, what an honest office it was in her, to bee the meanes, whereby so worthy a Countesse should recover an unkinde husband, led altogether by lust, and not a jot of cordiall love; she knew the intent to be honest, the Countesse vertuous, and her promise religious, and therefore undertooke to effect it. Within few dayes after, verie ingeniously, and according to the instructed order, the Ring was obtained, albeit much against the Counts will; and the Countesse, in sted of the Ladies vertuous daughter, was embraced by him in bed: the houre proving so auspicious, and *Juno* being Lady of the ascendent,

conjoynd with the witty *Mercury*, she conceived of two goodly Sonnes, and her deliverance agreed correspondently with the just time.

Thus the old Lady, not at this time only, but at many other meetings beside; gave the Countesse free possession of her husbands pleasures, yet alwayes in such darke and concealed secrecie, as it was never suspected, nor knowne by any but themselves, the Count lying with his owne wife, and disappointed of her whom he more deerely loved. Alwayes at his uprising in the mornings (which usually was before the breake of day, for preventing the least scruple of suspition) many familiar conferences passed betweene them, with the gifts of divers faire and costly Jewels; all which the Countesse carefully kept, and perceiving assuredly, that shee was conceived with childe, she would no longer bee troublesome to the good old Lady; but calling her aside, spake thus to her. Madam, I must needs give thanks to heaven and you, because my desires are amply accomplished, and both time and your deserts doe justly challenge, that I should accordingly quite you before my departure. It remaineth nowe in your owne power, to make what demand you please of me, which yet I will not give you by way of reward, because that would seeme to bee base and mercenary: but onely whatsoever you shall receive of me, is in honourable recompence of faire & vertuous deservings, such as any honest and well-minded Lady in the like distresse, may with good credit allow, and yet no prejudice to her reputation.

Although poverty might well have tutored the Ladies tongue, to demand a liberall recompence for her paines; yet she requested but an 100 pounds, as a friendly helpe towards her daughters marriage, and that with a bashfull blushing was uttered too; yet the Countesse gave hir five hundred pounds, beside so many rich and costly Jewels, as amounted to a farre greater summe. So she returned to her wonted lodging, at the aged widdowes house, where first she was entertained at her comming to *Florence*; and the good old Lady, to avoide the Counts repairing to her house any more, departed thence sodainly with her daughter, to divers friends of hers that dwelt in the Country, wherent the Count was much discontented; albeit afterward, he did never heare any more tidings of hir or her daughter, who was worthily married, to her Mothers great comfort.

Not long after, Count *Bertrand* was re-called home by his people: and he having heard of his wives absence, went to *Roussillion* so much the more willingly. And the Countesse knowing her husbands departure from *Florence*, as also his safe arrivall at his owne dwelling, remained still in *Florence*, untill the time of her deliverance, which was of two goodly Sonnes, lively resembling the lookes of their Father, and all the perfect lineaments of his body. Perswade your selves, she was not a little carefull of their nursing; and when she saw the time answerable to her determination, she tooke her journey (unknowne to any) and arrived with them at *Montpellier*, where shee rested her selfe for divers dayes, after so long and wearisome a journey.

Upon the day of all Saints, the Count kept a solemne Festivall, for the assembly of his Lords, Knights, Ladies, and Gentlewomen: uppon which Joviall day of generall rejoycing, the Countesse attired in her wonted Pilgrimes weed, repaired thither, entering into the great Hall, where the Tables were readily covered for dinner. Preassing thorough the throng of people, with her two children in her armes, she presumed unto the place where the Count sate, & falling on her knees before him, the teares trickling abundantly downe her cheekes, thus she spake. Worthy Lord, I am thy poor, despised, and unfortunate wife; who, that thou mightst returne home, and not bee an exile from thine owne abiding, have thus long gone begging through the world. Yet now at length, I hope thou wilt be so honourably-minded, as to performe thine own too strict imposed conditions, made to the two Knights which I sent unto thee, and which (by thy command) I was enjoyned to do. Behold here in mine armes, not onely one Sonne by thee begotten, but two Twins, and thy Ring beside. High time is it now, if men of honour respect their promises, that after so long and tedious travell, I should at last bee welcommed as thy true wife.

The Counte hearing this, stode as confounded with admiration; for full well he knew the Ring: and both the children were so perfectly like him, as he was confirmed to be their Father by generall judgement. Upon his urging by what possible meanes this could be broght to passe: the Countesse in presence of the whole assembly, and unto her eternall commendation, related the whole history, even in such manner as you have formerly heard it. Moreover, she reported the private speeches in bed, uttered betweene himselfe and her, being witnessed more apparantly, by the costly Jewels there openly shewn. All which infallible proofes, proclaiming his shame, and her most noble carriage to her husband; hee confessed, that she had told nothing but the truth in every point which she had reported.

Commending her admirable constancy, excellency of wit, & sprightly courage, in making such a bold adventure; hee kissed the two sweete boyes, and to keepe his promise, whereto he was earnestly importuned, by all his best esteemed friends there present, especially the honourable Ladies, who would have no deniall, but by forgetting his former harsh and uncivill carriage towards her, to accept her for ever as his lawfull wife: folding her in his armes, and sweetly kissing her divers times together, he bad her welcome to him, as his vertuous, loyall, & most loving wife, and so (for ever after) he would acknowledge her. Well knew he that she had store of better beseeing garments in the house, and therefore requested the Ladies to walke with her to her Chamber, to uncase her of those pilgrimes weeds, and cloath her in her owne more sumptuous garments, even those which she wore on her wedding day, because that was not the day of his contentment, but onely this: for now he confessed her to be his wife indeede, and now he would give the King thanks for her, and now was Count *Bertrand* truly married to the faire *Juliet of Narbona*.



***The wonderfull and chaste resolved continency of faire Serictha, daughter to Siwalde King of Denmark, who being sought and sued unto by many worthy persons, that did affect her dearly, would not looke any man in the face, untill such time as she was married.***

## **The tenth Novell.**

***A very singular and worthy president, for all yong Ladies and Gentlewomen: not rashly to bestow themselves in mariage, without the knowledge and consent of their Parents and Friends.***

*Dioneus* having diligently listened to the Queens singular discourse, so soone as she had concluded, and none now remaining but himselfe, to give a full period unto that dayes pleasure: without longer trifling the time, or expecting any command from the Queene, thus he began. Gracious Ladies, I know that you do now expect from me, some such queint Tale, as shall be suteable to my merry disposition; rather savouring of wantonnesse, then any discreet and sober wisdom; and such a purpose indeed, I once had entertained. But having well observed all your severall relations, grounded on grave & worthy examples, especially the last, so notably delivered by the Queene: I cannot but commend faire *Juliet of Narbona*, in performing two such strange impossibilities, and conquering the unkindnesse of so cruel a husband. If my Tale come short of the precedent excellency, or give not such content as you (perhaps) expect; accept my good will, and let me stand engaged for a better heereafter.

The *Annales of Denmarke* do make mention, that the King of the said country, who was first set downe as Prince, contrary to the ancient custom and lawes observed among the *Danes*, namely *Hunguinus*; had a son called *Siwalde*, who succeeded him in the estates and kingdome, belonging to his famous predecessors. That age, and the Court of that Royall Prince, was verie highly renowned, by the honour of faire *Serictha*, Daughter to the sayde *Siwalde*; who beside her generall repute, of being a myracle of Nature, in perfection of beautie, and most compleate in all that the heart of man could desire to note, in a body full of grace, gentlenesse, and whatsoever else, to attract the eyes of everie one to beholde her: was also so chaste, modest, and bashfull, as it was meerey impossible, to prevaile so farre with her, that any man should come to speake with her. For, in those dayes, marriages were pursued and sought by valour, and by the onely opinion, which stoute Warriours conceived, of the vertuous qualities of a Ladie. Notwithstanding, never could any man make his vaunt, that she had given him so much as a looke, or ever any one attained to the favour, to whisper a word in her eare. Because both the custome and will of Parents then (very respectively kept in those Northerne parts of the world) of hearing such speak, as desired their daughters in marriage; grew from offering them some worthy services; and thereby compassed meanes, to yeeld their contentation, by some gracious and kinde answers.

But she, who was farre off from the desire of any such follies, referring her selfe wholly to the will and disposition of the King her Lord and Father; was so contrary, to give any living man an answer, that her eye never looked on any one speaking to her, appearing as sparing in vouchsafing a glance, as her heart was free from a thought of affection. For, she had no other imagination, but that Maides, both in their choise & will, ought to have any other disposition, but such as should bee pleasing to their parents, either to graunt, or denie, according as they were guided by their grave judgement. In like manner, so well had shee brideled her sensuall appetites, with the curbe of Reason, Wisedome, and Providence; setting such a severe and constant restraint, on the twinkling or motions of her eyes, in absolute obedience to her Father; as never was she seene to turne her head aside, to lend one looke on any man of her age.

A worthy sight it was, to behold Knights errant, passing, repassing to *Denmarke*, and backe againe, labouring to conquer those settled eyes, to win the least signe of grace and favour, from her whom they so dutiously pursued, to steale but a silly glimpse or glance, and would have thought it a kind of honourable theft. But this immovable rock of beauty, although she knew the dissignes of them which thus frequented the Court of the King her Father, and could not pretend ignorance of their endeavour, ayiming onely at obtaining her in mariage: yet did she not lend any look of her eye, yeelding the least signall of the hearts motion, in affecting any thing whatsoever, but what it pleased her Father she should do.

*Serictha* living in this strange and unusuall manner, it mooved manie Princes and great Lords, to come and court her, contending both by signes and words, to change her from this severe constancie, and make knowne (if possible it might be) whether a woman would or could be so resolute, as to use no respect at all towards them, coming from so manie strange countries, to honour her in the Courts of the King her father. But in these dayes of ours, if such a number of gallant spirits should come, to aske but one looke of some of our beauties; I am halfe affraide, that they should finde the eyes of many of our dainty darlings, not so sparing of their glances, as those of *Serictha* were. Considering, that our Courtiers of these times, are this way emulous one of another, and women are so forward in offering themselves, that they performe the office of suters, as fearing lest they should not be solicited, yea, though it bee in honest manner.

The King, who knew well enough, that a daughter was a treasure of some danger to keepe, and growing doubtfull withall least (in the end) this so obstinate severity would be shaken, if once it came to passe, that his daughter should feele the piercing apprehensions of love, & whereof (as yet) she never had any experience; he determined to use some remedy for this great concourse of

lovers, and strange kinde of carriage in the Princesse his daughter. For, hee apparently perceived, that such excellling beauty as was in *Sericta*, with those good and commendable customes, and other ornaments of his daughters mind, could never attaine to such an height of perfection; but yet there would be found some men, so wittily accute and ingenious, as to convert and humour a maid, according to their will, and make a mockery of them, who were (before) of most high esteeme. Beside, among so great a troope of Lords, as daily made tender of their amorous service, some one or other would prove so happy, as (at the last) she should be his Mistresse. And therefore forbearing what otherwise he had intended, as a finall conclusion of all such follies: calling his daughter alone to himselfe in his Chamber, and standing cleere from all other attention, hee used to her this, or the like Language.

I know not faire daughter, what reason may move you to shew your selfe so disdainfull towards so many Noble and worthy men, as come to visite you, and honour my Court with their presence, offering me their love and loyall service, under this onely pretence (as I perceive) of obtaining you, and compassing the happinesse (as it appeareth in plaine strife among them) one day to winne the prize, you being the maine issue of all their hope. If it be bashfull modesty, which (indeede) ought to attend on all virgins of your yeares, and so veyles your eyes, as (with honour) you cannot looke on any thing, but what is your owne, or may not justly vouchsafe to see; I commend your maidenly continencie, which yet neverthesse, I would not have to bee so severe; as (at length) your youth falling into mislike thereof, it maybe the occasion of some great misfortune, either to you, or me, or else to us both together: considering what rapes are ordinarily committed in these quarters, and of Ladies equall every way to your selfe; which happening, would presently be the cause of my death.

If it be in regard of some vow which you have consecrated to virginity, and to some one of our Gods: I seeke not therein to hinder your disseignes, neither will bereave the celestiall powers, of whatsoever appertaineth to them. Albeit I could wish, that it should bee kept in a place more straited, and separate from the resort of men; to the end, that so bright a beauty as yours is, should cause no discords among amorous suters, neither my Court prove a Campe destinied unto the conclusion of such quarrels, or you be the occasion of ruining so many, whose service would beseeme a much more needfull place, then to dye heere by fond and foolish opinion of enjoying a vaine pleasure, yet remaining in the power of another bodie to grant. If therefore I shall perceive, that these behaviours in you do proceede from pride, or contempt of them, who endeavour to do you both honour and service, and in sted of granting them a gracious looke, in arrogancie you keepe from them, making them enemies to your folly and my sufferance: I sweare to you by our greatest God, that I will take such due order, as shall make you feele the hand of an offended Father, and teach you (hencefoorth) to bee much more affable.

Wherefore deere daughter, you shall do me a singular pleasure, freely to acquaint me with your minde, and the reasons of your so stricte severity: promising you, upon the word and faith of a King, nay more, of a loving and kinde Father, that if I finde the cause to bee just and reasonable, I will desist so farre from hindering your intent, as you shal rather perceive my fatherly furtherance, and rest truly resolved of my help and favour. Wherefore faire daughter, neither blush or dismay, or feare to let me understand your will; for evidently I see, that meere virgin shame hath made a rapture of your soule, beeing nothing else but those true splendours of vertue derived from your Auncestors, and shining in you most gloriously, gracing you with a much richer embellishing, then those beauties bestowed on you by Nature. Speake therefore boldly to your Father, because there is no law to prohibit your speech to him: for when he commandeth, he ought to bee obeyed: promising uppon mine oath once againe, that if your reasons are such as they ought to be, I will not faile to accommodate your fancy.

The wise and vertuous Princesse, hearing the King to alledge such gracious reasons, and to lay so kinde a command on her; making him most lowe and humble reverence, in signe of dutifull accepting such favour, thus she answered. Royall Lord and Father, seeing that in your Princely Court, I have gathered whatsoever may be termed vertuous in me, & you being the principall instructor of my life, from whom I have learned those lessons, how maides (of my age) ought to governe and maintaine themselves: you shall apparently perceive, that neither gazing lookes, which I ought not to yeelde without your consent, nor pride or arrogancie, never taught me by you, or the Queene my most honourable Lady and Mother, are any occasion of my carriage towards them, which come to make ostentation of their folly in your Court, as if a meere look of *Sericta*, were sufficient to yeeld assurance effectually of their desires victory.

Nothing (my most Royall Lord and Father) induceth mee to this kinde of behaviour, but onely due respect of your honour & mine owne: and to the end it may not be thought, that I belye my selfe, in not eying the affectionate offers of amorous pursuers, or have any other private reserved meaning, then what may best please King *Siwalde* my Father: let it suffice Sir, that it remaineth in your power onely, to make an apt election and choise for me; for I neither ought, nor will allowe the acceptance of any suters kindnesse, so much as by a looke (much lesse then by words) untill your Highnesse shall nominate the man, to be a meete husband for *Sericta*. It is onely you then (my Lord) that beares the true life-blood of our Auncestors. It is the untainted life of the Queene my Mother, that sets a chaste and strict restraint on mine eyes, from estranging my heart, to the idle amorous enticements of young giddy-headed Gentlemen, and have sealed up my soule with an absolute determination, rather to make choise of death, then any way to alter this my warrantable severity.

You being a wise King, and the worthie Father of *Sericta*, it is in you to mediate, counsell, and effect, what best shall beseeme the desseignes of your daughter: because it is the vertue of children, yea, and their eternall glory and renowne, to illustrate the lives and memories of their

parents. It consisteth in you, either to grant honest license to such Lords as desire me, or to oppose them with such discreete conditions, as both your selfe may sit free from any further afflicting, and they rest defeated of dangerous dissentions, according as you foresee what may ensue. Which yet (neverthelesse) I hold as a matter impossible, if their discord should be grounded on the sole apprehension of their soules: and the onely prevention thereof, is, not to yeeld any signe, glance of the eie, or so much as a word more to one man then another: for, such is the settled disposition of your daughters soule, and which shee humbly entreateth, may so be still suffered.

Many meanes there are, whereby to winne the grace of the greatest King, by employing their paines in worthy occasions, answerable unto their yeeres and vertue, if any such sparkes of honour doe shine in their soules; rather then by gaining heere any matter of so meane moment, by endeavouring to shake the simplicity of a bashfull maide: Let them cleare the Kings high-ways of Theeves, who make the passages difficult: or let them expell Pirates from off the Seas, which make our *Danish* coasts every way inaccessible. These are such Noble meanes to merit, as may throw deserved recompence upon them, and much more worthily, then making Idols of Ladies lookes, or gazing for babies in their wanton eyes. So may you bestowe on them what is your owne, granting *Sericta* to behold none, but him who you shall please to give her: for otherwise, you know her absolute resolve, never to looke any living man in the face, but onely you my gracious Lord and Father.

The King hearing this wise and modest answer of his daughter, could not choose but commend her in his heart; and smiling at the counsell which she gave him, returned her this answer. Understand me wel, faire daughter; neither am I minded to breake your determination wholly, nor yet to governe my selfe according to your fancie. I stand indifferently contented, that untill I have otherwise purposed, you shall continue the nature of your ancient custome: yet conditionally, that when I command an alteration of your carriage, you faile not therein to declare your obedience. What else remaineth beside, for so silly a thing as a Woman is, and for the private pleasing of so many great Princes and Lords, I will not endanger any of their lives; because their parents and friends (being sensible of such losses) may seeke revenge, perhaps to their owne ruine, and some following scourge to my indiscretion. For I consider (daughter) that I have neighbours who scarsely love me, and of whom (in time) I may right my selfe, having received (by their meanes) great wrongs & injuries. Also I make no doubt, but to manage your love-sute with discretion, and set such a pleasing proceeding betweene them, as neyther shall beget any hatred in them towards me, nor yet offend them in their affections pursuite, till fortune may smile so favourably upon some one man, to reach the height of both our wished desires.

*Siwalde* was thus determinately resolved, to let his daughter live at her owne discretion, without any alteration of her continued severitie, perceiving day by day, that many came still to request her in mariage; & he could not give her to them all, nor make his choise of any one, least all the rest should become his enemies, and fall in quarrell one with another. Onely this therefore was his ordination, that among such a number of amorous suters, he onely should weare the Lawrell wreath of victory, who could obtaine such favour of *Sericta*, as but to looke him in the face. This condition seemed to bee of no meane difficulty, yea, and so impossible, that many gave over their amorous enterprize: whereof *Sericta* was wondrously joyfull, seeing her selfe eased of such tedious importunitie, dulling her eares with their proffered services, and foppish allegations of fantasticke servitude: such as ydle-headed Lovers do use to protest before their Mistresses, wherein they may beleve them, if they list.

Among all them that were thus forward in their heate of affection, there was a young *Danish* Lord, named *Ocharus*, the sonne of a Pirate, called *Hebonius*, the same man, who having stolne the Sister unto King *Hunguinus*, and Sister to *Siwalde*, & affiancing himselfe to her, was slaine by King *Haldune*, and by thus killing him, enjoyed both the Lady, and the kingdome of the *Gothes* also, as her inheritance. This *Ocharus*, relying much on his comelinesse of person, wealth, power, and valour, but (above all the rest) on his excellent and eloquent speaking; bestowed his best endeavour to obtaine *Sericta*, notwithstanding the contemptible carriage of the rest towards him; whereupon prevailing for his accesse to the Princesse, and admitted to speake, as all the other did, he reasoned with her in this manner.

Whence may it proceede, Madam, that you being the fairest and wisest Princesse living at this day in all the Northerne parts, should make so small account of your selfe, as to denie that, which with honour you may yeeld to them, as seeke to doe you most humble service; and forgetting the rank you hold, doe refuse to deigne them recompence in any manner whatsoever, seeking onely to enjoy you in honourable marriage? Perhaps you are of opinion, that the gods should become slaves to your beauty, in which respect, men are utterly unworthy to crave any such acquaintance of you. If it be so, I confesse my selfe conquered: But if the gods seeke no such association with women, and since they forsooke the World, they left this legacy to us men; I thinke you covet after none, but such as are extracted of their blood, or may make vaunt of their neere kindred and alliance to them. I know that many have wished, and doe desire you: I know also, that as many have requested you of the King your Father, but the choyce remaineth in your power, and you being ordained the Judge, to distinguish the merit of all your Sutors; me thinkes you doe wrong to the office of a Judge; in not regarding the parties which are in suite, to sentence the desert of the best and bravest, and so to delay them with no more lingering.

I cannot thinke Madam, that you are so farre out of your selfe, and so chill cold in your affection, but desire of occasions, equall to your vertue and singular beauty, doe sometime touch you feelingly, and make you to wish for such a man, answerable to the greatnesse of your excellency. And if it should be otherwise (as I imagine it to be impossible) yet you ought to breake such an

obstinate designe, onely to satisfie the King your Father, who can desire nothing more, then to have a Sonne in Law, to revenge him on the Tyrant of *Swetia*; who, as you well know, was sometime the murtherer of your Grand-father *Hunguinus*, and also of his Father. If you please to vouchsafe me so much grace and favour, as to make me the man, whom your heart hath chosen to be your Husband; I swear unto you by the honour of a Souldier, that I will undergoe such service, as the King shall be revenged, you royally satisfied, and my self advanced to no meane happinesse, by being the onely fortunate man of the World. Gentle Princesse, the most beautifull daughter to a King, open that indurate heart, and so soften it, that the sweete impressions of love may be engraven therein; see there the loyall pursuite of your *Ocharus*, who, to save his life, cannot so much as winne one looke from his divine Mistresse.

This nicenesse is almost meerely barbarous, that I, wishing to adventure my life prodigally in your service, you are so cruell, as not to deigne recompence to this duty of mine, with the least signe of kindnesse that can be imagined. Faire *Serictha*, if you desire the death of your friendly servant *Ocharus*, there are many other meanes whereby to performe it, without consuming him in so small a fire, and suffering him there to languish without any answeere. If you will not looke upon me; if my face be so unworthy, that one beame of your bright Sunnes may not shine upon it: If a word of your mouth be too precious for me; make a signe with your hand, either of my happinesse or disaster. If your hand be envious of mine ease, let one of your women be shee, to pronounce the sentence of life or death; because, if my life be hatefull to you, this hand of mine may satisfie your will, and sacrifice it to the rigour of your disdain. But if (as I am rather perswaded) the ruine of your servants be against your more mercifull wishes; deale so that I may perceive it, and expresse what compassion you have of your *Ocharus*, who coveteth nothing more, then your daily hearts ease and contentment, with a priviledge of honour above other Ladies. All this discourse was heard by *Serictha*, but so little was shee moved therewith, as shee was farre enough off from returning him any answer, neither did any of the Gentlewomen attending on her, ever heare her use the very least word to any of her amorous sollicitors, nor did shee know any one of them, but by speech onely, which drove them all into an utter despaire, perceiving no possible meanes whereby to conquer her.

The Histories of the Northerne Countries doe declare, that in those times, the rapes of women were not much respected; and such as pursued any Lady or Gentlewoman with love, were verily perswaded, that they never made sufficient prooffe of their amorous passions, if they undertooke not all cunning stratagems, with adventure of their lives to all perils whatsoever, for the rape or stealth of them, whom they purposed to enjoy in marriage. As we reade in the *Gothes* History of *Gramo*, Sonne to the King of *Denmarke*, who being impatiently amorous of the daughter to the King of the *Gothes*, and winning the love of the Lady, stole her away, before her Parents or friends had any notice thereof; by meanes of which rape, there followed a most bloody warre betweene the *Gothes* and the *Danes*. In recompence of which injury, *Sibdagerus*, King of *Norway*, being chosen chiefe Commander of the *Swetians* & *Gothes*, entred powerfully into *Denmarke*, where first he violated the Sister to King *Gramo*, and led away her Daughter, whom in the like manner he made his Spouse, as the *Dane* had done the Daughter of *Sigtruge*, Prince of the *Gothes*.

I induce these briefe narrations, onely to shew, that while *Ocharus* made honest and affable meanes, to win respect from *Serictha*, and used all honourable services to her, as the Daughter of so great a Prince worthily deserved: some there were, not halfe so conscientious as he, especially one of the amorous sutors, who being weary of the strange carriages of *Serictha*, dissembling to prosecute his purpose no further; prevailed so farre, that he corrupted one of her Governesses, for secretly training her to such a place, where the ravisher should lie in ambush to carry her away, so to enjoy her by pollicy, seeing all other meanes failed for to compasse his desire.

Behold to what a kind of foolish rage, which giddy headed dullards doe terme a naturall passion, they are led, who, being guided more by sensuality, then reason or discretion, follow the braine-sicke motions of their rash apprehensions. He which pursueth, and protesteth to love a Lady for her gentillity and vertue; knoweth not how to measure what love is, neither seeth or conceiveth, how farre the permission of his owne endeavour extendeth. Moreover, you may observe, that never any age was so grosse, or men so simple, but even almost from the beginning, avarice did hood-winke the hearts of men, and that (with gold) the very strongest Fortification in the World hath beene broken, yea, and the best bard gates laide wide open. *Serictha*, who shunned the light of all men, and never distrusted them which kept about her; shee who never knew (except some naturall sparke gave light to her understanding) what belonged to the embracements of men, must now (without dreaming thereon) fall as foode to the insatiable appetite of a wretch, who compassed this surprisall of her, to glory in his owne lewdnesse, and make a mocke of the Princesses setled constancy.

Shee, good Lady, following the councill of her trayterous guide, went abroade on walking, but weakely accompanied, as one that admitted no men to attend her, which shee might have repented very dearely, if Heaven had not succoured her innocency, by the helpe of him, who wished her as well as the ravisher, though their desires were quite contrary; the one to enjoy her by violence, but the other affecting rather to die, then doe the least act which might displease her. No sooner was *Serictha* arrived at the destined place, where her false Governesse was to deliver her; but behold a second *Paris* came, and seized on her, hurrying her in haste away, before any helpe could possibly rescue her; the place being farre off from any dwelling.

Now the ravisher durst not convey her to his owne abiding, to enjoy the benefit of his purchase; but haled her into a small thicket of trees, where, although shee knew the evident perill, whereinto her severe continency had now throwne her: yet notwithstanding, shee would not lift

up her eyes, to see what he was that had thus stolne her, so firmly shee dwelt upon grounded deliberation, and such was the vigor of her chaste resolve. And albeit shee knew a wickednesse (worse then death) preparing for her, who had no other glory then in her vertue, and desire to live contentedly; yet was shee no more astounded thereat, then if hee had led her to the Palace of the King her Father: perswading herselfe, that violence done to the body, is no prejudice to honour, when the mind is free and cleere from consent.

As thus this robber of beauty was preparing to massacre the modesty of the faire Princesse, shee resisted him with all her power, yea, and defended her selfe so worthily, that he could not get one looke of her eye, one kisse of her cheeke, nor any advantage whatsoever, crying out shrilly, and struggling against him strongly: her outcryes were heard by one, who little imagined that shee was so neere, whom he loved more dearly then his owne life, namely, *Ocharus*; who was walking accidentally alone in this wood, devising by what meanes hee might winne grace from his sterne Mistresse. No sooner tooke he knowledge of her, and saw her (in the armes of another) to be ravished; but he cryed out to the thiefe, saying; Hand off villaine, let not such a slave as thou, prophane with an unreverend touch the sacred honour of so chaste a Princesse, who deserveth to be more royally respected, then thus rudely hurried: Hand off I say, or else I sweare by her divine perfections, whom I esteeme above all creatures in this World, to make thee die more miserably, then ever any man as yet did.

Whosoever had seene a Lyon or an Ounce rouse himselfe, chafing when any one adventureth to rob him of his prey; and then with fierce eyes, mounted creasts, writhed tayles, and sharpened pawes, make against him that durst to molest him. In the like manner did the ravisher shew himselfe, and one while snarling, another while bristling the darted disdainfull lookes at *Ocharus*, and spake to him in this manner. Vile and base Sea-thiefe, as thou art, welcome to thy deserved wages, and just repayment for thy proud presuming. It glads my heart not a little, to meete thee here, where thou shalt soone perceive what good will I beare thee, and whether thou be worthy or no to enjoy the honour of this Lady, now in mine owne absolute possession. It will also encrease her more ample perswasion of my worth, and pleade my merit more effectually in her favour; when shee shall see what a powerfull arme I have, to punish this proud insolence of a Pirate.

This harsh language was so distastfull to *Ocharus*, that like a Bull, made angry by the teeth of some Mastive Dogge, or pricked by the point of a weapon, he ran upon his enemy, and was so roughly welcommed by him, as it could not easilly be judged which of them had the better advantage. But in the end Fortune favoured most the honest man, and *Ocharus* having overthrowne the robber, hee smote the head of him quite from his shoulders, which he presented to her, whom he had delivered out of so great a peril, and thus he spake. You may now behold Madam, whether *Ocharus* be a true lover of *Serictaes* vertues, or no, and your knowledge fully resolved, at what end his affection aimeth; as also, how farre his honest desert extendeth, for you both to love him, and to recompence the loyall respect he hath used towards you. Never looke on the villaines face, who strove to shame the King your Fathers Court, by violation of theevery, the chastest Princesse on the Earth; but regard *Ocharus*, who is readie to sacrifice himselfe, if you take as much pleasure in his ruine, as (he thinketh) hee hath given you contentment, by delivering you from this Traytor.

Doth it not appeare unto you Madam, that I have as yet done enough, whereby to be thought a worthy Husband, for the royall Daughter of *Denmarke*? Have I not satisfied the Kings owne Ordinance, by delivering his Daughter, as already I have done? Will *Sericta* be so constant in her cruelty, as not to turne her eye towards him, who exposed his life, to no meane perill and daunger, onely in the defence of her Chastity? Then I plainly perceive, that the wages of my devoire, is ranked amongst those precedent services, which I have performed for so hurtfull a beautie. Yet gentle Princesse, let me tell you, my carriage hath bin of more importance, then all the others can be, and my merit no way to be compared with theirs; at least, if you pleased to make account of him, who is an unfeigned lover of your modesty, and devoutly honoureth your vertuous behaviour. And yet Madame, shall I have none other answere from you, but your perpetuall silence? Can you continue so obstinate in your opinion, in making your selfe still as strange to your *Ocharus*, as to the rest, who have no other affection, but onely to the bare outside of beauty? Why then, Royall Ladie, seeing (at this instant time) all my labour is but lost, and your heart seemeth much more hardned, in acknowledging any of my honest services: at least yet let me bee so happy, as to conduct you backe to the Palace, and restore you to that sacred safetie, which will be my soules best comfort to behold.

No outward signe of kinde acceptation, did any way expresse itselfe in her, but rather as fearing, lest the commodiousnesse of the place shold incite this young Lord, to forget all honest respect, and imitate the other in like basenesse. But he, who rather wished a thousand deathes, then any way to displease his Mistresse, as if hee were halfe doubtfull of her suspition, made offer of guiding her backe to the place, from whence shee had before bene stolne, where she found her company still staying, as not daring to stirre thence, to let the King know his daughters ill fortune; but when they saw her returne, and in the company of so worthie a Knight, they grew resolved, that no violence had bene done unto her.

The Princesse, sharpely rebuking her women, for leaving her so basely as they had done, gave charge to one of them (because she would not seeme altogether negligent & discourteous) that she being gone thence, she should not faile to thanke *Ocharus*, for the honest and faithfull service he had done unto her, which she would continually remember, and recompence as it lay in her power. Neverthesse, shee advised him withall, not to hope of any more advantage thereby, then reason should require. For, if it were the will of the Gods, that she should be his wife, neither she

or any other could let or hinder it: but if her destiny reserved her for another, all his services would availe to no purpose, but rather to make her the more rigorous towards him.

This gracious answer, thus given him by her Gentlewoman, although it gave some small contentment to the poore languishing lover: yet hee saw no assured signe whereon to settle his resolve, but his hopes vanished away in smoake, as fast as opinion bred them in his braine. And gladly he would have given over all further amorous solicitings, but by some private perswasions of her message sent him, which in time might so advance his services done for her sake, as would derive far greater favours from her. Whereupon, he omitted no time or place, but as occasion gave him any gracious permission, still plied her memorie, with his manly rescuing her from the ravisher, sufficient to pleade his merite to her Father, and that (in equity) she ought to beeh his wife, by right both of Honour and Armes; no man being able to deserve her, as he had done.

So long he pursued her in this manner, that his speeches seemed hatefull to her, and devising how to be free from his daily importunities, at length, in the habite of a poore Chamber-maide, she secretly departed out of the Court, wandering into the solitary parts of the country; where she entered into service, and had the charge of keeping Sheepe. It may seeme strange, that a Kings onely daughter should stray in such sort, and despising Courtly life, betake herselfe to paines and servility: but such was her resolution, and women delighting altogether in extremes, spare no attempts to compasse their owne wils. All the Court was in an uproare for the Ladies losse, the Father in no meane affliction, the Lovers well-nerre beside their wits, and every one else most greevously tormented, that a Lady of such worth should so sodainly be gone, and all pursuit made after her, gaine no knowledge of her.

In this high tide of sorrow and disaster, what shall we say of the gentle Lord *Ocharus*? What judgement can sound the depth of his wofull extreimity? Fearing least some other theefe had now made a second stealth of his divine Goddess; he must needs follow her againe, seeking quite throughout the world, never more returning backe to the Court, nor to the place of his owne abiding, untill hee heard tidings of his Mistresse, or ended his dayes in the search of her. No Village, Town, Cottage, Castle, or any place else of note or name, did hee leave unsought, but diligently he searched for *Sericttha*; striving to get knowledge, under what habit she lived thus concealed, but all his labour was to no effect: which made him leave the places so much frequented, and visite the solitary desert shades, entering into all Caves and rusticke habitations, whereon hee could fasten his eye, to seeke for the lost Treasure of his soule.

On a day, as hee wandred along in a spacious valley, seated betweene two pleasant hilles, taking delight to heare the gentle murmure of the rivers, running by the sides of two neighbouring rockes, planted with all kinde of trees, and very thickly spred with mosse: hee espied a flocke of Sheepe feeding on the grasse, and not farre off from them sate a Maide spinning on her Distaffe; who having got a sight of him, presently covered her face with a veile. Love, who sate as Sentinell both in the heart and eye of the gentle *Norwegian* Lord, as quickly discovered the subtilty of the faire Shepheardesse, enstructing the soule of *Ocharus*, that thus she hid her face, as coveting not to be knowne: whereupon he gathered, that doubtlesse this was shee, for whom he hadde sought with such tedious travaile, and therefore going directly unto her, thus hee spake.

Gentle Princesse; wherefore do you thus hide your selfe from mee? Why do you haunt these retreats and desolate abodes, having power to command over infinite men, that cannot live but by your presence? What hath moved you Madame, to flye from company, to dwel among desert Rockes, and serve as a slave, to such as are no way worthy of your service? Why do you forsake a potent King, whose onely daughter and hope you are; leaving your countrey and royall traine of Ladies, and so farre abasing your selfe, to live in the dejected state of a servant, and to some rusticke clowne or peazant? What reason have you, to despise so many worthy Lords, that dearely love and honour you, but (above them all) your poore slave *Ocharus*, who hath made no spare of his owne life, for the safety of yours, and also for the defence of your honour? Royal maid, I am the same man that delivered you from the villaine, who would have violated your faire chastity; and since then, have not spared any payne or travell in your search: for whose losse, King *Siwalde* is in extreme anguish, the *Danes* in mourning habites, and *Ocharus* even at the doore of death, being no way able to endure your absence.

Are you of the minde, worthy Madame, that I have not hitherto deserved so much as one good looke or glance of your eye, in recompence of so many good & loyall services? If Alas! I am neither ravisher, nor demander of any unjust requests, or else incivill in my motions: I may merit one regard of my Mistresse. I require onely so silly a favour, that her eyes may pay me the wages for all which I have hitherto done in her service. What would you do Madam, if I were an importunate solicitor, and requested farre greater matters of you, in just recompence of my labours? I do not desire, that you should embrace me. I am not so bold, as to request a kisse of *Serictthaes*, more then immortall lips. Nor doe I covet, that she should any otherwise entreate mee, then with such severity as beseemeth so great a Princesse. I aske no more, but onely to elevate your chaste eyes, and grace me with one little looke, as being the man, who for his vertue and loyall affection, hath deserved more then that favour, yea, a much greater and excellent recompence. Can you then be so cruell, as to denie me so small a thing, without regarde of the maine debt, wherein you stand engaged to your *Ocharus*?

The Princesse perceiving that it availed nothing to conceale hir selfe, being by him so apparantly discovered; began now to speake (which she had never done before, either to him, or any other of her amorous suters) answering him in this manner. Lord *Ocharus*, it might suffice you, that your importunity made me forsake my Fathers Court, and causeth me to live in this abased condition, which I purpose to prosecute all my life time; or so long (at the least) as you, and such as you are,

pursue me so fondly as you have presumed to do. For I am resolved, never to favour you any otherwise, then hitherto I have done; desiring you therefore, that *Sericta* wanting an Interpreter to tell you her will, you would now receive it from her owne mouth, determining sooner to dye, then alter a jot of her intended purpose.

*Ocharus* hearing this unwelcome answer, was even upon the point to have slaine himselfe: but yet, not to lose the name of a valiant man, or to be thought of an effeminate or cowardly spirite, that a Woman should force him to an acte, so farre unfitting for a man of his ranke; hee tooke his leave of her, solemnly promising, not to forget her further pursuite, but at all times to obey her so long as he lived, although her commaund was very hard for him to endure. So hee departed thence, not unto the Court, she being not there, that had the power to enjoyne his presence: but home to his owne house, where he was no sooner arrived, but he began to waxe wearie of his former folly; accusing himselfe of great indiscretion, for spending so much time in vaine, and in her service, who utterly despised him, and all his endeavours which he undertooke. He began to accuse her of great ingratitude, laying over-much respect uppon her vertue, to have no feeling at all of his loyall sufferings; but meerely made a mockery of his martyrdom. Heereupon, he concluded to give over all further affection, to languish no longer for her sake, that hated him and all his actions.

While he continued in these melancholly passions, the Princesse, who all this while had persisted in such strict severity, as astonished the courages of her stoutest servants; considering (more deliberately) on the sincere affection of *Ocharus*, and that vertue onely made him the friend to her modesty, and not wanton or lascivious appetite; she felt a willing readinesse in her soule, to gratifie him in some worthy manner, and to recompence some part of his travailes. Which to effect, she resolved to follow him (in some counterfeite habite) even to the place of his own abiding, to try, if easily he could take knowledge of her, whom so lately he saw in the garments of a Shepheardesse. Being thus minded, shee went to her Mistresse whom she served, and who had likewise seen Lord *Ocharus* (of whom she had perfect knowledge) when hee conferred with the Shepheardesse, and enquiring the cause, why hee resorted in that manner to her; *Sericta* returned her this answer.

Mistresse, I make no doubt, but you will be somewhat amazed, and (perhaps) can hardly credit when you heare, that she who now serveth you in the poore degree of Shepheardesse, is the onely daughter to *Siwalde* King of the *Danes*: for whose love, so many great Lords have continually laboured; and that I onely attracted hither *Ocharus*, the Noble Sonne of valiant *Hebonius*, to wander in these solitary deserts, to finde out her that fled from him, and helde him in as high disdain, as I did all the rest of his fellow rivals. But if my words may not heerein sufficiently assure you, I would advise you, to send where *Ocharus* dwelleth, & there make further enquiry of him, to the end that you may not imagine me a liar. If my speeches do otherwise prevaile with you, and you remain assured, that I am she, whom your Noble neighbour so deerely affecteth, albeit I never made any account at all of him: then I do earnestly intreat you, so much to stand my friend, as to provide some convenient means for me, whereby I may passe unknowne to the Castle of *Ocharus*, to revenge my selfe on his civill honesty, & smile at him hereafter, if he prove not so cleerely sighted, as to know her being neere him, whom he vaunteth to love above all women else.

The good Countrey-woman hearing these wordes, and perceyving that she had the Princesse in her house, of whose speeches she made not any doubt, in regard of her stout countenance, gravity, and faire demeanor, began to relish something in her minde, farre differing from matter of common understanding, and therefore roundly replied in this kind of language.

Madam (for servant I may no longer call you) I make no question to the contrary, but that you are derived of high birth; having observed your behaviour, and womanly carriage. And so much the more I remaine assured thereof, having seene such great honour done unto you, by the Noble Lord, and worthy Warriour *Ocharus*: wherefore, it lieth not in my power, to impeach your desseignes, much lesse to talke of your longer service, because you are the Princesse *Sericta*, whom I am to performe all humble dutie unto, as being one of your meanest subjects. And although you were not shee, yet would I not presume any way to offend you, in regarde of the true and vertuous love, which that good Knight *Ocharus* seemeth to beare you. If my company bee needefull for you, I beseech you to accept it: if not, take whatsoever is mine, which may any way sted you; for, to make you passe unknowne, I can and will provide sufficiently, even to your own contentment, and in such strange manner, as *Ocharus* (were he never so cleerely sighted) shal be deceived, you being attired in those fashion garments, which heere in these parts are usually worne.

*Sericta* being wonderously joyfull at her answer, suffred hir to paint, or rather soile her faire face, with the juice of divers hearbes and rootes, and cloathed her in such an habite as those women use to weare that live in the mountaines of *Norway*, upon the sea-coast fronting *Great-Britain*. Being thus disguised, confidently she went, to beguile the eie of her dearest friend, and so to returne backe againe from him, having afforded him such a secret favour, in requitall of his honourable services; delivering her out of so great a danger, and comming to visite her in so solitary a life. Nor would she have the womans company any further, then till she came within the sight of *Ocharus* his Castle; where when she was arrived (he being then absent) the mother unto the Noble Gentleman, gave her courteous welcome; and, notwithstanding her grosse & homely outward appearance, yet she collected by her countenance, that there was a matter of much more worth in her, then to bee a woman of base breeding.

When *Ocharus* was returned home, he received advertisement by his mother, concerning the arrivall of this stranger, when as sodainely his soule halfe perswaded him, of some kinde

courtesie to proceede from his sweet rebell, pretending now some feigned excuse, in recompence of all his travailes, and passed honest offices. Observing all her actions and gestures, her wonted rigour never bending one jot, or gave way to her eye to looke upon any man; he grew the better assured, that she was the daughter to King *Siwalde*. Yet feigning to take no knowledge thereof, he bethought himselfe of a queint policy, whereby to make triall, whether secret kindnesse had conducted this Lady thither, or no, to conclude his torments, and give a final end to his greevous afflictions.

Upon a watch-word given to his Mother, he pretended, and so caused it to be noised through the house, that he was to marry a very honourable Lady; which the constant and chaste maide verily beleaved; and therefore gave the more diligent attendance (as a new-come servant) to see all things in due decency, as no one could expresse herselfe more ready, because she esteemed him above all other men. Yet such was the obstinate opinion she concerned of her owne precisenesse, as she would rather suffer all the flames of love, then expresse the least shew of desire to any man living. Neverthelesse, she was inwardly offended, that any other should have the honour, to make her vaunt of enjoying *Ocharus*; whom (indeed) she coveted, and thought him only worthy in her heart, to be Son in law to the King of *Denmarke*.

Now, as the Mother was very seriously busied in preparing the Castle, for receiving the pretended Bride; shee employed her new Mayde (*Serictha* I meane) as busily as any of the rest. In the meane while, *Ocharus* was laid upon a bed, well noting all her carriage and behaviour, shee having a lighted Candle in her hand, without any Candlesticke to hold it in. As all the servants (both men and maids) were running hastily from place to place, to cary such occasions as they were commanded, the candle was consumed so neere to *Sericthaes* fingers, that it burned hir hand. She, not to faile a jote in her height of mind, and to declare that her corage was invincible; was so farre off from casting away the small snuffe which offended her, that she rather graspt it the more strongly, even to the enflaming of her owne flesh, which gave light to the rest about their businesse. A matter (almost) as marvellous, as the acte of the noble *Romane*, who gave his hand to be burned, in presence of the *Tuscane* King, that had besiedged *Rome*. Thus this Lady would needs make it apparantly knowne, by this generous acte of hers, that her heart could not be enflamed or conquered, by all the fires of concupiscence, in suffering so stoutly and couragiously, the burning of this material fire.

*Ocharus*, who (as we have already saide) observed every thing that *Serictha* did; perceiving that she spake not one worde, albeit her hand burned in such fierce manner, was much astonished at her sprightly mind. And as he was about to advise her, to hurle away the fire so much offending her; Curiosity (meerely naturall unto Women) made the Ladie lift uppe her eyes, to see (by stealth) whether her friend had noted her invincible constancy, or no. Heereby *Ocharus* won the honour of his long expected victory; and leaping from off the bed, hee ranne to embrace her, not with any such feare as he had formerly used, in not daring so much as to touch her: but boldly now clasping his armes about her, he said. At this instant Madam, the King your Fathers decree is fully accomplished, for I am the first man that ever you lookt in the face, & you are onely mine, without making any longer resistance. You are the Princely Lady and wife, by me so constantly loved and desired, whom I have followed with such painefull travels, exposing my life to infinite perils in your service: you have seene and lookt on him, who never craved any thing of you, but onely this favour, whereof you cannot bereave me againe, because the Gods themselves, at such time as I least expected it, have bestowne it on me, as my deserved recompence, and worthy reward.

In the delivery of these words, he kissed and embraced her a thousand times, shee not using any great resistance against him, but onely as somewhat offended with her selfe, either for being so rash in looking on him, or else for delaying his due merit so long; or rather, because with her good will shee had falne into the transgression. Shee declared no violent or contending motion, as loath to continue so long in his armes; but rather, evident signes of hearty contentment, yet in very bashfull and modest manner, willing enough to accept his loving kindnesse, yet not wandring from her wonted chaste carriage. He being favourably excused, for the outward expression of his amorous behaviour to her, and certified withall, that since the time of freeing her from the wretch, who sought the violating of her chastity, shee had entirely respected him, (albeit, to shun suspicion of lightnesse, and to win more assurance, of what shee credited sufficiently already, shee continued her stiffe opinion against him) yet always this resolution was set downe in her soule, never (with her will) to have any other Husband but *Ocharus*, who (above all other) had best deserved her, by his generosity, vertue, manly courage, and valiancy; whereof he might the better assure himselfe, because (of her owne voluntary disposition) shee followed to find him out, not for any other occasion, but to revenge her selfe (by this honest Office) for all that he had done or undertaken, to winne the grace and love of the King of *Denmarkes* Daughter, to whom he presented such dutifull service.

*Ocharus*, who would not loose this happinesse, to be made King of all the Northerne Ilands, with more then a thankfull heart, accepted all her gracious excuses. And being desirous to waste no longer time in vaine, lest Fortune should raise some new stratagem against him, to dispossesse him of so faire a felicity; left off his counterfet intended marriage, and effected this in good earnest, and was wedded to his most esteemed *Serictha*. Not long had these lovers lived in the lawfull and sacred rites of marriage, but King *Siwalde* was advertised, that his Daughter had given her consent to *Ocharus*, and received him as her noble Husband. The party was not a jot displeasing to him, hee thought him to be a worthy Son in Law, and the condition did sufficiently excuse the match; onely herein lay the error and offence, that the marriage was solemnized without his knowledge and consent, he being not called thereto, or so much as acquainting him



therewith, which made him condemne *Ocharus* of overbold arrogancy, he being such a great and powerfull King, to be so lightly respected by his Subject, and especially in the marriage of his Daughter.

But *Serictha*, who was now metamorphosed from a maide to a wife, and had lyen a few nights by the side of a Soldiour, was become much more valiant and adventurous then she was before. She took the matter in hand, went to her Father, who welcommed her most lovingly, and so pleasing were her speeches, carried with such wit and womanly discretion, that nothing wanted to approve what she had done. Matters which he had never knowne, or so much as heard of, were now openly revealed, how *Ocharus* had delivered her from the ravisher, what worthie respect he then used towards her, and what honour he extended to her in the deserts, where she tended her flocke as a Shehearddesse, with manie other honourable actions beside: that the Kings anger became mildely qualified, and so farre he entred into affection, that he would not do any thing thence-forward, without the counsell and advise of his Sonne in Law, whom so highly he esteemed, and liked so respectively of him, and his race; that his Queene dying, hee married with the Sister to *Ocharus*, going hand in band with the gentle and modest Princesse *Serictha*.

This Novell of *Dioneus*, was commended by all the company, and so much the rather, because it was free from all folly and obscennesse. And the Queene perceiving, that as the Tale was ended, so her dignitie must now be expired: she tooke the Crowne of Laurell from off her head, & graciously placed it on the head of *Philostratus*, saying; The worthy Discourse of *Dioneus*, being out of his wonted wanton element, causeth mee (at the resignation of mine Authority) to make choise of him as our next Commander, who is best able to order and enstruct us all; and so I yeeld both my place and honour to *Philostratus*, I hope with the good liking of all our assistants: as plainly appeareth by their instant carriage towards him, with all their heartiest love and sufferages.

Whereupon *Philostratus*, beginning to consider on the charge committed to his care, called the Maister of the houshold, to knowe in what estate all matters were, because where any defect appeared, everie thing might be the sooner remedied, for the better satisfaction of the company, during the time of his authority. Then returning backe to the assembly, thus he began. Lovely Ladies, I would have you to knowe, that since the time of ability in me, to distinguish betweene good and evill, I have alwayes bene subject (perhaps by the meanes of some beautie heere among us) to the proud and imperious dominion of love, with expression of all duty, humility, and most intimate desire to please: yet all hath proved to no purpose, but still I have bin rejected for some other, whereby my condition hath falne from ill to worse, and so still it is likely, even to the houre of my death. In which respect, it best pleaseth me, that our conferences to morrow, shal extend to no other argument, but only such cases as are most conformable to my calamity, namely of such, whose love hath had unhappy ending, because I await no other issue of mine; nor willingly would I be called by any other name, but onely, the miserable and unfortunate Lover.

Having thus spoken, he arose againe; granting leave to the rest, to recreate themselves till supper time. The Garden was very faire and spacious, affording large limits for their severall walkes; the Sun being already so low descended, that it could not be offensive to anyone, the Connies, Kids, and young Hindes skipping every where about them, to their no meane pleasure and contentment. *Dioneus* & *Fiammetta*, sate singing together, of *Messire Guiglielmo* and the Lady of *Vertue*. *Philomena* and *Pamphilus* playing at the Chesse, all sporting themselves as best they pleased. But the houre of Supper being come, and the Tables covered about the faire fountaine, they sate downe and supt in most loving manner. Then *Philostratus*, not to swerve from the course which had bene observed by the Queenes before him, so soone as the Tables were taken away, gave command, that Madam *Lauretta* should beginne the dance, and likewise to sing a Song. My gracious Lord (quoth shee) I can skill of no other Songs, but onely a peece of mine owne, which I have already learned by heart, & may well beseeme this faire assembly: if you please to allow of that, I am ready to performe it with all obedience. Lady, replied the King, you your selfe being so faire and lovely, so needs must be whatsoever commeth from you, therefore let us heare such as you have. Madam *Lauretta*, giving enstruction to the Chorus, prepared, and began in this manner.

*The Song.*

*No soule so comfortlesse,  
Hath more cause to expresse,  
Like woe and heavinesse,  
As I poore amorous Maide.*

*He that did forme the Heavens and every Starre,  
Made me as best him pleased,  
Lovely and gracious, no Element at jarre,  
Or else in gentle breasts to moove sterne Warre,  
But to have strifes appeased  
Where Beauties eye should make the deepest scarre.  
And yet when all things are confest,  
Never was any soule distrest,  
Like mine poore amorous Maide.  
No soule so comfortlesse, &c.*

*There was a time, when once I was helde deare,*

*Blest were those happy dayes:  
Numberlesse Love-suites whispred in mine eare,  
All of faire hope, but none of desperate feare;  
And all sung Beauties praise.  
Why should blacke clowdes obscure so bright a cleare?  
And why should others swimme in joy,  
And no heart drowned in annoy,  
Like mine poore amorous Maide?  
No soule so comfortlesse, &c.*

*Well may I curse that sad and dismall day,  
When in unkinde exchange;  
Another Beauty did my hopes betray,  
And stole my dearest Love from me away:  
Which I thought very strange,  
Considering vowes were past, and what else may  
Assure a loyall Maidens trust,  
Never was Lover so unjust,  
Like mine poore amorous Maide.  
No soule so comfortlesse, &c.*

*Come then kinde Death, and finish all my woes,  
Thy helpe is now the best.  
Come lovely Nymphes, lend hands mine eyes to close,  
And let him wander wheresoere he goes,  
Vaunting of mine unrest;  
Beguiling others by his treacherous showes,  
Grave on my Monument,  
No true love was worse spent,  
Then mine poore amorous Maide.  
No soule so comfortlesse, &c.*

So did Madam *Lauretta* finish her Song, which beeing well observed of them all, was understood by some in divers kinds: some alluding it one way, & others according to their own apprehensions, but all consenting, that both it was an excellent Ditty, well devised, and most sweetly sung. Afterward, lighted Torches being brought, because the Stars had already richly spangled all the heavens, and the fit houre of rest approaching: the King commanded them all to their Chambers, where wee meane to leave them untill the next morning.

### ***The End of the Third Day.***

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## **The Fourth Day.**

***Wherein all the severall Discourses, are under the Government of Honourable Philostratus: And concerning such persons, whose Loves have had successelesse ending.***

### **The Induction unto the ensuing Novelles.**

Most worthy Ladies, I have alwayes heard, as well by the sayings of the judicious, as also by mine owne observation and reading, that the impetuous and violent windes of envy, do sildome blow turbulently; but on the highest Towers and tops of the trees most eminently advanced. Yet (in mine opinion) I have found my selfe much deceived; because, by striving with my very uttermost endeavour, to shunne the outrage of those implacable winds; I have laboured to go, not onely by plaine and even pathes, but likewise through the deepest vallies. As very easily may be seene and observed in the reading of these few small Novels, which I have written not only in our vulgar *Florentine* prose, without any ambitious title: but also in a most humble stile, so low and gentle as possibly I could. And although I have bene rudely shaken, yea, almost halfe unrooted, by the extreame agitation of those blustering winds, and torne in peeces by that base back-biter, envy: yet have I not (for all that) discontinued, or broken any part of mine intended enterprize. Wherefore, I can sufficiently witenesse (by mine owne comprehension) the saying so much observed by the wise, to bee most true; That nothing is without envy in this world, but misery onely.

Among variety of opinions, faire Ladies; some, seeing these Novelties, spared not to say; That I have bene over-pleasing to you, and wandered too farre from mine owne respect, imbasing my credit and repute, by delighting my selfe too curiously, for the fitting of your humours, and have extolled your worth too much, with addition of worse speeches then I meane to utter. Others, seeming to expresse more maturity of judgment, have likewise said, That it was very unsuteable for my yeares, to meddle with womens wanton pleasures, or contend to delight you by the verie least of my labours. Many more, making shew of affecting my good fame and esteeme, say; I had done much more wisely, to have kept mee with the Muses at *Parnassus*, then to confound my studies with such effeminate follies. Some other beside, speaking more despightfully then

discreetly, saide; I had declared more humanity, in seeking means for mine owne maintenance, and wherewith to support my continual necessities, then to glut the worlde with gulleries, and feede my hopes with nothing but winde. And others, to caluminate my travailes, would make you beleeeve, that such matters as I have spoken of, are meerly disguised by me, and figured in a quite contrary nature, quite from the course as they are related. Whereby you may perceive (vertuous Ladies) how while I labour in your service, I am agitated and molested with these blustering, and bitten even to the bare bones, by the sharpe and venomous teeth of envy; all which (as heaven best knoweth) I gladly endure, and with good courage.

Now, albeit it belongeth onely to you, to defend me in this desperate extremity; yet, notwithstanding all their utmost malice, I will make no spare of my best abilities, and, without answering them any otherwise then is fitting, will quietly keepe their slanders from mine eares, with some sleight reply, yet not deserving to be dreamt on. For I apparantly perceive, that (having not already attained to the third part of my pains) they are growne to so great a number, and presume very farre uppon my patience: they may encrease, except they be repulsed in the beginning, to such an infinitie before I can reach to the end, as with their verie least paines taking, they will sinke me to the bottomlesse depth, if your sacred forces (which are great indeede) may not serve for me in their resistance. But before I come to answer any one of them, I will relate a Tale in mine owne favour; yet not a whole Tale, because it shall not appeare, that I purpose to mingle mine, among those which are to proceed from a company so commendable. Onely I will report a parcell thereof, to the end, that what remaineth untold, may sufficiently expresse, it is not to be numbred among the rest to come.

By way then of familiar discourse, and speaking to my malicious detractors, I say, that a long while since, there lived in our City, a Citizen who was named *Philippo Balduccio*, a man but of meane condition, yet verie wealthy, well qualified, and expert in many things appertaining unto his calling. He had a wife whom he loved most intirely, as she did him, leading together a sweet and peaceable life, studying on nothing more, then how to please each other mutually. It came to passe, that as all flesh must, the good woman left this wretched life for a better, leaving one onely sonne to her husband, about the age of two yeares. The husband remained so disconsolate for the losse of his kinde Wife, as no man possibly could be more sorrowfull, because he had lost the onely jewell of his joy. And being thus divided from the company which he most esteemed: he determined also to separate himselfe from the world, addicting al his endeavours to the service of God; and applying his yong sonne likewise, to the same holy exercises. Having given away all his goods for Gods sake, he departed to the Mountaine *Asinaio*, where he made him a small Cell, and lived there with his little sonne, onely upon charitable almes, in abstinence and prayer, forbearing to speak of any worldly occasions, or letting the Lad see any vaine sight: but conferred with him continually, on the glories of eternall life, of God and his Saints, and teaching him nothing else but devout prayers, leading this kinde of life for many yeares together, not permitting him ever to goe forth of the Cell, or shewing him any other but himselfe.

The good old man used divers times to go to *Florence*, where having received (according to his opportunities) the almes of divers well disposed people, he returned backe againe to his hermitage. It fortun'd, that the boy being now about eighteene yeeres olde, and his Father growne very aged; he demanded of him one day, whether hee went? Wherein the old man truly resolved him: whereuppon, the youth thus spake unto him. Father, you are now growne very aged, and hardly can endure such painfull travell: why do you not let me go to *Florence*, that by making me knowne to your well disposed friends, such as are devoutly addicted both to God, and you; I, who am young, and better able to endure travaile then you are, may go thither to supply our necessities, and you take your ease in the mean while? The aged man, perceiving the great growth of his Sonne, and thinking him to be so well instructed in Gods service, as no wordly vanities could easily allure him from it; did not dislike the Lads honest motion, but when he went next to *Florence*, tooke him thither along with him.

When he was there, and had seene the goodly Palaces, Houses, and Churches, with all other sights to be seene in so populous a Cittie: hee began greatly to wonder at them, as one that had never seene them before, at least within the compasse of his remembrance; demanding many things of his Father, both what they were, and how they were named: wherein the old man still resolved him. The answers seemed to content him highly, and caused him to proceede on in further questionings, according still as they found fresh occasions: till at the last, they met with a troope of very beautifull women, going on in seemely manner together, as returning backe from a Wedding. No sooner did the youth behold them, but he demanded of his Father, what things they were; whereto the olde man replyed thus. Sonne, cast downe thy lookes unto the ground, and do not seeme to see them at all, because they are bad things to behold. Bad things Father? answered the Lad: How do you call them? The good olde man, not to quicken any concupiscible appetite in the young boy, or any inclinable desire to ought but godnesse; would not terme them by their proper name of Women, but tolde him that they were called young Gozlings.

Heere grew a matter of no meane mervaille, that hee who had never seene any women before now; appeared not to respect the faire Churches, Palaces, goodly houses, Golde, Silver, or any thing else which he had seene; but, as fixing his affection onely upon this sight, sodainly said to the old man. Good Father, do so much for me, as to let me have one of these Gozlings. Alas Sonne (replyed the Father) holde thy peace I pray thee, and do not desire any such naughty things. Then by way of demand, he thus proceeded, saying. Father, are these naughty things made of themselves? Yes Sonne, answered the old man. I know not Father (quoth the Lad) what you meane by naughtinesse, nor why these goodly things should be so badly termed; but in my judgement, I have not seene any thing so faire and pleasing in mine eye, as these are, who excell

those painted Angels, which heere in the Churches you have shewn me. And therefore Father, if either you love me, or have any care of me, let mee have one of these Gozlings home to our Cell, where we can make means sufficient for her feeding. I will not (said the Father) be so much thine enemy, because neither thou, or I, can rightly skill of their feeding. Perceiving presently, that Nature had farre greater power then his Sonnes capacity and understanding; which made him repent, for fondly bringing his sonne to *Florence*.

Having gone so farre in this fragment of a Tale, I am content to pause heere, and will returne againe to them of whom I spake before; I meane my envious depravers: such as have saide (faire Ladies) that I am double blame-worthy, in seeking to please you, and that you are also over-pleasing to me; which freely I confesse before all the world, that you are singularly pleasing to me, and I have stroven how to please you effectually. I would demand of them (if they seeme so much amazed heereat,) considering, I never knew what belonged to true love kisses, amorous embraces, and their delectable fruition, so often received from your graces; but onely that I have seene, and do yet daily behold, your commendable conditions, admired beauties, noble adornments by nature, and (above all the rest) your womanly and honest conversation. If hee that was nourished, bred, and educated, on a savage solitary Mountain, within the confines of a poore small Cell, having no other company then his Father: If such a one, I say, uppon the very first sight of your sexe, could so constantly confesse, that women were onely worthy of affection, and the object which (above all things else) he most desired; why should these contumelious spirits so murmure against me, teare my credite with their teeth, and wound my reputation to the death, because your vertues are pleasing to mee, and I endeavour likewise to please you with my utmost paines? Never had the auspicious heavens allowed me life, but onely to love you; and from my very infancie, mine intentions have alwaies bene that way bent: feeling what vertue flowed from your faire eies, understanding the mellifluous accents of your speech, whereto the enkindled flames of your sighes gave no meane grace. But remembring especially, that nothing could so please an Hermite, as your divine perfections, an unnurtured Lad, without understanding, and little differing from a meere brutish beast: undoubtedly, whosoever loveth not women, and desireth to be affected of them againe; may well be ranked among these women-haters, speaking out of cankred spleene, and utterly ignorant of the sacred power (as also the vertue) of naturall affection, whereof they seeming so carelesse, the like am I of their depraving.

Concerning them that touch me with mine age; Do not they know, that although Leeks have white heads, yet the blades of them are alwaies greene? But referring them to their flouts and taunts, I answer, that I shal never hold it any disparagement to mee, so long as my life endureth, to delight my selfe with those exercises, which *Guido Cavalconti*, and *Dante Alighieri*, already aged, as also *Messer Cino de Pistoia*, older then either of them both, held to be their chiefest honour. And were it not a wandering too farre from our present argument, I would alledge Histories to approve my words, full of very ancient and famous men, who in the ripest maturity of all their time, were carefully studious for the contenting of women, albeit these cock-braines neither know the way how to do it, nor are so wise as to learne it.

Now, for my dwelling at *Parnassus* with the Muses, I confesse their counsell to be very good: but wee cannot alwayes continue with them, nor they with us. And yet neverthesse, when any man departeth from them, they delighting themselves, to see such things as may bee thought like them, do not therein deserve to be blamed. Wee finde it recorded, that the Muses were women, and albeit women cannot equall the performance of the Muses; yet in their very prime aspect, they have a lively resemblance with the Muses: so that, if women were pleasing for nothing else, yet they ought to be generally pleasing in that respect. Beside all this, women have bin the occasion of my composing a thousand Verses, whereas the Muses never caused me to make so much as one. Verie true it is, that they gave me good assistance, and taught me how I shold compose them, yea, and directed me in writing of these Novels. And how basely soever they judge of my studies, yet have the Muses never scorned to dwell with me, perhaps for the respective service, and honourable resemblance of those Ladies with themselves, whose vertues I have not spared to commend by them. Wherefore, in the composition of these varieties, I have not strayed so farre from *Parnassus*, nor the Muses; as in their silly conjectures they imagine.

But what shall I say to them, who take so great compassion on my povertie, as they advise me to get something, whereon to make my living? Assuredly, I know not what to say in this case, except by due consideration made with my selfe, how they would answer mee, if necessitie should drive me to crave kindnesse of them; questionles, they would then say: Goe, seeke comfort among thy fables and follies. Yet I would have them know, that poore Poets have alwayes found more among their fables & fictions; then many rich men ever could do, by ransacking all their bags of treasure. Beside, many other might be spoken of, who made their age and times to flourish, meere by their inventions and fables: whereas on the contrary, a great number of other busier braines, seeking to gaine more then would serve them to live on; have utterly runne uppon their owne ruine, and overthrowne themselves for ever. What should I say more? To such men, as are either so suspitious of their owne charitie, or of my necessity, whensoever it shall happen: I can answer (I thanke my God for it) with the Apostle; I know how to abounde, & how to abate, yea, how to endure both prosperity and want; and therefore, let no man be more carefull of me, then I am of my selfe.

For them that are so inquisitive into my discourses, to have a further construction of them, then agrees with my meaning, or their own good manners, taxing me with writing one thing, but intending another; I could wish, that their wisdom would extend so farre, as but to compare them with their originals, to finde them a jot discordant from my writing; and then I would freely confesse, that they had some reason to reprehend me, and I should endeavour to make them

amends. But untill they can touch me with any thing else, but words onely; I must let them wander in their owne giddy opinions, and followe the course projected to my selfe, saying of them, as they do of me.

Thus holding them all sufficiently answered for this time, I say (most worthy Ladies) that by heavens assistance and yours, whereto I onely leane: I will proceede on, armed with patience; and turning my backe against these impetuous windes, let them breath till they burst, because I see nothing can happen to harme me, but onely the venting of their malice. For the roughest blastes, do but raise the smallest dust from off the ground, driving it from one place to another; or, carrying it up to the aire, many times it falleth downe againe on mens heads, yea, upon the Crownes of Emperors and Kings, and sometimes on the highest Palaces and tops of Towers; from whence, if it chance to descend again by contrarie blasts, it can light no lower, then whence it came at the first. And therefore, if ever I strove to please you with my uttermost abilities in any thing, surely I must now contend to expresse it more then ever. For, I know right well, that no man can say with reason, except some such as my selfe, who love and honour you, that we do any otherwise then as nature hath commanded us; and to resist her lawes, requires a greater and more powerfull strength then ours: and the contenders against her supreame priviledges, have either laboured meerely in vaine, or else incurred their owne bane. Which strength, I freely confesse my selfe not to have, neither covet to be possessed of it in this case: but if I had it, I wold rather lend it to some other, then any way to use it on mine own behalfe. Wherefore, I would advise them that thus checke and controule mee, to give over, and be silent; and if their cold humours cannot learne to love, let them live still in their frostie complexion, delighting themselves in their corrupted appetites: suffering me to enjoy mine owne, for the little while I have to live; and this is all the kindnesse I require of them.

But now it is time (bright beauties) to returne whence we parted, and to follow our former order begun, because it may seeme we have wandered too farre. By this time the Sun had chased the Starre-light from the heavens, and the shadie moisture from the ground, when *Philostratus* the King being risen, all the company arose likewise. When being come into the goodly Garden, they spent the time in varietie of sports, dining where they had supt the night before. And after that the Sun was at his highest, and they had refreshed their spirits with a little slumbering, they sate downe (according to custome) about the faire Fountaine. And then the King commanded Madam *Fiammetta*, that she should give beginning to the dayes Novels: when she, without any longer delaying, began in this gracious manner.

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***Tancrede, Prince of Salerne, caused the amorous friend of his daughter to be slaine, and sent her his heart in a cup of Gold: which afterward she steeped in an impoysoned water, and then drinking it so dyed.***

## **The first Novell.**

***Wherein is declared the power of Love, and their cruelty justly reprehended, who imagine to make the vigour thereof cease, by abusing or killing one of the Lovers.***

Our King (most Noble and vertuous Ladies) hath this day given us a subject, very rough and stearne to discourse on, and so much the rather, if we consider, that we are come hither to be merry & pleasant, where sad Tragically reports are no way suteable, especially, by reviving the teares of others, to bedew our owne cheekes withall. Nor can any such argument be spoken of, without moving compassion both in the reporters, and hearers. But (perhaps) it was his highnesse pleasure, to moderate the delights which we have already had. Or whatsoever else hath provoked him thereto, seeing it is not lawfull for mee, to alter or contradict his appointment; I will recount an accident very pittiful, or rather most unfortunate, and well worthy to bee graced with our teares.

*Tancrede*, Prince of *Salerne* (which City, before the Consulles of *Rome* held dominion in that part of *Italy*, stooed free, and thence (perchance) tooke the moderne title of a Principality) was a very humane Lord, and of ingenious nature; if, in his elder yeares, he had not soiled his hands in the blood of Lovers, especially one of them, being both neere and deere unto him. So it fortun'd, that during the whole life time of this Prince, he had but one onely daughter (albeit it had bene much better, if he had had none at all) whom he so choisely loved and esteemed, as never was any childe more deerely affected of a Father: and so farre extended his over-curious respect of her, as he would sildome admit her to be foorth of his sight; neither would he suffer her to marry, although she had outstept (by divers yeares) the age meete for marriage. Neverthesse, at length, he matched her with the Sonne to the Duke of *Capua*, who lived no long while with her; but left her in a widdowed estate, and then shee returned home to her father againe.

This Lady, had all the most absolute perfections, both of favour and feature, as could be wished in any woman, yong, queintly disposed, and of admirable understanding, more (perhappes) then was requisite in so weake a bodie. Continuing thus in Court with the King her Father, who loved her beyond all his future hopes; like a Lady of great and glorious magnificence, she lived in all delights & pleasure. She well perceiving, that her Father thus exceeding in his affection to her, had no mind at all of re-marrying her, and holding it most immodest in her, to sollicite him with any such suite: concluded in her mindes private consultations, to make choise of some one

especiall friend or favourite (if Fortune would prove so furtherous to her) whom she might acquaint secretly, with her sober, honest, and familiar purposes. Her Fathers Court beeing much frequented, with plentifull accesse of brave Gentlemen, and others of inferiour quality, as commonly the Courts of Kings & Princes are, whose carriage and demeanor she very heedfully observed. There was a yong Gentleman among all the rest, a servant to her Father, and named *Guiscardo*, a man not derived from any great descent by bloode, yet much more Noble by vertue and commendable behaviour, then appeared in any of the other, none pleased her opinion, like as he did; so that by often noting his parts and perfections, her affection being but a glowing sparke at the first, grewe like a Bavin to take flame, yet kept so closely as possibly she could; as Ladies are warie enough in their love.

The yong Gentleman, though poore, being neither blocke nor dullard, perceived what he made no outward shew of, and understood himselfe so sufficiently, that holding it no meane happinesse to bee affected by her, he thought it very base and cowardly in him, if he should not expresse the like to her againe. So loving mutually (yet secretly) in this manner, and shee coveting nothing more, then to have private conference with him, yet not daring to trust anyone with so important a matter; at length she devised a new cunning stratageme, to compasse her longing desire, and acquaint him with her private purpose, which proved to bee in this manner. Shee wrote a Letter, concerning what was the next day to be done, for their secret meeting together; and conveying it within the joynt of an hollow Cane, in jesting manner threw it to *Guiscardo*, saying; Let your man make use of this, insted of a paire of bellowes, when he meaneth to make fire in your chamber. *Guiscardo* taking up the Cane, and considering with himselfe, that neither was it given, or the wordes thus spoken, but doubtlesse on some important occasion: went unto his lodging with the Cane, where viewing it respectively, he found it to be cleft, and opening it with his knife, found there the written Letter enclosed.

After he had reade it, and well considered on the service therein concerned; he was the most joyfull man of the world, and began to contrive his aptest meanes, for meeting with his gracious Mistresse, and according as she had given him direction. In a corner of the Kings Palace, it being seated on a rising hill, a cave had long beene made in the body of the same hill, which received no light into it, but by a small spiracle or vent-loope, made out ingeniously on the hills side. And because it hadde not in long time bene frequented, by the accesse of any body, that vent-light was over-growne with briars and bushes, which almost engirt it round about. No one could descend into this cave or vault, but only by a secret paire of staires, answering to a lower Chamber of the Palace, and very neere to the Princesses lodging, as beeing altogether at her command, by meanes of a strong barred and defensible doore, whereby to mount or descend at her pleasure. And both the cave it selfe, as also the degrees conducting downe into it, were now so quite worne out of memory (in regard it had not bene visited by any one in long time before) as no man remembred that there was any such thing.

But Love, from whose bright discerning eies, nothing can be so closely concealed, but at the length it commeth to light: had made this amorous Lady mindefull thereof, and because she would not bee discovered in her intention, many dayes together, her soule became perplexed; by what meanes that strong doore might best be opened, before shee could compasse to performe it. But after that she had found out the way, and gone downe her selfe alone into the cave; observing the loope-light, & had made it commodious for her purpose, shee gave knowledge thereof to *Guiscardo*, to have him devise an apt course for his descent, acquainting him truly with the height, and how farre it was distant from the ground within. After he had found the souspirall in the hills side, and given it a larger entrance for his safer passage; he provided a Ladder of cords, with steppes sufficient for his descending and ascending, as also a wearing sute made of leather, to keepe his skinne unscratched of the thornes, and to avoide all suspition of his resorting thither. In this manner went he to the saide loope-hole the night following, and having fastened the one end of his corded ladder, to the strong stump of a tree being closely by it; by meanes of the saide ladder, he descended downe into the cave, and there attended the comming of his Lady.

She, on the morrow morning, pretending to her waiting woman, that she was scarsly well, and therefore would not be diseased the most part of that day; commanded them to leave her alone in her Chamber, and not to returne untill she called for them, locking the doore her selfe for better security. Then opened she the doore of the cave, and going downe the staires, found there her amorous friend *Guiscardo*, whom she saluting with a chaste and modest kisse; caused him to ascend up the stayres with her into her chamber. This long desired, and now obtained meeting, caused the two deerey affecting Lovers, in kinde discourse of amorous argument (without incivill or rude demeanor) to spend there the most part of that day, to their hearts joy and mutuall contentment. And having concluded on their often meeting there, in this cunning & concealed sort; *Guiscardo* went downe into the cave againe, the Princesse making the doore fast after him, and then went forth among her Women. So in the night season, *Guiscardo* ascended uppe againe by his Ladder of cords, and covering the loope-hole with brambles and bushes, returned (unseene of any) to his owne lodging: the cave being afterward guilty of their often meeting there in this manner.

But Fortune, who hath alwayes bin a fatall enemy to lovers stolne felicities, became envious of their thus secret meeting, and overthrew (in an instant) all their poore happinesse, by an accident most spightfull and malicious. The King had used divers dayes before, after dinner time, to resort all alone to his daughters Chamber, there conversing with her in most loving manner. One unhappy day amongst the rest, when the Princesse, being named *Ghismonda*, was sporting in her privat Garden among her Ladies, the King (at his wonted time) went to his daughters

Chamber, being neither heard or seene by any. Nor would he have his daughter called from her pleasure, but finding the windowes fast shut, and the Curtaines close drawne about the bed; he sate downe in a chaire behind it, and leaning his head upon the bed; his body being covered with the curtaine, as if he hid himselfe purposely; hee mused on so many matters, untill at last he fell fast asleepe.

It hath bin observed as an ancient Adage, that when disasters are ordained to any one, commonly they prove to be inevitable, as poore *Ghismonda* could wnesse too well. For, while the King thus slept, shee having (unluckily) appointed another meeting with *Guiscardo*, left hir Gentlewomen in the Garden, and stealing softly into her Chamber, having made all fast and sure, for being descried by any person: opened the doore to *Guiscardo*, who stood there ready on the staire-head, awaiting his entrance; and they sitting downe on the bed side (according as they were wont to do) began their usuall kinde conference againe, with sighes and loving kisses mingled among them. It chanced that the King awaked, & both hearing and seeing this familiarity of *Guiscardo* with his Daughter, he became extreemly confounded with greefe thereat. Once he intended, to cry out for helpe, to have them both there apprehended; but he helde it a part of greater wisdom, to sit silent still, and (if hee could) to keepe himselfe so closely concealed: to the end, that he might the more secretly, and with far less disgrace to himselfe, performe what hee had rashly intended to do.

The poore discovered Lovers, having ended their amorous interparlance, without suspicion of the Kings being so neer in person, or any els, to betray their over-confident trust; *Guiscardo* descended againe into the Cave, and shee leaving the Chamber, returned to her women in the Garden; all which *Tancrede* too well observed, and in a rapture of fury, departed (unseene) into his owne lodging. The same night, about the houre of mens first sleepe, and according as he had given order; *Guiscardo* was apprehended, even as he was coming forth of the loope-hole, & in his homely leather habite. Very closely was he brought before the King, whose heart was swolne so great with greefe, as hardly was hee able to speake: notwithstanding, at the last he began thus. *Guiscardo*, the love & respect I have used towards thee, hath not deserved the shameful wrong which thou hast requited me withall, and as I have seene with mine owne eyes this day. Whereto *Guiscardo* could answer nothing else, but onely this: Alas my Lord! Love is able to do much more, then either you, or I. Whereupon, *Tancrede* commanded, that he should bee secretly well guarded, in a neere adjoining Chamber, and on the next day, *Ghismonda* having (as yet) heard nothing heereof, the Kings braine being infinitely busied and troubled, after dinner, and as he often had used to do: he went to his daughters chamber, where calling for her, and shutting the doores closely to them, the teares trickling downe his aged white beard, thus he spake to her.

*Ghismonda*, I was once grounded in a settled perswasion, that I truly knew thy vertue, and honest integrity of life; and this beleefe could never have bene altered in mee, by any sinister reports whatsoever, had not mine eyes seene, and mine eares heard the contrary. Nor did I so much as conceive a thought either of thine affection, or private conversing with any man, but onely he that was to be thy husband. But now, I my selfe being able to avouch thy folly, imagine what an heart-broke this will be to me, so long as life remaineth in this poore, weak, and aged body. Yet, if needs thou must have yeilded to this wanton weakenesse, I would thou hadst made choise of a man, answerable to thy birth & Nobility: whereas on the contrary, among so many worthy spirits as resort to my Court, thou likest best to converse with that silly yong man *Guiscardo*, one of very meane and base descent, and by mee (even for Gods sake) from his very youngest yeares, brought uppe to this instant in my Court; wherein thou hast given me much affliction of minde, and so overthrowne my senses, as I cannot wel imagine how I should deale with thee. For him, whom I have this night caused to be surprized, even as he came forth of your close contrived conveyance, and detaine as my prisoner, I have resolved how to proceed with him: but concerning thy selfe, mine oppressions are so many and violent, as I know not what to say of thee. One way, thou hast meerly murdered the unfeigned affection I bare thee, as never any father could expresse more to his child: and then againe, thou hast kindled a most just indignation in me, by thine immodest and wilfull folly, and whereas Nature pleadeth pardon for the one, yet justice standeth up against the other, and urgeth cruell severity against thee: neverthelesse, before I will determine upon any resolution, I come purposely first to heare thee speake, and what thou canst say for thy selfe, in a bad case, so desperate and dangerous.

Having thus spoken, he hung downe the head in his bosome, weeping as abundantly, as if it had bene a childe severely disciplinde. On the other side, *Ghismonda* hearing the speeches of her Father, and perceiving withall, that not onely her secret love was discovered, but also *Guiscardo* was in close prison, the matter which most of all did torment her; shee fell into a very strange kinde of extasie, scorning teares, and entreating tearmes, such as feminine frailty are alwayes aptest unto: but rather, with height of courage, controlling feare or servile basenesse, and declaring invincible fortitude in her very lookes, shee concluded with her selfe, rather then to urge any humble perswasions, shee would lay her life downe at the stake. For plainly shee perceived, that *Guiscardo* already was a dead man in Law, and death was likewise as welcome to her, rather then the deprivation of her Love; and therefore, not like a weeping woman, or as checkt by the offence committed, but carelesse of any harme happening to her: stoutly and couragiously, not a teare appearing in her eye, or her soule any way to be perturbed, thus shee spake to her Father.

*Tancrede*, to denie what I have done, or to entreate any favour from you, is now no part of my disposition: for as the one can little availe me, so shall not the other any way advantage me. Moreover, I covet not, that you should extend any clemency or kindnesse to me, but by my voluntary confession of the truth; doe intend (first of all) to defend mine honour, with reasons

sound, good, and substantiall, and then vertuously pursue to full effect, the greatnesse of my minde and constant resolution. True it is, that I have loved, and still doe, honourable *Guiscardo*, purposing the like so long as I shall live, which will be but a small while: but if it bee possible to continue the same affection after death, it is for ever vowed to him onely. Nor did mine owne womanish weaknesse so much thereto induce me, as the matchlesse vertues shining cleerely in *Guiscardo*, and the little respect you had of marrying me againe. Why royall Father, you cannot be ignorant, that you being composed of flesh and blood, have begotten a Daughter of the selfe same composition, and not made of stone or yron. Moreover, you ought to remember (although now you are farre stept in yeeres) what the Lawes of youth are, and with what difficulty they are to be contradicted. Considering withall, that albeit (during the vigour of your best time) you evermore were exercised in Armes; yet you should likewise understand, that negligence and idle delights, have mighty power, not onely in yong people, but also in them of greatest yeeres.

I being then made of flesh and blood, and so derived from your selfe; having had also so little benefit of life, that I am yet in the spring, and blooming time of my blood: by either of these reasons, I must needs be subject to naturall desires, wherein such knowledge as I have once already had, in the estate of my marriage, perhaps might move a further intelligence of the like delights, according to the better ability of strength, which exceeding all capacity of resistance, induced a second motive to affection, answerable to my time and youthfull desires, and so (like a yong woman) I became amorous againe; yet did I strive, even with all my utmost might, and best vertuous faculties abiding in me, no way to disgrace either you or my selfe, as (in equall censure) yet I have not done. But Nature is above all humane power, and Love, commanded by Nature, hath prevailed for Love, joyning with Fortune: in meere pity and commiseration of my extreme wrong, I found them both most benigne and gracious, teaching me a way secret enough, whereby I might reach the height of my desires, howsoever you became instructed, or (perhaps) found it out by accident; so it was, and I denie it not.

Nor did I make election of *Guiscardo* by chance, or rashly, as many women doe, but by deliberate counsell in my soule, and most mature advise; I chose him above all other, and having his honest harmelesse conversation, mutually we enjoyed our hearts contentment. Now it appeareth, that I having not offended but by love; in imitation of vulgar opinion, rather then truth: you seeke to reprove me bitterly, alleaging no other maine argument for your anger, but onely my not choosing a gentleman, or one more worthy. Wherein it is most evident, that you doe not so much checke my fault, as the ordination of Fortune; who many times advanceth men of meanest esteeme, and abaseth them of greater merit. But leaving this discourse, let us looke into the originall of things, wherein wee are first to observe, that from one masse or lumpe of flesh, both we, and all other received our flesh, and one Creator hath created all things; yea, all creatures, equally in their forces and faculties, and equall likewise in their vertue: which vertue was the first that made distinction of our birth and equality, in regard, that such as had the most liberall portion thereof, and performed actions thereto answerable, were thereby termed noble, all the rest remaining unnoble: now although contrary use did afterward hide and conceale this Law, yet was it not therefore banished from Nature or good manners. In which respect, whosoever did execute all his actions by vertue, declared himselfe openly to be noble; and he that tearmed him otherwise, it was an error in the miscaller, and not in the person so wrongfully called; as the very same priviledge is yet in full force among us at this day.

Cast an heedfull eye then (good Father) upon all your Gentlemen, and advisedly examine their vertues, conditions and manner of behaviour. On the other side, observe those parts remaining in *Guiscardo*: and then, if you will judge truly, and without affection, you will confesse him to be most noble, and that all your Gentlemen (in respect of him) are but base Groomes and villaines. His vertues and excelling perfections, I never credited from the report or judgement of any person; but onely by your speeches, and mine owne eyes as true witnesses. Who did ever more commend *Guiscardo*, extolling all those singularities in him, most requisite to be in an honest vertuous man; then you your selfe have done? Nor neede you to be sorry, or ashamed of your good opinion concerning him; for, if mine eyes have not deceived my judgement, you never gave him the least part of praise, but I have knowne much more in him, then ever your words were able to expresse: wherefore, if I have beene any way deceived, truly the deceit proceeded onely from you. How will you then maintaine, that I have throwne my liking on a man of base condition? In troth (Sir) you cannot. Perhaps you will alleadge, that he is meane and poore; I confesse it, and surely it is to your shame, that you have not bestowne place of more preferment, on a man so honest and well deserving, and having beene so long a time your servant. Neverthesse, poverty impaireth not any part of noble Nature, but wealth hurries it into horrible confusions. Many Kings and great Princes have heretofore beene poore, when divers of them that have delved into the Earth, and kept Flockes in the Feld, have beene advanced to riches, and exceeded the other in wealth.

Now, as concerning your last doubt, which most of all afflicteth you, namely, how you shall deale with me; boldly rid your braine of any such disturbance, for if you have resolved now in your extremity of yeeres, to doe that which your younger dayes evermore despised, I meane, to become cruell; use your utmost cruelty against me, for I will never entreate you to the contrary, because I am the sole occasion of this offence, if it doe deserve the name of an offence. And this I dare assure you, that if you deale not with me, as you have done already, or intend to *Guiscardo*, mine owne hands shall act as much: and therefore give over your teares to women, and if you purpose to be cruel, let him and me in death drinke both of one cup, at least, if you imagine that we have deserved it.

The King knew well enough the high spirit of his Daughter, but yet (neverthesse) he did not



believe, that her words would prove actions, or shee doe as shee saide. And therefore parting from her, and without intent of using any cruelty to her; concluded, by quenching the heate of another, to coole the fiery rage of her distemper, commanding two of his followers (who had the custody of *Guiscardo*) that without any rumour or noyse at all, they should strangle him the night ensuing, and taking the heart forth of his body, to bring it to him, which they performed according to their charge. On the next day, the King called for a goodly standing Cup of Gold, wherein he put the heart of *Guiscardo*, sending it by one of his most familiar servants to his Daughter, with command also to use these words to her. Thy Father hath sent thee this present, to comfort thee with that thing which most of all thou affectest, even as thou hast comforted him with that which he most hated.

*Ghismonda*, nothing altered from her cruell deliberation, after her Father was departed from her, caused certaine poysonous rootes & hearbs to be brought her, which shee (by distillation) made a water of, to drinke suddenly, whensoever any crosse accident should come from her Father; whereupon, when the messenger from her Father had delivered her the present, and uttered the words as he was commanded: shee tooke the Cup, and looking into it with a settled countenance, by sight of the heart, and effect of the message, shee knew certainly, that it was the heart of *Guiscardo*; then looking stearely on the servant, thus she spake unto him. My honest friend, it is no more then right and justice, that so worthy a heart as this is, should have any worsor grave then gold, wherein my Father hath dealt most wisely. So, lifting the heart up to her mouth; and sweetly kissing it, shee proceeded thus. In all things, even till this instant, (being the utmost period of my life) I have evermore found my Fathers love most effectuell to me; but now it appeareth farre greater, then at any time heretofore: and therefore from my mouth, thou must deliver him the latest thanks that ever I shall give him, for sending me such an honourable present.

These words being ended, holding the Cup fast in her hand, and looking seriously upon the heart, shee began againe in this manner. Thou sweete entertainer of all my dearest delights, accursed be his cruelty, that causeth me thus to see thee with my corporall eyes, it being sufficient enough for me, alwayes to behold thee with the sight of my soule. Thou hast runne thy race, and as Fortune ordained, so are thy dayes finished: for as all flesh hath an ending; so hast thou concluded, albeit too soone, and before thy due time. The travailes and miseries of this World, have now no more to meddle with thee, and thy very heaviest enemy, hath bestowed such a grave on thee, as thy greatnesse in vertue worthily deserveth; now nothing else is wanting, wherewith to beautifie thy Funerall, but onely her sighes & teares, that was so deare unto thee in thy life time. And because thou mightest the more freely enjoy them, see how my mercilesse Father (on his owne meere motion) hath sent thee to me; and truly I will bestow them frankly on thee, though once I had resolved, to die with drie eyes, and not shedding one teare, dreadlesse of their utmost malice towards me.

And when I have given thee the due oblation of my teares, my soule, which sometime thou hast kept most carefully, shall come to make a sweete conjunction with thine: for in what company else can I travaile more contentedly, and to those unfrequented silent shades, but onely in thine? As yet I am sure it is present here, in this Cup sent me by my Father, as having a provident respect to the place, for possession of our equall and mutuall pleasures; because thy soule affecting mine so truly, cannot walke alone, without his deare companion.

Having thus finished her complaint, even as if her head had been converted into a well-spring of water, so did teares abundantly flow from her faire eyes, kissing the heart of *Guiscardo* infinite times. All which while, her women standing by her, neither knew what heart it was, nor to what effect her speeches tended: but being moved to compassionate teares, they often demanded (albeit in vaine) the occasion of her sad complaining, comforting her to their utmost power. When shee was not able to weepe any longer, wiping her eyes, and lifting up her head, without any signe of the least dismay, thus shee spake to the heart. Deare heart, all my duty is performed to thee, and nothing now remaineth uneffected; but onely breathing my last, to let my ghost accompany thine.

Then calling for the glasse of water, which shee had readily prepared the day before, and powring it upon the heart lying in the Cup, couragiously advancing it to her mouth, shee dranke it up every drop; which being done, shee lay downe upon her bed, holding her Lovers heart fast in her hand, and laying it so neere to her owne as she could. Now although her women knew not what water it was, yet when they had seene her to quaffe it off in that manner, they sent word to the King, who much suspecting what had happened, went in all haste to his Daughters chamber, entring at the very instant, when shee was laide upon her bed; beholding her in such passionate pangs, with teares streaming downe his reverend beard, he used many kinde words to comfort her, when boldly thus shee spake unto him. Father (quoth she) well may you spare these teares, because they are unfitting for you, and not any way desired by me; who but your selfe, hath seene any man to mourne for his owne wilfull offence. Neverthelesse, if but the least jot of that love doe yet abide in you, whereof you have made such liberall profession to me; let me obtaine this my very last request, to wit, that seeing I might not privately enjoy the benefit of *Guiscardoes* love, and while he lived; let yet (in death) one publike grave containe both our bodies, that death may afford us, what you so cruelly in life denied us.

Extremity of griefe and sorrow, with-held his tongue from returning any answer, and shee perceiving her end approaching, held the heart still closed to her owne bare brest, saying; Here Fortune, receive two true hearts latest oblation, for, in this manner are we comming to thee. So closing her eyes, all sense forsooke her, life leaving her body breathlesse. Thus ended the haplesse love of *Guiscardo*, and *Ghismonda*, for whose sad disaster, when the King had mourned

sufficiently, and repented fruitlessly; he caused both their bodies to be honourably embalmed, and buried in a most royall Monument, not without generall sorrow of the subjects of *Salerne*.

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***Fryar Albert made a young Venetian Gentlewoman beleeve, that God Cupid was false in love with her, and he resorted oftentimes unto her, in the disguise of the same God. Afterward, being frighted by the Gentlewomans kindred and friends, he cast himselfe out of her Chamber window, and was hidden in a poore mans House; on the day following, in the shape of a wilde or savage man, he was brought upon the Rialto of Saint Marke, and being there publikely knowne by the Brethren of his Order; he was committed to Prison.***

## The second Novell.

***Reprehending the lewd lives of dissembling hypocrites; and checking the arrogant pride of vaine-headed women.***

The Novell recounted by Madam *Fiammetta*, caused teares many times in the eyes of all the company; but it being finished, the King shewing a stearne countenance, saide; I should much have commended the kindnesse of fortune, if in the whole course of my life, I had tasted the least moiety of that delight, which *Guiscardo* received by conversing with faire *Ghismonda*. Nor neede any of you to wonder thereat, or how it can be otherwise, because hourelly I feele a thousand dying torments, without enjoying any hope of ease or pleasure: but referring my fortunes to their owne poore condition, it is my will, that Madam *Pampinea* proceed next in the argument of successesse love, according as Madam *Fiammetta* hath already begun, to let fall more dew-drops on the fire of mine afflictions. Madam *Pampinea* perceiving what a taske was imposed on her, knew well (by her owne disposition) the inclination of the company, whereof shee was more respective, then of the Kings command: wherefore, chusing rather to recreate their spirits, then to satisfie the Kings melancholy humour; shee determined to relate a Tale of mirthfull matter, and yet to keepe within compasse of the purposed Argument.

It hath been continually used as a common Proverbe; that a bad man, taken and reputed to be honest and good, may commit many evils, yet neither credited, or suspected: which proverbe giveth mee very ample matter to speake of, and yet not varying from our intention, concerning the hypocrisie of some religious persons, who having their garments long and large, their faces made artificially pale, their language meeke and humble, to get mens goods from them; yet sower, harsh, and stearne enough, in checking and controuling other mens errors, as also in urging others to give, and themselves to take, without any other hope or meanes of salvation. Nor doe they endeavour like other men, to worke out their soules health with feare and trembling; but, even as if they were sole owners, Lords, and possessors of Paradice, will appoint to every dying person, places (there) of greater or lesser excellency, according as they thinke good, or as the legacies left by them are in quantity, whereby they not onely deceive themselves, but all such as give credit to their subtile perswasions. And were it lawfull for me, to make knowne no more then is meere necessary; I could quickly disclose to simple credulous people, what craft lieth concealed under their holy habites: and I would wish, that their lies and deluding should speed with them, as they did with a *Franciscane* Friar, none of the younger Novices, but one of them of greatest reputation, and belonging to one of the best Monasteries in *Venice*. Which I am the rather desirous to report, to recreate your spirits, after your teares for the death of faire *Ghismonda*.

Sometime (Honourable Ladies) there lived in the City of *Imola*, a man of most lewd and wicked life; named, *Bertho de la massa*, whose shamelesse deedes were so well knowne to all the Citizens, and won such respect among them; as all his lies could not compasse any beleefe, no, not when he delivered a matter of sound truth. Wherefore, perceiving that his lewdnesse allowed him no longer dwelling there; like a desperate adventurer, he transported himselfe thence to *Venice*, the receptacle of all foule sinne and abomination, intending there to exercise his wonted bad behaviour, and live as wickedly as ever he had done before. It came to passe, that some remorse of conscience tooke hold of him, for the former passages of his dissolute life, and he pretended to be surprized with very great devotion, becomming much more Catholike then any other man, taking on him the profession of a *Franciscane Cordelier*, and calling himselfe Fryar *Albert of Imola*.

In this habite and outward appearance, hee seemed to leade an austere and sanctimonious life, highly commending penance & abstinence, never eating flesh, or drinking wine, but when hee was provided of both in a close corner. And before any person could take notice thereof, hee became (of a theefe) Ruffian, forswearer and murtherer, as formerly he had beene a great Preacher; yet not abandoning the forenamed vices, when secretly he could put any of them in execution. Moreover, being made Priest, when he was celebrating Masse at the Altar, if he saw himselfe to be observed by any; he would most mournefully reade the passion of our Saviour, as one whose teares cost him little, whensoever hee pleased to use them: so that, in a short while, by his preaching and teares, he fed the humours of the *Venetians* so pleasingly; that they made him executour (well neere) of all their Testaments, yea, many chose him as depositary or Guardian of their monies; because he was both Confessour and Councillor, almost to all the men

and women.

By this well seeming out-side of sanctity, the Wolfe became a Shepheard, and his renown for holinesse was so famous in those parts, as Saint *Frances* himselfe had hardly any more. It fortun'd, that a young Gentlewoman, being somewhat foolish, wanton and proud minded, named Madam *Lisetta de Caquirino*, wife to a wealthy Merchant, who went with certaine Gallies into *Flanders*, and there lay as Lieger long time, in company of other Gentlewomen, went to be confessed by this ghostly Father; kneeling at his feete, although her heart was high enough, like a proud minded woman, (for *Venetians* are presumptuous, vaine-glorious, and witted much like to their skittish Gondoloes) she made a very short rehearsall of her sinnes. At length Fryar *Albert* demanded of her, whether shee had any amorous friend or lover? Her patience being exceedingly provoked, stearne anger appeared in her lookes, which caused her to returne him this answer. How now Sir *Domine*? what? have you no eyes in your head? Can you not distinguish between mine, and these other common beauties? I could have Lovers enow, if I were so pleased; but those perfections remaining in me, are not to be affected by this man, or that. How many beauties have you beheld, any way answerable to mine, and are more fit for Gods, then mortals.

Many other idle speeches shee uttered, in proud opinion of her beauty, whereby Friar *Albert* presently perceived, that this Gentlewoman had but a hollow braine, and was fit game for folly to flye at; which made him instantly enamoured of her, and that beyond all capacity of resisting, which yet he referred to a further, and more commodious time. Neverthelesse, to shew himselfe an holy and religious man now, he began to reprehend her, and told her plainely, that she was vain-glorious, and overcome with infinite follies. Hereupon, she called him a logger headed beast, and he knew not the difference between an ordinary complexion, and beauty of the highest merit. In which respect, Friar *Albert*, being loth to offend her any further; after confession was fully ended, let her passe away among the other Gentlewomen, she giving him divers disdainfull lookes.

Within some few dayes after, taking one of his trusty brethren in his company, he went to the House of Madam *Lisetta*, where requiring to have some conference alone with her selfe; shee tooke him into a private Parlour, and being there, not to be seene by any body, he fell on his knees before her, speaking in this manner. Madam, for charities sake, and in regard of your own most gracious nature, I beseech you to pardon those harsh speeches, which I used to you the other day, when you were with me at confession: because, the very night ensuing thereon, I was chastised in such cruell manner, as I was never able to stirre forth of my bed, untill this very instant morning; whereto the weake witted Gentlewoman thus replyed. And who I pray you (quoth she) did chastise you so severely? I will tell you Madam, said Friar *Albert*, but it is a matter of admirable secrecie.

Being alone by my selfe the same night in my Dorter, and in very serious devotion, according to my usuall manner: suddenly I saw a bright splendour about me, and I could no sooner arise to discern what it might be, and whence it came, but I espied a very goodly young Lad standing by me, holding a golden Bow in his hand, and a rich Quiver of Arrowes hanging at his back. Catching fast hold on my Hood, against the ground he threw me rudely, trampling on me with his feete, and beating me with so many cruell blowes, that I thought my body to be broken in peeces. Then I desired to know, why he was so rigorous to me in his correction? Because (quoth he) thou didst so saucily presume this day, to reprove the celestiall beauty of Madam *Lisetta*, who (next to my Mother *Venus*) I love most dearely. Whereupon I perceived, he was the great commanding God *Cupid*, and therefore I craved most humbly pardon of him. I will pardon thee (quoth he) but upon this condition, that thou goe to her so soone as conveniently thou canst, and (by lowly humility) prevaile to obtaine her free pardon: which if she will not vouchsafe to grant thee, then shall I in stearne anger returne againe, and lay so many torturing afflictions on thee, that all thy whole life time shall be most hateful to thee. And what the displeas'd God saide else beside, I dare not disclose, except you please first to pardon me.

Mistresse shallow braine, being swolne big with this wind, like an empty bladder; conceived no small pride in hearing these words, constantly crediting them to be true, and therefore thus answered. Did I not tel you Father *Albert*, that my beauty was celestiall? But I sweare by my beauty, notwithstanding your idle passed arrogancy, I am heartily sorry for your so severe correction; which that it may no more be inflicted on you, I doe freely pardon you; yet with this *proviso*, that you tell me, what the God else saide unto you; whereto Fryar *Albert* thus replyed. Madam, seeing you have so graciously vouchsafed to pardon me, I will thankfully tell you all: but you must be very carefull and respective, that whatsoever I shall reveale unto you, must so closely be concealed, as no living creature in the World may know it; for you are the onely happy Lady now living, and that happinesse relieth on your silence and secrecie: with solemne vowes and protestations shee sealed up her many promises, and then the Fryar thus proceeded.

Madam, the further charge imposed on me by God *Cupid*, was to tell you, that himselfe is so extremely enamoured of your beauty, and you are become so gracious in his affection; as, many nights he hath come to see you in your Chamber, sitting on your pillow, while you slept sweetly, and desiring very often to awake you, but onely fearing to affright you. Wherefore, now he sends you word by me, that one night he intendeth to come visite you, and to spend some time in conversing with you. But in regard he is a God, and meerey a spirit in forme, whereby neither you or any else have capacity of beholding him, much lesse to touch or feele him: he saith, that (for your sake) he will come in the shape of a man, giving me charge also to know of you, when you shall please to have him come, and in whose similitude you would have him to come, whereof he will not faile; in which respect, you may justly thinke your selfe to be the onely happy woman living, and farre beyond all other in your good fortune.

Mistress want-wit presently answered, shee was well contented, that God *Cupid* should love her, and she would returne the like love againe to him; protesting withall, that wheresoever shee should see his majesticall picture, she would set a hallowed burning Taper before it. Moreover, at all times he should be most welcome to her, whensoever hee would vouchsafe to visite her; for, he should alwayes finde her alone in her private Chamber: on this condition, that his olde Love *Psyche*, and all other beauties else whatsoever, must be set aside, and none but her selfe only to be his best Mistresse, referring his personall forme of appearance, to what shape himselfe best pleased to assume, so that it might not be frightfull, or offensive to her.

Madam (quoth Friar *Albert*) most wisely have you answered, & leave the matter to me; for I will take order sufficiently, and to your contentment. But you may do me a great grace, and without any prejudice to your selfe, in granting me one poore request; namely, to vouchsafe the Gods appearance to you, in my bodily shape and person, and in the perfect forme of a man as now you behold me, so may you safely give him entertainment, without any taxation of the world, or ill apprehension of the most curious inquisition. Beside, a greater happinesse can never befall me: for, while he assumeth the soule out of my body, and walketh on the earth in my humane figure: I shall be wandering in the joyes of Lovers Paradise, feeling the fruition of their felicities; which are such, as no mortality can be capeable of, no, not so much as in imagination.

The wise Gentlewoman replied, that she was well contented, in regard of the severe punishment inflicted on him by God *Cupid*, for the reproachfull speeches he had given her; to allow him so poore a kinde of consolation, as he had requested her to grant him. Whereuppon Fryar *Albert* saide: Be ready then Madam to give him welcome to morrow in the evening, at the entering into your house, for comming in an humane body, he cannot but enter at your doore, whereas, if (in powerfull manner) he made use of his wings, he then would flye in at your window, and then you could not be able to see him.

Upon this conclusion, *Albert* departed, leaving *Lisetta* in no meane pride of imagination, that God *Cupid* should bee enamored of her beauty; and therefore she thought each houre a yeare, till she might see him in the mortall shape of Friar *Albert*. And now was his braine wonderfully busied, to visite her in more then common or humane manner; and therefore he made him a sute (close to his body) of white Taffata, all poudred over with Starres, and spangles of Gold, a Bow and Quiver of Arrowes, with wings also fastened to his backe behinde him, and all cunningly covered with his Friars habit, which must be the sole meanes for his safe passage.

Having obtained licence of his Superiour, and being accompanied with an holy Brother of the Convent, yet ignorant of the businesse by him intended; he went to the house of a friend of his, which was his usuall receptacle, whensoever he went about such deeds of darknes. There did he put on his dissembled habit of God *Cupid*, with his winges, Bowe, and Quiver, in formall fashion; and then (clouded over with his Monkes Cowle) leaves his companion to awaite his returning backe, while he visited foolish *Lisetta*, according to her expectation, readily attending for the Gods arrivall.

*Albert* being come to the house, knocked at the doore, and the Maid admitting him entrance, according as her Mistresse had appointed, shee conducted him to her Mistresses Chamber, where laying aside his Friars habite, and she seeing him shine with such glorious splendour, adding action also to his assumed dissimulation, with majesticke motion of his body, wings, and bow, as if he had bene God *Cupid*, indeede converted into a body much bigger of stature, then Painters commonly do describe him, her wisdom was so overcome with feare and admiration, that she fell on her knees before him, expressing all humble reverence unto him. And he spreading his wings over her, as with wiers and strings hee had made them pliant; shewed how graciously he accepted her humiliation; folding her in his armes, and sweetly kissing her many times together, with repetition of his entire love and affection towards her. So delicately was he perfumed with odoriferous favours, and so compleate of person in his spangled garments, that she could do nothing else, but wonder at his rare behaviour, reputed her felicity beyond all Womens in the world, and utterly impossible to bee equalled, such was the pride of her presuming. For he told her divers tales and fables, of his awefull power among the other Gods, and stolne pleasures of his upon the earth; yet gracing her praises above all his other Loves, and vowes made now, to affect none but her onely, as his often visitations should more constantly assure her, that shee verily credited all his protestations, and thought his kisses and embraces, farre to exceed any mortall comparison.

After they had spent so much time in amorous discoursing, as might best fit with this their first meeting, and stand cleare from suspition on either side: our *Albert-Cupid*, or *Cupid-Albert*, which of them you best please to terme him, closing his spangled winges together againe behinde his backe, fastening also on his Bow and Quiver of Arrowes, over-clouds all with his religious Monkes Cowle, and then with a parting kisse or two, returned to the place where he had left his fellow and companion, perhaps employed in as devout an exercise, as he had bin in his absence from him; whence both repaying home to the Monastery, all this nightes wandering was allowed as tollerable, by them who made no spare of doing the like.

On the morrow following, Madam *Lisetta* immediately after dinner, being attended by her Chamber-maid, went to see Friar *Albert*, finding him in his wonted forme and fashion, and telling him what had hapned betweene her and God *Cupid*, with all the other lies and tales which hee had told her. Truly Madam (answered *Albert*) what your successe with him hath beene, I am no way able to comprehend; but this I can assure you, that so soone as I had acquainted him with your answer, I felt a sodaine rapture made of my soule, and visibly (to my apprehension) saw it carried by Elves and Fairies, into the floury fields about *Elisium*, where Lovers departed out of this life, walk among the beds of Lillies and Roses, such as are not in this world to be seene,

neither to be imagined by any humane capacity. So super-abounding was the pleasure of this joy and solace, that, how long I continued there, or by what means I was transported hither againe this morning, it is beyond all ability in mee to expresse, or how I assumed my body againe after that great God hadde made use thereof to your service. Well Friar *Albert* (quoth shee) you may see what an happinesse hath befalne you, by so grosse an opinion of my perfections, and what a felicity you enjoy, and still are like to do, by my pardoning your error, and granting the Gods accesse to me in your shape: which as I envy not, so I wish you heereafter to be wiser, in taking upon you to judge of beautie. Much other idle folly proceeded from hir, which still he soothed to her contentment, and (as occasion served) many meetings they had in the former manner.

It fortun'd within a few dayes after, that Madam *Lisetta* being in company with one of her Gossips, and their conference (as commonly it falleth out to be) concerning other women of the City; their beautie, behaviour, amorous suters and servants, and generall opinion conceived of their worth and merit; wherein *Lisetta* was over-much conceyted of her selfe, not admitting any other to be her equall. Among other speeches, favouring of an unseasoned braine: Gossip (quoth she) if you knew what account is made of my beauty, and who holdes it in no meane estimation, you would then freely confesse, that I deserve to bee preferred before any other. As women are ambitious in their owne opinions, so commonly are they covetous of one anothers secrets, especially in matter of emulation, whereupon the Gossip thus replyed. Beleeve me Madam, I make no doubt but your speeches may bee true, in regard of your admired beauty, and many other perfections beside: yet let me tell you, priviledges, how great and singular soever they be, without they are known to others, beside such as do particularly enjoy them; they carrie no more account, then things of ordinary estimation. Whereas on the contrary, when any Lady or Gentlewoman hath some eminent and peculiar favour, which few or none other can reach unto, and it is made famous by generall notion: then do all women else admire and honour her, as the glory of their kinde, and a miracle of Nature.

I perceive Gossip said *Lisetta* whereat you ayme, & such is my love to you, as you should not lose your longing in this case, were I but constantly secured of your secrecy, which as hitherto I have bene no way able to tax, so would I be loth now to be more suspitious of then needs. But yet this matter is of such maine moment, that if you will protest as you are truely vertuous, never to reveale it to any living body, I will disclose to you almost a miracle. The vertuous oath being past, with many other solemne protestations beside, *Lisetta* then proceeded in this manner.

I know Gossip, that it is a matter of common & ordinary custome, for Ladies and Gentlewomen to be graced with favourites, men of fraile & mortall conditions, whose natures are as subject to inconstancy, as their very best endeavours dedicated to folly, as I could name no mean number of our Ladies heere in *Venice*. But when Sovereigne deities shal feele the impression of our humane desires, and behold subjects of such prevailing efficacy, as to subdue their greatest power, yea, and make them enamored of mortall creatures: you may well imagine Gossip, such a beauty is superiour to any other. And such is the happy fortune of your friend *Lisetta*, of whose perfections, great *Cupid* the awefull commanding God of Love himselfe, conceived such an extraordinary liking: as he hath abandoned his seate of supreme Majesty, and appeared to me in the shape of a mortall man, with lively expression of his amorous passions, and what extremities of anguish he hath endured, onely for my love. May this be possible? replyed the Gossip. Can the Gods be toucht with the apprehension of our fraile passions? True it is Gossip, answered *Lisetta*, and so certainly true, that his sacred kisses, sweet embraces, and most pleasing speeches, with proffer of his continuall devotion towards me, hath given me good cause to confirme what I say, and to thinke my felicity farre beyond all other womens, being honoured with his often nightly visitations.

The Gossip inwardly smiling at her idle speeches, which (nevertheles) she avouched with very vehement asseverations; fell instantly sicke of womens naturall disease, thinking every minute a tedious month, till she were in company with some other Gossips, to breake the obligation of her vertuous promise, and that others (as well as her selfe) might laugh at the folly of this shallow-witted woman. The next day following, it was her hap to be at a wedding, among a great number of other women, whom quickly she acquainted with this so strange a wonder; as they did the like to their husbands: and passing so from hand to hand, in lesse space then two daies, all *Venice* was fully possessed with it.

Among the rest, the brethren to this foolish woman, heard this admirable newes concerning their Sister; and they discreetly concealing it to themselves, closely concluded to watch the walks of this pretended god: and if he soared not too lofty a flight, they would clip his wings, to come the better acquainted with him. It fortun'd, that the Friar hearing his Cupidicall visitations over-publicly discovered, purpos'd to check and reprove *Lisetta* for her indiscretion. And being habited according to his former manner, his Friarly Cowle covering al his former bravery, he left his companion where he used to stay, and closely walked along unto the house. No sooner was he entred, but the Brethren being ambushed neer to the doore, went in after him, and ascending the staires, by such time as he had uncased himselfe, and appeared like God *Cupid*, with his spangled wings displayed: they rushed into the Chamber, and he having no other refuge, opened a large Casement, standing directly over the great gulfe or River, and presently leapt into the water; which being deepe, and hee skilfull in swimming, he had no other harme by his fall, albeit the sodain affright did much perplex him.

Recovering the further side of the River, he espied a light, & the doore of an house open, wherein dwelt a poore man, whom he earnestly intreated, to save both his life and reputation, telling him many lies and tales by what means he was thus disguised, and throwne by night-walking Villaines into the water. The poore man, being moved to compassionate his distressed estate, laid

him in his owne bed, ministring such other comforts to him, as the time and his poverty did permit; and day drawing on, he went about his businesse, advising him to take his rest, and it should not be long till he returned. So, locking the doore, and leaving the counterfet God in bed, away goes the poore man to his daily labour. The Brethren to *Lisetta*, perceiving God *Cupid* to bee fled and gone, and shee in melancholly sadnesse sitting by them: they tooke up the Reliques he had left behind him, I meane the Friars hood and Cowle, which shewing to their sister, and sharply reprovng her unwomanly behaviour: they lefte her in no meane discomfort, returning home to their owne houses, with their conquered spoiles of the forlorne Friar.

During the time of these occurrences, broad day speeding on, & the poore man returning homeward by the *Rialto*, to visit his guest so lefte in bed: he beheld divers crouds of people, and a generall rumor noysed among them, that God *Cupid* had beene that night with Madame *Lisetta*, where being over-closely pursued by her Brethren, for fear of being surprized, he leapt out of her window into the gulfe, and no one could tell what was become of him. Heereupon, the poore man beganne to imagine, that the guest entertained by him in the night time, must needs bee the same supposed God *Cupid*, as by his wings and other embellishments appeared: wherefore being come home, and sitting downe on the beds side by him, after some few speeches passing between them, he knew him to be Friar *Albert*, who promised to give him fifty ducates, if hee would not betray him to *Lisettaes* brethren.

Upon the acceptation of this offer, the money being sent for, and paied downe; there wanted nothing now, but some apt and convenient meanes, whereby *Albert* might safely be conveyed into the Monasterie, which being wholly referred to the poore mans care and trust, thus hee spake. Sir, I see no likely-hoode of your cleare escaping home, except in this manner as I advise you. We observe this day as a merry Festivall, & it is lawfull for any one, to disguise a man in the skin of a Beare, or in the shape of a savage man, or any other forme of better device. Which being so done, he is brought upon S. *Marks* market place, where being hunted a while with dogs, upon the huntings conclusion, the Feast is ended; and then each man leades his monster whether him pleaseth. If you can accept any of these shapes, before you bee seene heere in my poore abiding, then can I safely (afterward) bring you where you would bee. Otherwise, I see no possible meanes, how you may escape hence unknown; for it is without all question to the contrary, that the Gentlewomans brethren, knowing your concealment in some one place or other, will set such spies and watches for you throughout the City, as you must needs be taken by them.

Now, although it seemed a most severe imposition, for *Albert* to passe in any of these disguises: yet his exceeding feare of *Lisettaes* brethren and friends, made him gladly yeelde, and to undergo what shape the poore man pleased, which thus he ordered. Anointing his naked body with Hony, he then covered it over with downy small Feathers, and fastning a chaine about his necke, and a strange ugly vizard on his face; hee gave him a great staffe in the one hand, and two huge Mastive dogs chained together in the other, which he had borrowed in the Butchery. Afterward, he sent a man to the *Rialto*, who there proclaimed by the sound of Trumpet: That all such as desired to see God *Cupid*, which the last night had descended downe from the skies, and fell (by ill hap) into the *Venetian* gulfe, let them repaire to the publike Market place of S. *Marke*, and there he would appeare in his owne likenesse.

This being done, soone after he left his house, and leading him thus disguised along by his chaine, hee was followed by great crowds of people, every one questioning of whence, and what he was. In which manner, he brought him to the Market place, where an infinite number of people were gathered together, as well of the followers, as of them that before heard the proclamation. There he made choise of a pillar, which stood in a place somewhat highly exalted, whereto he chained his savage man, making shew, as if he meant to awaite there, till the hunting should begin: in which time, the Flies, Wasps, and Hornets, did so terribly sting his naked body, being annointed with Hony, that he endured thereby unspeakable anguish. When the poore man saw, that there needed no more concourse of people; pretending, as if he purposed to let loose his Salvage man; he tooke the maske or vizard from *Alberts* face, and then he spake aloud in this manner.

Gentlemen and others, seeing the wilde Boare commeth not to our hunting, because I imagine that he cannot easily be found: I meane (to the end you may not lose your labour in comming hither) to shew you the great God of Love called *Cupid*, whom Poets feigned long since to be a little boy, but now growne to manly stature. You see in what manner he hath left his high dwelling, onely for the comfort of our *Venetian* beauties: but belike, the night-fogs over-flagging his wings, he fell into our gulfe, and comes now to present his service to you. No sooner had he taken off his vizard, but every one knew him to be Friar *Albert*; and sodainly arose such shoutes and out-cries, with most bitter words breathed forth against him, hurling also stones, durt and filth in his face, that his best acquaintance then could take no knowledge of him, and not any one pittying his abusing.

So long continued the offended people in their fury, that newes thereof was carried to the Convent, and six of his Religious brethren came, who casting an habite about him, and releasing him from his chain, they led him to the Monastery, not without much molestation and trouble of the people; where imprisoning him in their house, severitie of some inflicted punishment, or rather conceite for his open shame, shortned his dayes, and so he dyed. Thus you see faire Ladies, when licentious life must be clouded with a cloake of sanctity, and evill actions dayly committed, yet escaping uncredited: there will come a time at length, for just discovering of all, that the good may shine in their true luster of glory, and the bad sinke in their owne deserved shame.

***Three yong Gentlemen affecting three Sisters, fledde with them into Candie. The eldest of them (through jealousie) becommeth the death of her Lover: The second, by consenting to the Duke of Candies request, is the meanes of saving her life. Afterward, her owne Friend killeth her, and thence flyeth away with the elder Sister. The third couple, both man & woman, are charged with her death, and being committed prisoners, they confesse the facte: And fearing death, by corruption of money they prevaile with their keepers, escaping from thence to Rhodes, where they died in great poverty.***

## **The third Novell.**

***Heerein is declared, how dangerous the occasion is, ensuing by anger and despight, in such as entirely love, especially, being injured and offended by them that they love.***

When the King perceived, that Madame *Pampinea* had ended her discourse; he sat sadly a prety while, without uttering one word, but afterward spake thus. Little goodnesse appeared in the beginning of this Novell, because it ministred occasion of mirth; yet the ending proved better, and I could wish, that worse inflictions had falne on the venerious Friar. Then turning towards Madam *Lauretta*, he said; Lady, do you tell us a better tale, if possible it may be. She smiling, thus answered the King: Sir, you are over-cruelly bent against poore Lovers, in desiring, that their amorous processions should have harsh and sinister concludings. Neverthesse, in obedience to your severe command, among three persons amourosly perplexed, I will relate an unhappy ending; whereas all may be saide to speede as unfortunately, being equally alike, in enjoying the issue of their desires, and thus I purpose for to proceede.

Every vice (choise Ladies) as very well you know, redoundeth to the great disgrace and prejudice, of him or her by whom it is practised, and oftentimes to others. Now, among those common hurtfull enemies, the sinne or vice which most carrieth us with full carrere, and draweth us into unavoidable perils and dangers; in mine opinion, seemeth to be that of choller or anger, which is nothing else, but a sudden and inconsiderate moving, provoked by some received injury, which having excluded all respect of reason, and dimde (with darke vapours) the bright discerning sight of the understanding, enflameth the minde with most violent furie. And albeit this inconvenience happeneth most to men, and more to some few, then others; yet notwithstanding, it hath been noted, that women have felt the selfe same infirmity, and in more extreme manner, because it much sooner is kindled in them, and burneth with the brighter flame, in regard they have the lesser consideration, and therefore not to be wondred at. For if we will advisedly observe, we shall plainly perceive, that fire (even of his owne nature) taketh hold on such things as are light and tender, much sooner then it can on hard and weighty substances; and some of us women (let men take no offence at my words) are farre more soft and delicate then they be, and therefore more fraile. In which regard, seeing we are naturally enclined hereto, and considering also, how much our affability and gentlenesse, doe shew themselves pleasing and full of content, to those men with whom we are to live; and likewise, how anger and fury are compacted of extraordinary perils; I purpose (because we may be the more valiant in our courage, to outstand the fierce assaults of wrath and rage) to shew you by mine ensuing Novel, how the loves of three young Gentlemen, and of as many Gentlewomen, came to fatall and unfortunate successe, by the tempestuous anger of one among them, according as I have formerly related unto you.

*Marseilles* (as you are not now to learne) is in *Provence*, seated on the Sea, and is also a very ancient and most noble City, which hath beene (heretofore) inhabited with farre richer and more wealthy Merchants, then at this instant time it is. Among whom there was one, named *Narnaldo Civada*, a man but of meane condition, yet cleare in faith and reputation, and in lands, goods, and ready monies, immeasurably rich. Many children he had by his Wife, among whom were three Daughters, which exceeded his Sonnes in yeeres. Two of them being twinnes, and borne of one body, were counted to be fifteene yeares old; the third was foureteene, and nothing hindered marriage in their Parents owne expectation, but the returne home of *Narnaldo*, who was then abroade in *Spaine* with his Merchandises. The eldest of these Sisters was named *Ninetta*, the second *Magdalena*, and the third *Bertella*. A Gentleman (albeit but poore in fortunes) and called *Restagnone*, was so extraordinarily enamoured of *Ninetta*, as no man possibly could be more, and shee likewise as earnest in affection towards him; yet both carrying their loves proceeding with such secrecie, as long time they enjoyed their hearts sweete contentment, yet undiscovered by any eye.

It came to passe, that two other young Gallants, the one named *Folco*, and the other *Hugnetto*, (who had attained to incredible wealth, by the decease of their Father) were also as farre in love, the one with *Magdalena*, and the other with *Bertella*. When *Restagnone* had intelligence thereof, by the meanes of his faire friend *Ninetta*; he purposed to releve his poverty, by friendly furthering both their love, and his owne; and growing into familiarity with them, one while he would walke abroade with *Folco*, and then againe with *Hugnetto*, but oftner with them both together, to visite their Mistresses, and continue worthy friendship. On a day, when hee saw the time sutable to his intent, and that hee had invited the two Gentlemen home to his House, hee fell into this like conference with them.

Kind friends (quoth he) the honest familiarity which hath past betweene us, may render you some certaine assurance, of the constant love I beare to you both, being as willing to worke any meanes that may tend to your good, as I desire to compasse mine owne. And because the truth of

mine affection cannot conceale it selfe to you, I meane to acquaint you with an intention, wherewith my braine hath a long while travelled, and now may soone be delivered of, if it may passe with your liking and approbation. Let me then tell you, that except your speeches savour of untruth, and your actions carry a double understanding, in common behaviour both by night and day, you appeare to pine and consume away, in the cordiall love you beare to two of the Sisters, as I suffer the same afflictions for the third, with reciprocall requitall of their dearest affection to us. Now, to qualifie the heate of our tormenting flames, if you will condescend to such a course as I shall advise you, the remedy will yeeld them equall ease to ours, and we may safely enjoy the benefit of contentment. As wealth aboundeth with you both, so doth want most extremely tyrannize over me: but if one banke might be made of both your rich substances, I embraced therein as a third partaker, and some quarter of the World dissigined out by us, where to live at hearts ease upon your possessions; I durst engage my credite, that all the Sisters, (not meanly stored with their Fathers treasure) shall beare us company to what place soever we please. There each man freely enjoying his owne dearest love, we may live like three brethren, without any hinderance to our mutuall contentment; it remaineth now in you Gentlemen, to accept this comfortable offer, or to refuse it.

The two Brothers, whose passions exceeded their best meanes for support, perceiving some hope how to enjoy their loves; desired no long time of deliberation, or greatly disputed with their thoughts what was best to be done: but readily replyed, that let happen any danger whatsoever, they would joyne with him in this determination, and he should partake with them in their wealthiest fortunes. After *Restagnone* had heard their answer, within some few dayes following, he went to conferre with *Ninetta*, which was no easie matter for him to compasse. Neverthelessse, opportunity proved so favourable to him, that meeting with her at a private place appointed, he discoursed at large, what had passed betweene him and the other two young Gentlemen, maintaining the same with many good reasons, to have her like and allow of the enterprize. Which although (for a while) he could very hardly doe; yet, in regard shee had more desire then power, without suspition to be daily in his company, she franckly thus answered. My hearts chosen friend, I cannot any way mislike your advise, and will take such order with my Sisters, that they shall agree to our resolution: let it therefore be your charge, that you and the rest make every thing ready, to depart from hence so soone, as with best convenient meanes we may be enabled.

*Restagnone* being returned to *Folco* and *Hugnetto*, who thought every houre a yeere, to heare what would succeed upon the promise past betweene them; he told them in plaine termes, that their Ladies were as free in consent as they, and nothing wanted now, but furnishment for their sudden departing. Having concluded, that *Candy* should be their harbour for entertainment, they made sale of some few inheritances, which lay the readiest for their purpose, as also the goods in their Houses, and then, under colour of venting Merchandises abroad; they bought a nimble Pinnace, fortified with good strength and preparation, and waited but for a convenient wind. On the other side, *Ninetta*, who was sufficiently acquainted with the forwardnesse of her Sisters desires and her owne; had so substantially prevailed with them, that a good voyage now was the sole expectation. Whereupon, the same night when they should set away, they opened a strong barred Chest of their Fathers, whence they tooke great store of gold and costly Jewels, wherewith escaping secretly out of the House; they came to the place where their Lovers attended for them, and going all aboard the Pinnace, the windes were so furtherous to them; that without touching any where, the night following they arrived at *Geneway*.

There being out of peril or pursuite, they all knit the knot of holy wedlocke, and then freely enjoyed their long wished desires, from whence setting sayle againe, and being well furnished with all things wanting; passing on from Port to Port, at the end of eight dayes they landed in *Candie*, not meeting with any impeachment by the way. Determining there to spend their dayes, first they provided themselves of faire and goodly Lands in the Countrey, and then of beautifull dwelling Houses in the City, with all due furnishments belonging to them, and Families well beseeming such worthy Gentlemen, and all delights else for their daily recreations, inviting their Neighbours, and they them againe in loving manner; so that no Lovers could wish to live in more ample contentment.

Passing on their time in this height of felicity, and not crossed by any sinister accidents, it came to passe (as often wee may observe in the like occasions, that although delights doe most especially please us, yet they breed surfet, when they swell too over-great in abundance) that *Restagnone*, who most deerey affected his faire *Ninetta*, and had her now in his free possession, without any perill of loosing her: grew now also to bee wearie of her, and consequently, to faile in those familiar performances, which formerly had passed betweene them. For, being one day invited to a Banket, hee saw there a beautifull Gentle-woman of that Countrey, whose perfections pleasing him beyond all comparison: hee laboured (by painfull pursuite) to win his purpose; and meeting with her in divers private places, grew prodigall in his expences upon her. This could not be so closely carried, but beeing seene and observed by *Ninetta*, she became possessed with such extreame jelousie, that hee could not doe any thing whatsoever, but immediately he had knowledge of it: which fire, growing to a flame in her, her patience became extreamey provoked, urging rough and rude speeches from her to him, and daily tormenting him beyond power of sufferance.

As the enjoying of anything in too much plenty, makes it appeare irkesome and loathing to us, and the deniall of our desires, do more and more whet on the appetite: even so did the angry spleene of *Ninetta* proceede on in violence, against this newe commenced love of *Restagnone*. For in succession of time, whether hee enjoyed the embracements of his new Mistresse, or no:



yet *Ninetta* (by sinister reports, but much more through her owne jealous imaginations) held it for infallible, and to be most certaine. Heereupon, she fell into an extreame melancholly, which melancholly begat implacable fury, and (consequently) such contemptible disdain: as converted her former kindly love to *Restagnone*, into most cruell and bloudie hatred; yea, and so strangely was reason or respect confounded in her, as no revenge else but speedy death, might satisfie the wrongs shee imagined to receive by *Restagnone* and his Minion.

Upon enquiry, by what meanes shee might best compasse her bloody intention, she grew acquainted with a *Græcian* woman, and wonderfully expert in the compounding of poysons, whom shee so perswaded, by gifts and bounteous promises, that at the length shee prevailed with her. A deadly water was distilled by her, which (without any other counsell to the contrary) on a day when *Restagnone* had his blood some-what over-heated, and little dreamed on any such Treason conspired against him by his Wife, she caused him to drinke a great draught thereof, under pretence, that it was a most soveraigne and cordiall water: but such was the powerfull operation thereof, that the very next morning, *Restagnone* was found to be dead in his bed. When his death was understood by *Folco*, *Hugnetto* and their Wives, and not knowing how hee came to bee thus empoysoned (because their sister seemed to bemoane his sodaine death, with as apparant shewes of mourning as they could possibly expresse) they buried him very honourably, and so all suspicion ceased.

But as Fortune is infinite in her fagaries, never acting disaster so closely, but as cunningly discovereth it againe: so it came to passe, that within a few dayes following, the *Græcian* woman, that had delivered the poyson to *Ninetta*, for such another deede of damnation, was apprehended even in the action. And being put upon the tortures, among many other horrid villanies by her committed, she confessed the empoysoning of *Restagnone*, and every particle thereto appertaining. Whereupon, the Duke of *Candie*, without any noyse or publication, setting a strong guard (in the night time) about the house of *Folco*, where *Ninetta* then was lodged; there sodainly they seized on her, & upon examination, in maintainance of her desperate revenge; voluntarily confessed the fact, and what else concerned the occasion of his death, by the wrongs which hee had offered her.

*Folco* and *Hugnetto* understanding secretly, both from the Duke, & other intimate friends, what was the reason of *Ninettaes* apprehension, which was not a little displeasing to them, laboured by all their best pains and endeavour, to worke such meanes with the Duke, that her life might not perish by fire, although she had most justly deserved it; but all their attempts proved to no effect, because the Duke had concluded to execute justice.

Heere you are to observe, that *Magdalena* (beeing a very beautifull Woman, yong, and in the choisest flower of her time:) had often before bin solicited by the Duke, to entertaine his love and kindnesse, whereto by no meanes she would listen or give consent. And being now most earnestly importuned by her, for the safety of her Sisters life, shee tooke hold on this her daily suite to him, and in private told her, that if she was so desirous of *Ninettaes* life: it lay in her power to obtaine it, by granting him the fruition of her love. She apparantly perceiving, that *Ninetta* was not likely to live, but by the prostitution of her chaste honour, which she preferred before the losse of her owne life, or her Sisters; concluded, to let her dye, rather then run into any such disgrace. But having an excellent ingenious wit, quicke, and apprehensive in perillous occasions, shee intended now to make a trial of over-reaching the lascivious Duke in his wanton purpose, and yet to be assured of her Sisters life, without any blemish to her reputation.

Soliciting him still as she was wont to doe, this promise passed from her to him, that when *Ninetta* was delivered out of prison, and in safety at home in her house: hee should resort thither in some queint disguise, and enjoy his long expected desire; but untill then she would yeeld. So violent was the Duke in the prosecution of his purpose, that under colour of altering the manner of *Ninettaes* death, not suffering her to bee consumed by fire, but to be drowned, according to a custome observed there long time, and at the importunity of her Sister *Magdalena*, in the still silence of the night, *Ninetta* was conveyed into a sacke, and sent in that manner to the House of *Folco*, the Duke following soone after, to challenge her promise.

*Magdalena*, having acquainted her Husband with her vertuous intention, for preserving her Sisters life, and disappointing the Duke in his wicked desire; was as contrary to her true meaning in this case, as *Ninetta* had formerly beene adverse to *Restagnone*, onely being over-ruled likewise by jealousie, and perswaded in his rash opinion, that the Duke had already dishonoured *Magdalena*, otherwise, he would not have delivered *Ninetta* out of prison. Mad fury gave further fire to this unmanly perswasion, and nothing will now quench this violent flame, but the life of poore *Magdalena*, suddenly sacrificed in the rescue of her Sisters, such a divell is anger, when the understandings bright eye is thereby abused. No credit might be given to her womanly protestations, nor any thing seeme to alter his bloody purpose; but, having slaine *Magdalena* with his Poniard, (notwithstanding her teares and humble entreaties) hee ran in haste to *Ninettaes* Chamber, shee not dreaming on any such desperate accident, and to her he used these dissembling speeches.

Sister (quoth he) my wife hath advised, that I should speedily convey you hence, as fearing the renewing of the Dukes fury, and your falling againe into the hands of Justice: I have a Barke readily prepared for you, and your life being secured, it is all that she and I doe most desire. *Ninetta* being fearefull, and no way distrusting what he had saide; in thankfull allowance of her Sisters care, and courteous tender of his so ready service; departed thence presently with him, not taking any farewell of her other Sister and her Husband. To the Sea-shore they came, very weakely provided of monies to defray their charges, and getting aboard the Barke, directed their course themselves knew not whether.

The amorous Duke in his disguise, having long daunced attendance at *Folcoes* doore, and no admittance of his entrance; angerly returned backe to his Court, protesting severe revenge on *Magdalena*, if she gave him not the better satisfaction, to cleare her from thus basely abusing him. On the morrow morning, when *Magdalena* was found murdered in her Chamber, and tidings thereof carried to the Duke; present search was made for the bloody offendor, but *Folco* being fled and gone with *Ninetta*; some there were, who bearing deadly hatred to *Hugnetto*, incensed the Duke against him and his wife, as supposing them to be guilty of *Magdalenaes* death. He being thereto very easily perswaded, in regard of his immoderate love to the slaine Gentlewoman; went himselfe in person (attended on by his Guard) to *Hugnettoes* House, where both he and his wife were seized as prisoners.

These newes were very strange to them, and their imprisonment as unwelcome; and although they were truly innocent, either in knowledge of the horrid fact, or the departure of *Folco* with *Ninetta*: yet being unable to endure the tortures extremity, they made themselves culpable by confession, and that they had hand with *Folco* in the murder of *Magdalena*. Upon this their forced confession, and sentence of death pronounced on them by the Duke himselfe; before the day appointed for their publike execution, by great summes of money, which they had closely hid in their House, to serve when any urgent extremitie should happen to them; they corrupted their keepers, and before any intelligence could be had of their flight, they escaped by Sea to *Rhodes*, where they lived afterward in great distresse and misery. The just vengeance of Heaven followed after *Folco* and *Ninetta*, he for murdering his honest wife, and she for poysoning her offending Husband: for being beaten a long while on the Seas, by tempestuous stormes and weather, and not admitted landing in any Port or creeke; they were driven backe on the Coast of *Candie* againe, where being apprehended, and brought to the City before the Duke, they confessed their severall notorious offences, and ended their loathed lives in one fire together.

Thus the idle and loose love of *Restagnone*, with the franticke rage and jealousie of *Ninetta* and *Folco*, overturned all their long continued happinesse, and threw a disastrous ending on them all.

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***Gerbino, contrary to the former plighted faith of his Grand-father, King Gulielmo, fought with a Ship at Sea, belonging to the King of Thunis, to take away his Daughter, who was then in the same Ship. Shee being slaine by them that had the possession of her, he likewise slew them; and afterward had his owne head smitten off.***

## The fourth Novell.

***In commendation of Justice betweene Princes; and declaring withal, that neither feare, dangers, nor death it selfe; can any way daunt a true and loyall Lover.***

Madam *Lauretta* having concluded her Novel, and the company complaining on Lovers misfortunes, some blaming the angry and jealous fury of *Ninetta*, and every one delivering their severall opinions; the King, as awaking out of a passionate perplexity, exalted his lookes, giving a signe to Madam *Elisa*, that shee should follow next in order, whereto she obeying, began in this manner. I have heard (Gracious Ladies, quoth she) of many people, who are verily perswaded, that Loves arrowes, never wound any body, but onely by the eyes lookes and gazes, mocking and scorning such as maintaine that men may fall in love by hearing onely. Wherein (beleeeve me) they are greatly deceived, as will appeare by a Novell which I must now relate unto you, and wherein you shall plainly perceive, that not onely fame or report is as prevailing as sight; but also hath conducted divers, to a wretched and miserable ending of their lives.

*Gulielmo* the second, King of *Sicilie*, according as the *Sicilian* Chronicles record, had two children, the one a sonne, named *Don Rogero*, and the other a daughter, called Madam *Constance*. The saide *Rogero* died before his Father, leaving a sonne behind him, named *Gerbino*, who, with much care and cost, was brought up by his Grand-father, proving to be a very goodly Prince, and wondrously esteemed for his great valour and humanity. His fame could not containe it selfe, within the bounds or limits of *Sicilie* onely, but being published very prodigally, in many parts of the world beside, flourished with no meane commendations throughout all *Barbarie*, which in those dayes was tributary to the King of *Sicilie*. Among other persons, deserving most to be respected, the renowned vertues, and affability of this gallant Prince *Gerbino*, was understood by the beautiful Daughter to the King of *Thunis*, who by such as had seene her, was reputed to be one of the rarest creatures, the best conditioned, and of the truest noble spirit, that ever Nature framed in her very choycest pride of art.

Of famous, vertuous, and worthy men, it was continually her cheefest delight to heare, and the admired actions of valiant *Gerbino*, reported to her by many singular discoursers, such as could best describe him, with language answerable to his due deservings, won such honourable entertainment in her understanding soule, that they were most affectionately pleasing to her, and in capitulating (over and over againe) his manifold and heroycall perfections; meere speech made her extremely amorous of him, nor willingly would she lend an eare to any other discourse, but that which tended to his honour and advancement.

On the other side, the fame of her incomparable beauty, with addition of her other infinite singularities beside; as the World had given eare to in numberlesse places, so *Sicilie* came at length acquainted therewith, in such flowing manner, as was truly answerable to her merit. Nor

seemed this as a bare babbling rumour, in the Princely hearing of royall *Gerbino*; but was embraced with such a reall apprehension, and the entire probation of a true understanding: that he was no lesse enflamed with noble affection towards her, then she expressed the like in vertuous opinion of him. Wherefore, awaiting such convenient opportunity, when he might entreate license of his Grandfather, for his owne going to *Thunis*, under colour of some honourable occasion, for the earnest desire hee had to see her: he gave charge to some of his especiall friends (whose affaires required their presence in those parts) to let the Princesse understand, in such secret manner as best they could devise, what noble affection he bare unto her, devoting himselfe onely to her service.

One of his chosen friends thus put in trust, being a Jeweller, a man of singular discretion, and often resorting to Ladies for sight of his Jewelles, winning like admittance to the Princesse: related at large unto her, the honourable affection of *Gerbino*, with full tender of his person to her service, and that she onely was to dispose of him. Both the message and the messenger, were most graciously welcome to her, and flaming in the selfsame affection towards him; as a testimony thereof, one of the very choisest Jewels which she bought of him, shee sent by him to the Prince *Gerbino*, it being received by him with such joy and contentment, as nothing in the world could be more pleasing to him. So that afterward, by the trusty carriage of this Jeweller, many Letters and Love-tokens passed betweene them, each being as highly pleased with this poore, yet happy kinde of entercourse, as if they had seene & conversed with one another.

Matters proceeding on in this manner, and continuing longer then their love-sicke passions easily could permit, yet neither being able to find out any other meanes of helpe; it fortun'd, that the King of *Thunis* promised his daughter in marriage to the King of *Granada*, whereat she grew exceeding sorrowfull, perceyving, that not onely she should be sent further off, by a large distance of way from her friend, but also bee deprived utterly, of all hope ever to enjoy him. And if she could have devised any meanes, either by secret flight from her Father, or any way els to further her intention, she would have adventured it for the Princes sake. *Gerbino* in like manner hearing of this purposed mariage, lived in a hell of torments, consulting oftentimes with his soule, how he might bee possessed of her by power, when she should be sent by Sea to her husband, or private stealing her away from her Fathers Court before: with these and infinite other thoughts, was he incessantly afflicted, both day and night.

By some unhappy accident or other, the King of *Thunis* heard of this their secret love, as also of *Gerbinoes* purposed policy to surprize her, and how likely he was to effect it, in regard of his manly valour, and store of stout friends to assist him. Hereupon, when the time was come, that hee would convey his daughter thence to her marriage, and fearing to be prevented by *Gerbino*: he sent to the King of *Sicily*, to let him understand his determination, craving safe conduct from him, without impeachment of *Gerbino*, or any one else, untill such time as his intent was accomplished. King *Gulielmo* being aged, and never acquainted with the affectionat proceedings of *Gerbino*, nor any doubtfull reason to urge this securitie from him, in a case convenient to be granted: yeelded the sooner thereto right willingly, and as a signale of his honourable meaning, he sent him his royall Glove, with a full confirmation for his safe conduct.

No sooner were these Princely assurances received, but a goodly ship was prepared in the Port of *Carthagena*, well furnished with all thinges thereto belonging, for the sending his daughter to the King of *Granada*, waiting for nothing else but best favouring windes. The yong Princesse, who understood and saw all this great preparation; secretly sent a servant of hers to *Palermo*, giving him especial charge, on her behalfe, to salute the Prince *Gerbino*, and to tell him withall, that (within few dayes) shee must be transported to *Granada*. And now opportunity gave fayre and free meane, to let the world know, whether hee were a man of that magnanimous spirit, or no, as generall opinion had formerly conceyved of him, and whether he affected her so firmly, as by many close messages he had assured her. He who had the charge of this embassie, effectually performed it, and then returned backe to *Thunis*.

The Prince *Gerbino*, having heard this message from his divine Mistresse, and knowing also, that the King his Grandfather, had past his safe conduct to the King of *Thunis*, for peaceable passage thorough his Seas: was at his wits end, in this urgent necessitie, what might best bee done. Notwithstanding, moved by the settled constancie of his plighted Love, and the speeches delivered to him by the messenger from the Princesse: to shew himselfe a man endued with courage, he departed thence unto *Messina*, where he made readie two speedie gallies, and fitting them with men of valiant disposition, set away to *Sardignia*, as making full account, that the Ship which carried the Princesse, must come along that Coast. Nor was his expectation therein deceived: for, within few dayes after, the Ship (not over-swiftly winded) came sailing neere to the place where they attended for her arrivall; whereof *Gerbino* had no sooner gotten a sight, but to animate the resolute which were in his company, thus he spake.

Gentlemen, if you be those men of valour, as heeretofore you have beene reputed, I am perswaded, that there are some among you, who either formerly have, or now instantly do feele, the all-commanding power of Love, without which (as I thinke) there is not any mortall man, that can have any goodnesse or vertue dwelling in him. Wherefore, if ever you have bene amorously affected, or presently have any apprehension thereof, you shall the more easily judge of what I now aime at. True it is, that I do love, and love hath guided me to be comforted, and manfully assisted by you, because in yonder Ship, which you see commeth on so gently under saile (even as if she offered her selfe to be our prize) not onely is the Jewell which I most esteeme, but also mighty and unvaluable treasure, to be wonne without any difficult labour, or hazard of a dangerous fight, you being men of such undauntable courage. In the honour of which victory, I covet not any part or parcell, but onely a Ladie, for whose sake I have undertaken these Armes,

and freely give you all the rest contained in the shippe. Let us set on them, Gentlemen, and my dearest friends; courageously let us assaile the ship, you see how the wind favours us, and (questionlesse) in so good an action, Fortune will not faile us.

*Gerbino* needed not to have spoken so much, in perswading them to seize so rich a booty; because the men of *Messina* were naturally addicted to spoile and rapine: and before the Prince began his Oration, they had concluded to make the ship their purchase. Wherefore, giving a lowde shout, according to their Countrey manner, and commaunding their Trumpets to sound chearefully, they rowed on amain with their Oares, and (in meere despight) set upon the ship. But before the Gallies could come neere her, they that had the charge and managing of her, perceyving with what speede they made towards them, and no likely meanes of escaping from them, resolvedly they stood upon their best defence, for now it was no time to be slothfull.

The Prince being come neere to the Ship, commanded that the Patrones should come to him, except they would adventure the fight. When the Sarazines were thereof advertised, and understood also what he demanded, they returned answer: That their motion and proceeding in this manner, was both against Law and plighted faith, which was promised by the King of *Sicily*, for their safe passage thorow his Sea, by no meanes to be molested or assailed. In testimony whereof, they shewed his Glove, avouching moreover, that neyther by force (or otherwise) they would yeelde, or deliver him any thing which they had aboorde their Ship.

*Gerbino* espying his gracious Mistresse on the Ships decke, and she appearing to be farre more beautifull, then Fame had made relation of her: being much more enflamed now, then formerly he had bin, replied thus when they shewed the Glove. Wee have (quoth he) no Faulcon heere now, to be humbled at the sight of your Glove: and therefore, if you will not deliver the Lady, prepare your selves for fight, for we must have her whether you will or no. Hereupon, they began to let flie (on both sides) their Darts and arrowes, with stones sent in violent sort from their slings, thus continuing the fight a long while, to very great harme on either side. At the length, *Gerbino* perceyving, that small benefite would redound to him, if he did not undertake some other kinde of course: he tooke a small Pinnace, which purposely he brought with him from *Sardignia*, and setting it on a flaming fire, conveyd it (by the Gallies help) close to the ship. The Sarazines much amazed thereat, and evidently perceyving, that eyther they must yeeld or dy; brought their Kings daughter upon the prow of the ship, most greevously weeping and wringing her hands. Then calling *Gerbino*, to let him behold their resolution, there they slew hir before his face; and afterward, throwing her body into the Sea, said: Take her, there we give her to thee, according to our bounden duty, and as thy perjury hath justly deserved.

This sight was not a little greevous to the Prince *Gerbino*, who madded now with this their monstrous cruelty, and not caring what became of his owne life, having lost her for whom hee onely desired to live: not dreading their Darts, Arrowes, slinged stones, or what violence els they could use against him; he leapt aboord their ship, in despight of all that durst resist him, behaving himself there like a hunger-starved Lyon, when he enters among a heard of beastes, tearing their carkasses in pieces both with his teeth and pawes. Such was the extreme fury of the poor Prince, not sparing the life of any one, that durst appeare in his presence; so that what with the bloody slaughter, and violence of the fires encreasing in the Ship; the Mariners got such wealth as possibly they could save, and suffering the Sea to swallow the rest, *Gerbino* returned unto his Gallies againe, nothing proud of this so ill-gotten victory.

Afterward, having recovered the Princesses dead body out of the Sea, and enbalm'd it with sighes and teares: hee returned backe into *Sicilie*, where he caused it to be most honourably buried, in a little Island, named *Ustica*, face to face confronting *Trapanum*. The King of *Thunis* hearing these disastrous Newes, sent his Ambassadors (habited in sad mourning) to the aged King of *Sicily*, complaining of his faith broken with him, and how the accident had falne out. Age being sodainly incited to anger, and the King extreemly offended at this injury, seeing no way whereby to deny him justice, it being urged so instantly by the Ambassadors: caused *Gerbino* to be apprehended, and hee himselfe (in regard that none of his Lords and Barons would therein assist him, but laboured to divert him by their earnest importunity) pronounced the sentence of death on the Prince, and commanded to have him beheaded in his presence; affecting rather, to dye without an heire, then to be thought a King void of justice. So these two unfortunate Lovers, never enjoying the very least benefite of their long wished desires: ended both their lives in violent manner.

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***The three Brethren to Isabella, slew a Gentleman that secretly loved her. His ghost appeared to her in her sleepe, and shewed her in what place they had buried his body. She (in silent manner) brought away his head, and putting it into a pot of earth, such as Flowers, Basile, or other sweet hearbes are usually set in; she watered it (a long while) with her teares. Whereof her Brethren having intelligence; soone after she dyed, with meere conceite of sorrow.***

## **The fift Novell.**

***Wherein is plainly proved, that Love cannot be rooted uppe, by any humane power or providence; especially in such a soule, where it hath bene really apprehended.***

The Novell of Madame *Eliza* being finished, and some-what commended by the King, in regard of the Tragical conclusion; *Philomena* was enjoyned to proceede next with her discourse. She beeing overcome with much compassion, for the hard Fortunes of Noble *Gerbino*, and his beautiful Princesse, after an extreame and vehement sighe, thus she spake. My tale (worthy Ladies) extendeth not to persons of so high birth or quality, as they were of whom Madame *Eliza* gave you relation: yet (peradventure) it may prove to be no lesse pitifull. And now I remember my selfe, *Messina* so lately spoken of, is the place where this accident also happened.

In *Messina* there dwelt three yong men, Brethren, and Merchants by their common profession, who becoming very rich by the death of theyr Father, lived in very good fame and repute. Their Father was of *San Gemignano*, and they had a Sister named *Isabella*, young, beautifull, and well conditioned; who, upon some occasion, as yet remained unmarried. A proper youth, being a Gentleman borne in *Pisa*, and named *Lorenzo*, as a trusty factor or servant, had the managing of the Brethrens businesse and affaires. This *Lorenzo* being of comely personage, affable, and excellent in his behaviour, grew so gracious in the eyes of *Isabella*, that shee afforded him many very respective lookes, yea, kindnesses of no common quality. Which *Lorenzo* taking notice of, and observing by degrees from time to time, gave over all other beauties in the Citie, which might allure any affection from him, and only fixed his heart on her, so that their love grew to a mutuall embracing, both equally respecting one another, and entertaining kindnesses, as occasion gave leave.

Long time continued this amorous league of love, yet not so cunningly concealed, but at the length, the secret meeting of *Lorenzo* and *Isabella*, to ease their poore soules of Loves oppressions, was discovered by the eldest of the Brethren, unknowne to them who were thus betrayed. He being a man of great discretion, although this sight was highly displeasing to him: yet notwithstanding, he kept it to himselfe till the next morning, labouring his braine what might best be done in so urgent a case. When day was come, he resorted to his other brethren, and told them what he had seene in the time past, betweene their sister and *Lorenzo*.

Many deliberations passed on in this case; but after all, thus they concluded together, to let it proceede on with patient supportance, that no scandall might ensue to them, or their Sister, no evill acte being (as yet) committed. And seeming, as if they knew not of their love, had a wary eye still upon her secret walkes, awaiting for some convenient time, when without their owne prejudice, or *Isabellaes* knowledge, they might safely breake off this their stolne love, which was altogether against their liking. So, shewing no worse countenance to *Lorenzo*, then formerly they had done, but imploying and conversing with him in kinde manner; it fortun'd, that riding (all three) to recreate themselves out of the Cittie, they tooke *Lorenzo* in their company, and when they were come to a solitarie place, such as best suited with their vile purpose: they ran sodainly upon *Lorenzo*, slew him, & afterward enterred his body, where hardly it could be discovered by any one. Then they returned backe to *Messina*, & gave it forth (as a credible report) that they had sent him abroad about their affaires, as formerly they were wont to do: which every one verily beleev'd, because they knew no reason why they should conceite any otherwise.

*Isabella*, living in expectation of his returne, and perceiving his stay to her was so offensively long: made many demands to her Brethren, into what parts they had sent him, that his tarrying was so quite from all wonted course. Such was her importunate speeches to them, that they taking it very discontentedly, one of them returned her this frowning answer. What is your meaning Sister, by so many questionings after *Lorenzo*? What urgent affaires have you with him, that makes you so impatient upon his absence? If heereafter you make any more demands for him, we shall shape you such a reply, as will bee but little to your liking. At these harsh words, *Isabella* fell into abundance of teares, where-among she mingled many sighes and groanes, such as were able to overthrow a far stronger constitution: so that, being full of feare and dismay, yet no way distrusting her brethrens cruell deede; shee durst not question any more after him.

In the silence of darke night, as she lay afflicted in her bed, oftentimes would she call for *Lorenzo*, entreating his speedy returning to her: And then againe, as if he had bene present with her, shee checkt and reproved him for his so long absence. One night amongst the rest, she being growen almost hopelesse, of ever seeing him againe, having a long while wept and greevously lamented; her senses and faculties utterly spent and tired, that she could not utter any more complaints, she fell into a trance or sleepe; and dreamed, that the ghost of *Lorenzo* appeared unto her, in torne and unbefitting garments, his lookes pale, meager, and staring: and (as she thought) thus spake to her. My deare love *Isabella*, thou doest nothing but torment thy selfe, with calling on me, accusing me for overlong tarrying from thee: I am come therefore to let thee know, that thou canst not enjoy my company any more, because the very same day when last thou sawest me, thy brethren most bloodily murdered me. And acquainting her with the place where they had buried his mangled body: hee strictly charged her, not to call him at any time afterward, and so vanished away.

The yong Damosell awaking, and giving some credite to her Vision, sighed and wept exceedingly; and after she was risen in the morning, not daring to say any thing to her brethren, she resolutely determined, to go see the place formerly appointed her, onely to make triall, if that which she seemed to see in her sleepe, should carry any likely-hood of truth. Having obtained favour of her brethren, to ride a dayes journey from the City, in company of her trusty Nurse, who long time had attended on her in the house, and knew the secret passages of her love: they rode directly to the designed place, which being covered with some store of dried leaves, and more deeply sunke then any other part of the ground thereabout, they digged not farre, but they found the body of murdered *Lorenzo*, as yet very little corrupted or impaired, and then perceived the truth of her vision.

Wisdom and government so much prevailed with her, as to instruct her soule, that her teares spent there, were meereley fruitlesse and in vaine, neither did the time require any long tarrying there. Gladly would shee have carried the whole body with her, secretly to bestow honourable enterment on it, but it exceeded the compasse of her ability. Wherefore, in regard she could not have all, yet she would be possessed of a part, & having brought a keene razor with her, by helpe of the Nurse, shee divided the head from the body, and wrapped it up in a Napkin, which the nurse conveyed into her lap, and then laide the body in the ground again. Thus being undiscovered by any, they departed thence, and arrived at home in convenient time, where being alone by themselves in the Chamber: she washed the head over and over with her teares, and bestowed infinite kisses thereon.

Not long after, the Nurse having brought her a large earthen pottle, such as wee use to set Basile, Marjerom, Flowers, or other sweet hearbes in, and shrouding the head in a silken Scarfe, put it into the pot, covering it with earth, and planting divers rootes of excellent Basile therein, which she never watered, but either with her teares, Rose water, or water distilled from the Flowers of Oranges. This pot she used continually to sitte by, either in her chamber, or any where else: for she caried it alwaies with her, sighing and breathing foorth sad complaints thereto, even as if they had beene uttered to her *Lorenzo*, and day by day this was her continuall exercise, to the no meane admiration of her bretheren, and many other friends that beheld her.

So long she held on in this mourning manner, that, what by the continuall watering of the Basile, and putrifaction of the head, so buried in the pot of earth; it grew very flourishing, and most odoriferous to such as scented it, so that as no other Basile could possibly yeeld so sweet a savour. The neighbours noting this behaviour in her, observing the long continuance thereof, how much her bright beauty was defaced, and the eyes sunke into her head by incessant weeping, made many kinde and friendly motions, to understand the reason of her so violent oppressions; but could not by any meanes prevaile with her, or win any discovery by her Nurse, so faithfull was she in secrecie to her. Her brethren also waxed wearie of this carriage in her; and having very often reproved her for it, without any other alteration in her: at length, they closely stole away the pottle of Basile from her, for which she made infinite wofull lamentations, earnestly entreating to have it restored againe, avouching that shee could not live without it.

Perceiving that she could not have the pot againe, she fell into an extreame sicknesse, occasioned onely by her ceaselesse weeping: and never urged she to have any thing, but the restoring of her Basile pot. Her brethren grew greatly amazed thereat, because shee never called for ought else beside; and thereupon were very desirous to ransacke the pot to the very bottome. Having emptied out all the earth, they found the Scarfe of silke, wherein the head of Lorenzo was wrapped; which was (as yet) not so much consumed, but by the lockes of haire, they knew it to be *Lorenzoes* head, whereat they became confounded with amazement.

Fearing least their offence might come to open publication, they buried it very secretly; and, before any could take notice thereof, they departed from *Messina*, and went to dwell in *Naples*. *Isabella* crying & calling still for her pot of Basile, being unable to give over mourning, dyed within a few dayes after. Thus have you heard the hard fate of poore *Lorenzo* and his *Isabella*. Within no long while after, when this accident came to be publikely knowne, an excellent ditty was composed thereof, beginning thus:

*Cruell and unkinde was the Christian,  
That robd me of my Basiles blisse, &c.*

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***A beautifull yong Virgin, named Andreana, became enamored of a yong Gentleman, called Gabriello. In conference together, she declared a dreame of hers to him, and he another of his to her; whereupon Gabriello fell downe sodainly dead in her armes. Shee, and her Chamber-maide were apprehended, by the Officers belonging to the Seigneury, as they were carrying Gabriello, to lay him before his owne doore. The Potestate offering violence to the Virgin, and she resisting him vertuously: it came to the understanding of her Father, who approved the innocence of his daughter, and compassed her deliverance. But she afterward, being weary of all worldly felicities, entred into Religion, and became a Nun.***

## **The sixth Novell.**

***Describing the admirable accidents of Fortune; and the mighty prevailing power of Love.***

The Novell which Madam *Philomena* had so graciously related, was highly pleasing unto the other Ladies; because they had oftentimes heard the Song, without knowing who made it, or uppon what occasion it was composed. But when the King saw that the Tale was ended: hee commanded *Pamphilus*, that hee should follow in his due course: whereupon he spake thus.

The dreame already recounted in the last Novell, doth minister matter to me, to make report of another Tale, wherein mention is made of two severall dreames; which divined as well what was to ensue, as the other did what had hapned before. And no sooner were they finished in the relation, by both the parties which had formerly dreampt them, but the effects of both as sodainly

followed.

Worthy Ladies, I am sure it is not unknowne to you, that it is, & hath bene a generall passion, to all men and women living, to see divers and sundry things while they are sleeping. And although (to the sleeper) they seeme most certaine, so that when he awaketh, hee judgeth the trueth of some, the likelihood of others, and some beyond all possibility of truth: yet notwithstanding, many dreames have bene observed to happen, and very strangely have come to passe. And this hath bene a grounded reason for some men, to give as great credit to such things as they see sleeping, as they do to others usually waking. So that, according unto their dreames, and as they make construction of them, that are sadly distasted, or merrily pleased, even as (by them) they either feare or hope. On the contrary, there are some, who will not credit any dreame whatsoever, untill they be falne into the very same danger which formerly they saw, and most evidently in their sleepe.

I meane not to commend either the one or other, because they do not alwayes fall out to be true; neither are they at all times lyars. Now, that they prove not all to be true, we can best testifie to our selves. And that they are not alwayes lyars, hath already sufficiently bene manifested, by the discourse of Madame *Philomena*, and as you shall perceiue by mine owne, which next commeth in order to salute you. Wherefore, I am of this opinion, that in matters of good life, and performing honest actions; no dreame is to be feared presaging the contrary, neither are good works any way to be hindred by them. Likewise, in matters of bad and wicked quality, although our dreames may appeare favourable to us, and our visions flatter us with prosperous successe: yet let us give no credence unto the best, nor addicte our minds to them of contrary Nature. And now we will proceed to our Novell.

In the Citie of *Brescia*, there lived sometime a Gentleman, named *Messer Negro da Ponte Cararo*, who (among many other children) had a daughter called *Andreana*, yong and beautifull, but as yet unmarried. It fortun'd, that shee fell in love with a neighbour, named *Gabriello*, a comely yong Gentleman, of affable complexion, and graciously conditioned. Which love was (with like kindnesse) welcommed and entertained by him, and by the furtherance of her Chamber-maide, it was so cunningly carried, that in the Garden belonging to *Andreanaes* Father, she had many meetings with her *Gabriello*. And solemne vowes being mutually passed betweene them, that nothing but death could alter their affection: by such ceremonious words as are used in marriage, they married themselves secretly together, and continued their stolne chaste pleasures, with equall contentment to them both.

It came to passe, that *Andreana* sleeping in her bed, dreamed, that she met with *Gabriello* in the Garden, where they both embracing lovingly together, she seemed to see a thing blacke and terrible, which sodainely issued forth of his body, but the shape thereof she could not comprehend. It rudely seized upon *Gabriello*, & in despite of her utmost strength (with incredible force) snatched him out of her armes, and sinking with him into the earth, they never after did see one another; whereuppon, overcome with extremity of greefe and sorrow, presently shee awaked, being then not a little joyfull, that she found no such matter as shee feared, yet continued very doubtfull of her dreame. In regard whereof, *Gabriello* being desirous to visite her the night following: she laboured very diligently to hinder his comming to her; yet knowing his loyall affection toward her, and fearing least he should grow suspitious of some other matter: she welcommed him into the Garden, where gathering both white and Damaske Roses (according to the nature of the season) at length, they sate downe by a goodly Fountaine, which stode in the middst of the Garden.

After some small familiar discourse passing betweene them, *Gabriello* demanded of her upon what occasion shee denied his comming thither the night before, and by such a sodaine unexpected admonition? *Andreana* told him, that it was in regard of a troublesome dreame, wherewith hir soule was perplexed the precedent night, and doubt what might ensue thereon. *Gabriello* hearing this, began to smile, affirming to her, that it was an especiall note of folly, to give any credit to idle dreames: because (oftentimes) they are caused by excesse of feeding, and continually are observed to be meere lies. For (quoth hee) if I had any superstitious beleefe of dreames, I should not then have come hither nowe: yet not so much as being dismayed by your dreame, but for another of mine owne, which I am the more willing to acquaint you withall.

Me thought, I was in a goodly delightfull Forrest, in the Noble exercise of sportfull hunting, and became there possessed of a yong Hinde, the verie loveliest and most pleasing beast that was ever seene. It seemed to be as white as snow, and grew (in a short while) so familiar with mee, that by no meanes it would forsake me. I could not but accept this rare kindnesse in the beast, and fearing least (by some ill hap) I might loose it, I put a collar of Gold about the necke thereof, and fastned it into a chain of Gold also, which then I held strictly in my hand. The Hind afterward couched downe by mee, laying his head mildely in my lap; and on a sudden, a blacke Grey-hound bitch came rushing on us (but whence, or how I could not imagine) seeming halfe hunger-starved, and very ugly to look upon. At me she made her full carriere, without any power in me of resistance: and putting her mouth into the lefte side of my bosome, griped it so mainly with her teeth, that (me thought) I felt my heart quite bitten through, and she tugged on still, to take it wholly away from me; by which imagined paine and anguish I felt, instantly I awaked: Laying then my hand upon my side, to know whether any such harme had befallen me, or no, and finding none at all, I smiled at mine owne folly, in making such a frivolous and idle search. What can be said then in these or the like cases? Divers times I have had as ill seeming dreames, yea, and much more to be feared: yet never any thing hurtfull to me followed thereon; and therefore I have alwaies made the lesse account of them.

The yong Maiden, who was still dismayed by her owne dreame, became much more afflicted in

her minde, when shee had heard this other reported by *Gabriello*: but yet to give him no occasion of distast, she bare it out in the best manner she could devise to doe. And albeit they spent the time in much pleasing discourse, maintained with infinite sweete kisses on either side: yet was she still suspitious, but knew not whereof; fixing her eies oftentimes upon his face, and throwing strange lookes to all parts of the Garden, to catch hold on any such blacke ugly sight, whereof he had formerly made description to her. As thus she continued in these afflicting feares, it fortun'd, that *Gabriello* sodainly breathing forth a very vehement sighe, and throwing his armes fast about her, said: O helpe me deare Love, or else I dye; and, in speaking the words, fell downe upon the ground. Which the yong Damosell perceiving, and drawing him into her lappe, weeping saide: Alas sweete Friend, What paine dost thou feele?

*Gabriello* answered not one word, but being in an exceeding sweate, without any ability of drawing breath, very soone after gave up the ghost. How greevous this strange accident was to poore *Andreana*, who loved him as deere as her owne life: you that have felt loves tormenting afflictions, can more easily conceive, then I relate. Wringing her hands, & weeping incessantly, calling him, rubbing his temples, and using all likely meanes to reduce life: she found all her labour to be spent in vain, because he was starke dead indeed, and every part of his body as cold as ice: whereupon, she was in such wofull extremity, that she knew not what to do or say. All about the Garden she went weeping, in infinite feares and distraction of soule, calling for her Chamber-maid, the only secret friend to their stolne meetings, and told her the occasion of this sudden sorrow. After they had sighed and mourned awhile, over the dead body of *Gabriello*, *Andreana* in this manner spake to her maid.

Seeing Fortune hath thus bereft me of my Love, mine owne life must needs be hatefull to me: but before I offer any violence to my selfe, let us devise some convenient meanes, as may both preserve mine honour from any touch or scandall, and conceale the secret love passing betweene us: but yet in such honest sort, that this body (whose blessed soule hath too soone forsaken it) may be honourably enterred. Whereto her Mayde thus answered: Mistresse, never talke of doing any violence to your self, because by such a blacke and dismall deed, as you have lost his kind company here in this life, so shall you never more see him in the other world: for immediately you sinke downe to hell, which foule place cannot bee a receptacle for his faire soule, that was endued with so many singular vertues. Wherefore, I holde it farre better for you, to comfort your selfe by all good meanes, and with the power of fervent prayer, to fight against all desperate intruding passions, as a truly vertuous minde ought to doe. Now, as concerning his enterrement, the meanes is readily prepared for you heere in this Garden, where never he hath bene seene by any, or his resorting hither knowne, but onely to our selves. If you will not consent to have it so, let you and I convey his bodye hence, and leave it in such apt place, where it may be found to morrow morning: and being then carried to his owne house, his friends and kindred will give it honest buriall.

*Andreana*, although her soule was extraordinarily sorrowfull, & teares flowed abundantly from her eyes; yet she listned attentively to hir maids counsell; allowing her first advice against desperation, to be truly good; but to the rest thus she replied. God forbid (quoth she) that I shold suffer so deare a loving friend, as he hath always shewed himselfe to mee; nay, which is much more, my husband; by sacred and solemn vowes passed betweene us, to be put into the ground basely, and like a dog, or else to be left in the open streete. He hath had the sacrifice of my virgin teares, and if I can prevaile, he shall have some of his kindred, as I have instantly devised, what (in this hard case) is best to be done. Forthwith she sent the maid to her Chamber, for divers elles of white Damaske lying in her Chest, which when she had brought, they spread it abroad on the grasse, even in the manner of a winding sheete, and therein wrapped the bodie of *Gabriello*, with a faire wrought pillow lying under his head, having first (with their teares) closed his mouth and eyes, and placed a Chaplet of Flowers on his head, covering the whole shrowd over in the same manner, which being done, thus she spake to her maide.

The doore of his owne house is not farre hence, and thither (between us two) he may be easily carried, even in this manner as we have adorned him; where leaving him in his owne Porch, we may returne back before it be day; and although it will be a sad sight to his friends; yet, because he dyed in mine armes, and we being so well discharged of the bodie, it will be a little comfort to me. When she had ended these words, which were not uttered without infinite teares, the Maid entreated her to make hast, because the night passed swiftly on. At last, she remembered the Ring on her finger, wherewith *Gabriello* had solemnly espoused her, and opening the shroud againe, she put it on his finger, saying, My deare and loving husband, if thy soule can see my teares, or any understanding do remaine in thy body, being thus untimely taken from me: receive the latest guifte thou gavest me, as a pledge of our solemne and spotlesse marriage. So, making up the shroud againe as it should be, and conveighing it closely out of the Garden, they went on along with it, towards his dwelling house.

As thus they passed along, it fortun'd, that they were met and taken by the Guard or Watch belonging to the Potestate, who had bin so late abroad, about very earnest and important businesse. *Andreana*, desiring more the dead mans company, then theirs whom she had thus met withall, boldly spake thus to them. I know who and what you are, and can tel my selfe, that to offer flight will nothing availe me: wherefore, I am ready to go along with you before the Seignurie, and there will tel the truth concerning this accident. But let not any man among you, be so bold as to lay hand on me, or to touch me, because I yeeld so obediently to you: neither to take any thing from this body, except he intend that I shal accuse him. In which respect, not any one daring to displease her, shee went with the dead bodye to the Seignurie, there to answer all Objections.



When notice heereof was given to the Potestate, he arose; and shee being brought forth into the Hall before him, he questioned with her, how and by what meanes this accident happened. Beside, he sent for divers Physitians, to be informed by them, whether the Gentleman were poysoned, or otherwise murdered: but al of them affirmed the contrary, avouching rather, that some impostumation had engendred neere his heart, which sodainly breaking, occasioned his as sodaine death. The Potestate hearing this, and perceiving that *Andreana* was little or nothing at all faulty in the matter: her beauty and good carriage, kindled a villanous and lustfull desire in him towards her, provoking him to the immodest motion, that upon granting his request, he would release her. But when he saw, that all his perswasions were to no purpose, hee sought to compasse his will by violence; which, like a vertuous and valiant *Virago*, shee worthily withstood, defending her honour Nobly, and reprooving him with many injurious speeches, such as a lustfull Letcher justlie deserved.

On the morrow morning, these newes being brought to her Father, *Messer Negro da Ponte Cararo*; greeving thereat exceedingly, and accompanied with many of his friends, he went to the Palace. Being there arrived, and informed of the matter by the Potestate: hee demaunded (in teares) of his daughter, how, and by what meanes shee was brought thither? The Potestate would needs accuse her first, of outrage and wrong offered to him by her, rather then to tarry her accusing of him: yet, commending the yong Maiden, and her constancie, proceeded to say, that onely to prove her, he had made such a motion to her, but finding her so firmly vertuous, his love and liking was now so addicted to her, that if hir Father were so pleased, to forget the remembrance of her former secret husband, he willingly would accept her in marriage.

While thus they continued talking, *Andreana* comming before her Father, the teares trickling mainly downe her cheekes, and falling at his feete, she began in this manner. Deare Father, I shall not neede to make an historical relation, either of my youthfull boldnesse or misfortunes, because you have both seene and knowne them: rather most humblie, I crave your pardon, for another error by me committed, in that, both without your leave and liking, I accepted the man as my troth-plighted husband, whom (above all other in the world) I most intirely affected. If my offence heerein do challenge the forfeite of my life, then (good Father) I free you from any such pardon: because my onely desire is to die your daughter, and in your gracious favour; with which words, in signe of her humility, she kissed his feete. *Messer Negro da Ponte*, being a man well stept into yeares, and of a milde and gentle nature, observing what his daughter had saide: could not refraine from teares, and in his weeping, lovingly tooke her from the ground, speaking thus to her.

Daughter, I could have wished, that thou hadst taken such an husband, as (in my judgement) had bene best fitting for thee, and yet if thou didst make election of one, answerable to thine owne good opinion & liking: I have no just reason to be therewith offended. My greatest cause of complaint, is, thy too severe concealing it from me, and the slender trust thou didst repose in me, because thou hast lost him, before I knew him. Neverthesse, seeing these occasions are thus come to passe, and accidents already ended, cannot by any meanes be re-called: it is my will, that as I would gladly have contented thee, by making him my Sonne in Law, if he had lived; so I will expresse the like love to him now he is dead. And so turning himself to his kindred and friends, lovingly requested of them, that they would grace *Gabriello* with most honourable obsequies.

By this time, the kindred and friends to the dead man (uppon noise of his death bruided abroad) were likewise come to the Pallace, yea, most of the men and women dwelling in the City, the bodie of *Gabriello* beeing laide in the midst of the Court, upon the white Damaske shrowde given by *Andreana*, with infinite Roses and other sweet Flowers lying thereon: and such was the peoples love to him, that never was any mans death, more to be bemoaned and lamented. Being delivered out of the Court, it was carried to buriall, not like a Burgesse or ordinary Citizen, but with such pompe as beseemed a Lord Baron, and on the shoulders of very noble Gentlemen, with very especiall honour and reverence.

Within some few dayes after, the Potestate pursuing his former motion of marriage, and the Father moving it to his daughter; she wold not by any meanes listen thereto. And he being desirous to give her contentment, delivered her and her Chamber-maid into a Religious Abbey, very famous for devotion and sanctity, where afterwarde they ended their lives.

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***Faire Simonida affecting Pasquino, and walking with him in a pleasant garden, it fortun'd, that Pasquino rubbed his teeth with a leafe of Sage, and immediately fell downe dead. Simonida being brought before the bench of Justice, and charged with the death of Pasquino: she rubbed her teeth likewise with one of the leaves of the same Sage, as declaring what shee saw him do: and thereon she dyed also in the same manner.***

## **The seaventh Novell.**

***Whereby is given to understand, that Love & Death do use their power equally alike, as well upon poore and meane persons, as on them that are rich and Noble.***

*Pamphilus* having ended his Tale, the King declaring an outward shew of compassion, in regard

of *Andreanaes* disastrous Fortune: fixed his eye on Madam *Emillia*, and gave her such an apparant signe, as expressed his pleasure, for her next succeeding in discourse; which being sufficient for her understanding, thus she began: Faire assembly, the Novel so lately delivered by *Pamphilus*, maketh me willing to report another to you, varying from it, in any kinde of resemblance; onely this excepted: that as *Andreana*, lost her lover in a Garden, even so did shee of whome I am now to speake. And being brought before the seate of Justice, according as *Andreana* was, freed her selfe from the power of the Law; yet neither by force, or her owne vertue, but by her sodaine and inopinate death. And although the nature of Love is such (according as wee have oftentimes heeretofore maintained) to make his abiding in the houses of the Noblest persons; yet men and women of poore and farre inferiour quality, do not alwayes sit out of his reach, though enclosed in their meanest Cottages; declaring himselfe sometimes as powerfull a commaunder in those humble places, as he doth in the richest and most imperious Palaces. As will plainly appeare unto you, either in all, or a great part of my Novell, whereto our Citie pleadeth some title; though, by the diversity of our discourses, talking of so many severall accidents; we have wandred into many other parts of the world, to make all answerable to our owne liking.

It is not any long time since, when there lived in our City of *Florence*, a young and beautifull Damosell, yet according to the nature of hir condition; because she was the Daughter of a poore Father, and called by the name of *Simonida*. Now, albeit shee was not supplied by any better meanes, then to maintaine her selfe by her owne painfull travell, & earne her bread before shee could eate it, by carding and spinning to such as employed her; yet was she not of so base or dejected a spirit, but had both courage and sufficient vertue, to understand the secret solicitings of love, and to distinguish the parts of well deserving, both by private behaviour and outward ceremony. As naturall instinct was her first tutor thereto, so wanted she not a second maine and urging motion; a chip hewed out of the like Timber, one no better in birth then her selfe, a proper young springall, named *Pasquino*, whose generous behaviour, and gracefull actions (in bringing her daily wooll to spin, by reason his master was a Clothier) prevailed upon her liking and affection.

Nor was he negligent in the observation of her amorous regards, but the Tinder tooke, and his soule flamed with the selfe-same fire; making him as desirous of her loving acceptance, as possibly she could bee of his: so that the commanding power of love, could not easily be distinguished in which of them it had the greater predominance. For, everie day as he brought her fresh supply of woolles, and found her seriously busied at hir wheele: her soule would vent forth many deepe sighes, and those sighes fetch floods of teares from her eyes, thorough the singular good opinion she had conceyved of him, and earnest desire to enjoy him. *Pasquino* on the other side, as leysure gave him leave for the least conversing with her: his disease was every way answerable to her, for teares stood in his eyes, sighes flew abroad, to ease the poore hearts afflicting oppressions, which though he was unable to conceale; yet would hee seeme to clowd them cleanly, by entreating her that his masters worke might be neatly performed, and with such speed as time would permit her, intermixing infinite praises of her artificiall spinning; and affirming withall, that the Quilles of Yearne received from her, were the choisest beauty of the whole peece; so that when other worke-women played, *Simonida* was sure to want no employment.

Heereupon, the one soliciting, and the other taking delight in beeing solicited; it came to passe, that often accesse bred the bolder courage, & over-much bashfulnesse became abandoned, yet no immodestie passing betweene them: but affection grew the better settled in them both, by interchangeable voves of constant perseverance, so that death onely, but no disaster else had power to divide them. Their mutuall delight continuing on in this manner, with more forcible encreasing of their Loves equall flame; it fortun'd, that *Pasquino* sitting by *Simonida*, tolde her of a goodly Garden, whereto hee was desirous to bring her, to the end, that they might the more safely converse together, without the suspicion of envious eyes. *Simonida* gave answer of her well-liking the motion, and acquainting her Father therewith, he gave her leave, on the Sunday following after dinner, to go serch the pardon of S. *Gallo*, and afterwards to visit the Garden.

A modest yong maiden named *Lagina*, following the same profession, and being an intimate familiar friend, *Simonida* tooke along in her company, and came to the Garden appointed by *Pasquino*; where shee found him readily expecting her comming, and another friend also with him, called *Puccino* (albeit more usually tearmed *Strambo*) a secret well-willer to *Lagina*, whose love became the more furthered by this friendly meeting. Each Lover delighting in his hearts chosen Mistresse, caused them to walke alone by themselves, as the spaciousnesse of the Garden gave them ample liberty: *Puccino* with his *Lagina* in one part, & *Pasquino* with his *Simonida* in another. The walke which they had made choise of, was by a long and goodly bed of Sage, turning and returning by the same bed as their conference ministred occasion, and as they pleased to recreate themselves; affecting rather to continue still there, then in any part of the Garden.

One while they would sit downe by the Sage bed, and afterward rise to walke againe, as ease or wearinesse seemed to invite them. At length, *Pasquino* chanced to crop a leafe of the Sage, wherewith he both rubbed his teeth and gummes, and champing it betweene them also, saying; that there was no better thing in the world to cleanse the teeth withall, after feeding. Not long had he thus champed the Sage in his teeth, returning to his former kinde of discoursing, but his countenance began to change very pale, his sight failed, and speech forsooke him; so that (in briefe) he fell downe dead. Which when *Simonida* beheld, wringing her hands, she cryed out for helpe to *Strambo* and *Lagina*, who immediately came running to her. They finding *Pasquino* not

onely to be dead, but his bodie swolne; and strangely over-sprede with foule black spots, both on his face, handes, and all parts else beside: *Strambo* cried out, saying; Ah wicked maide, what hast thou poisoned him?

These words and their shrill out-cries also, were heard by Neighbours dwelling neere to the Garden, who comming in sodainly uppon them, and seeing *Pasquino* lying dead, and hugely swoln, *Strambo* likewise complaining, and accusing *Simonida* to have poysoned him; shee making no answer, but standing in a gastly amazement, all her senses meerey confounded, at such a strange and uncouth accident, in loosing him whome she so dearely loved: knew not how to excuse her selfe, and therefore every one verily beleevd, that *Strambo* had not unjustly accused her. Poore woful maide, thus was shee instantly apprehended, and drowned in her teares, they led her along to the Potestates Palace, where her accusation was justified by *Strambo*, *Lagina*, and two men more; the one named *Atticciato*, and the other *Malagevole*, fellowes and companions with *Pasquino*, who came into the Garden also upon the out-cry.

The Judge, without any delay at all, gave eare to the business, and examined the case very strictly: but could by no meanes comprehend, that any malice should appeare in her towards him, nor that she was guiltie of the mans death. Wherefore, in the presence of *Simonida*, hee desired to see the dead body, and the place where he fell downe dead, because there he intended to have her relate, how she saw the accident to happen, that her owne speeches might the sooner condemne her, whereas the case yet remained doubtfull, and farre beyond his comprehension. So, without any further publication, and to avoid the following of the turbulent multitude: they departed from the bench of Justice, and came to the place, where *Pasquinoes* body lay swolne like a Tunne. Demanding there questions, concerning his behaviour, when they walked there in conference together, and, not a little admiring the manner of his death, while hee stood advisedly considering thereon.

She going to the bed of Sage, reporting the whole precedent history, even from the original to the ending: the better to make the case understood, without the least colour of ill carriage towards *Pasquino*; according as she had seene him do, even so did she plucke another leafe of the Sage, rubbing her teeth therewith, and champing it as he formerly did. *Strambo*, and the other intimate friends of *Pasquino*, having noted in what manner she used the Sage, and this appearing as her utmost refuge, either to acquit or condemne her: in presence of the Judge they smiled thereat, mocking and deriding whatsoever shee saide, or did, and desiring (the more earnestly) the sentence of death against her, that her body might be consumed with fire, as a just punishment for her abominable transgression.

Poore *Simonida*, sighing and sorrowing for her deere loves losse, and (perhappes) not meanly terrified, with the strict infliction of torment so severely urged and followed by *Strambo* and the rest: standing dumb still, without answering so much as one word; by tasting of the same Sage, fell downe dead by the bed, even by the like accident as *Pasquino* formerly did, to the admirable astonishment of all there present.

Oh poore infortunate Lovers, whose Starres were so inauspicious to you, as to finish both your mortall lives, and fervent love, in lesse limitation then a dayes space. How to censure of your deaths, and happines to ensue thereon, by an accident so straunge and inevitable: it is not within the compasse of my power, but to hope the best, and so I leave you. But yet concerning *Simonida* her selfe, in the common opinion of us that remaine living: her true vertue and innocency (though Fortune was other wise most cruell to her) would not suffer her to sinke under the testimony of *Strambo*, *Lagina*, *Atticciato* and *Malagevole*, being but carders of wool, or perhaps of meaner condition; a happier course was ordained for her, to passe clearly from their infamous imputation, and follow her *Pasquino*, in the verie same manner of death, and with such a speedie expedition.

The Judge standing amazed, and all there present in his companie, were silent for a long while together: but, uppon better re-collection of his spirits, thus he spake. This inconvenience which thus hath hapned, and confounded our senses with no common admiration; in mine opinion concerneth the bed of Sage, avouching it either to bee venomous, or dangerously infected; which (neverthelesse) is seldom found in Sage. But to the end, that it may not be offensive to any more hereafter, I will have it wholly digd up by the rootes, and then to bee burnt in the open Market place.

Hereupon, the Gardiner was presently sent for, and before the Judge would depart thence, he saw the bed of Sage digged up by the roots, and found the true occasion, whereby these two poore Lovers lost their lives. For, just in the midst of the bed, and at the maine roote, which directed all the Sage in growth; lay an huge mighty Toad, even weltring (as it were) in a hole full of poyson; by meanes whereof, in conjecture of the Judge, and all the rest, the whole bed of Sage became envenomed, occasioning every leafe thereof to be deadly in taste. None being so hardie, as to approach neere the Toade, they made a pile of wood directly over it, and setting it on a flaming fire, threw all the Sage thereinto, and so they were consumed together. So ended all further suite in Lawe, concerning the deaths of *Pasquino* and *Simonida*: whose bodies being carried to the Church of Saint *Paul*, by their sad and sorrowfull accusers, *Strambo*, *Lagina*, *Atticciato* and *Malagevole*, were buried together in one goodlie Monument, for a future memory of their hard Fortune.

***importunity of his Mother) to take a journey to Paris. At his return home from thence againe, hee found his love Silvestra married. By secret meanes, he got entrance into her house, and dyed upon the bed lying by her. Afterward, his body being carried to Church, to receive buriall, she likewise died there instantly upon his coarse.***

## **The eight Novell.**

***Wherein is againe declared, the great indiscretion and folly of them, that think to constraene love, according to their will, after it is constantly setled before: With other instructions, concerning the unspeakeable power of Love.***

Madam *Emillia* had no sooner concluded her Novell, but Madame *Neiphila* (by the Kings command) began to speake in this manner. It seemeth to mee (Gracious Ladies) that there are some such people to be found, who imagine themselves to know more, then all other else in the world beside, and yet indeede doe know nothing at all: presuming (thorough this arrogant opinion of theirs) to imploy and oppose their senselesse understanding, against infallible grounded reason, yea, and to attempt courses, not only contrary to the counsell and judgment of men, but also to crosse the nature of divine ordination. Out of which fancy & ambitious presumption, many mighty harmes have already had beginning, and more are like to ensue upon such boldnesse, because it is the ground of all evils.

Now, in regard that among all other naturall things, no one is lesse subject to take counsell, or can bee wrought to contrariety, then Love, whose nature is such, as rather to run upon his owne rash consumption, then to be ruled by admonitions of the very wisest: my memory hath inspired itself, with matter incident to this purpose, effectually to approve, what I have already said. For I am now to speake of a woman, who would appeare to have more wit, then either she had indeed, or appertained to her by any title. The matter also, wherein she would needs shew hir studious judgement and capacity, was of much more consequence then she could deserve to meddle withall. Yet such was the issue of her fond presuming; that (in one instant) she expelled both love, and the soule of her owne sonne out of his body, where (doubtlesse) it was planted by divine favour and appointment.

In our owne City (according to true & ancient testimony) there dwelt sometime a very worthy and wealthy Merchant, named *Leonardo Sighiero*, who by his wife had one onely Sonne, called *Jeronimo*, and within a short while after his birth, *Leonardo* being very sicke, and having setled al his affaires in good order; departed out of this wretched life to a better. The Tutors and Governours of the Childe, thought it fittest to let him live with his Mother, where he had his whole education, though schooled among many other worthy neighbours children, according as in most Cities they use to do. Yong *Jeronimo* growing on in yeares, and frequenting dayly the company of his Schoole-fellowes and others: hee would often sport (as the rest did) with the neighbours children, and much pretty pastime they found together.

In the harmlesse recreations of youth, graver judgements have often observed, that some especiall matter received then such original, as greater effect hath followed thereon. And many times, parents and kindred have bene the occasion (although perhaps beyond their expectation) of very strange and extraordinary accidents, by names of familiarity passing betweene Boyes and Girles, as King and Queene, sweet heart and sweet heart, friend and friend, husband and wife, and divers other such like kind tearmes, proving afterwards to be true indeede. It fell out so with our yong *Jeronimo*; for, among a number of pretty Damosels, daughters to men of especiall respect, and others of farre inferiour qualitie: a Taylors daughter, excelling the rest in favour and feature (albeit her Father was but poore) *Jeronimo* most delighted to sport withall; and no other titles passed betweene them, even in the hearing of their parents and friendes, but wife and husband: such was the beginning of their young affection, presaging (no doubt) effectually to follow.

Nor grew this familiarity (as yet) any way distasted, till by their dayly conversing together, and enterchange of infinite pretty speeches: *Jeronimo* felt a strange alteration in his soule, with such enforcing and powerfull afflictions; as he was never well but in her company, nor she enjoyed any rest if *Jeronimo* were absent. At the length, this being noted by his Mother, she beganne to rebuke him, yea, many times gave him both threatnings and blowes, which proving to no purpose, nor hindering his accesse to her; she complained to his Tutors, and like one that in regard of her riches, thought to plant an Orange upon a blacke thorne, spake as followeth.

This Sonne of mine *Jeronimo*, being as yet but fourteene years of age, is so deeply enamored of a yong Girle, named *Silvestra*, daughter unto a poore Tailor, our neere dwelling neighbour: that if we do not send him out of her company, one day (perhaps) he may make her his wife, and yet without any knowledge of ours, which questionlesse would be my death. Otherwise, he may pine and consume himselfe away, if he see us procure her marriage to some other. Wherefore, I hold it good, that to avoid so great an inconvenience, we shold send *Jeronimo* some far distance hence, to remaine where some of our Factors are employed: because, when he shall be out of her sight, and their often meetings utterly disappointed; his affection to her will the sooner cease, by frustrating his hope for ever enjoying her, and so we shall have the better meanes, to match him with one of greater quality. The Tutors did like well of her advice, not doubting but it would take answerable effect: and therefore, calling *Jeronimo* into a private Parlour, one of them began in this manner.

*Jeronimo*, you are now growne to an indifferent stature, and (almost) able to take government of

your selfe. It cannot then seeme any way inconvenient, to acquaint you with your deceased Fathers affaires, and by what good courses he came to such wealth. You are his onely sonne and heire, to whom hee hath bequeathed his rich possessions (your Mothers moiety evermore remembred) and travaile would now seeme fitting for you, as well to gaine experience in Traffick and Merchandize, as also to let you see the worlds occurrences. Your Mother therefore (and we) have thought it expedient, that you should journey from hence to *Paris*, there to continue for some such fitting time, as may grant you full and free opportunity, to survey what stocke of wealth is there employed for you, and to make you understand, how your Factors are furtherous to your affayres. Beside, this is the way to make you a man of more solid apprehension, & perfect instruction in civill courses of life; rather then by continuing here to see none but Lords, Barons, and Gentlemen, whereof wee have too great a number. When you are sufficiently qualified there, and have learned what belongeth to a worthy Marchant, such as was *Leonardo Sighiero* your famous Father; you may returne home againe at your owne pleasure.

The youth gave them attentive hearing, and (in few words) returned them answer: That he would not give way to any such travaile, because hee knew how to dispose of himselfe in *Florence*, as well as in any other place he should be sent too. Which when his Tutors heard, they reprov'd him with many severe speeches: and seeing they could win no other answer from him, they made returne thereof to his Mother. Shee storming extreemly thereat, yet not so much for denying the journey to *Paris*, as in regard of his violent affection to the Maide; gave him very bitter and harsh language. All which availing nothing, she began to speake in a more milde and gentle straine, entreating him with flattering and affable words, to be governed in this case by his Tutors good advise. And so farre (in the end) she prevailed with him, that he yeelded to live at *Paris* for the space of a yeare; but further time he would not graunt, and so all was ended.

*Jeronimo* being gone to remain at *Paris*, his love daily increasing more and more, by reason of his absence from *Silvestra*, under faire and friendly promises, of this moneth and the next moneth sending for him home; there they detained him two whole yeares together. Whereuppon, his love was growne to such an extremity, that he neither would, or could abide any longer there, but home hee returned, before hee was expected. His love *Silvestra*, by the cunning compacting of his Mother and Tutors, he found married to a Tent-makers Sonne; whereat hee vexed and greeved beyond all measure. Neverthelesse, seeing the case was now no way to bee holpen; hee strove to beare it with so much patience, as so great a wrong, and his hearts tormenting greefe, would give him leave to doe.

Having found out the place where she dwelt, hee began (as it is the custome of yong Lovers) to use divers daily walkes by her door: as thinking in his minde, that her remembrance of him was constantly continued, as his was most intirely fixed on her. But the case was verie strangely altered, because she was now growne no more mindfull of him, then if she had never seene him before. Or if she did any way remember him, it appeared to be so little, that manifest signes declared the contrary. Which *Jeronimo* very quickly perceived, albeit not without many melanchollie perturbations. Notwithstanding, he laboured by all possible meanes, to recover her former kindnesse againe: but finding all his paines frivously employed; he resolved to dye, and yet to compasse some speech with her before.

By meanes of a neere dwelling neighbour (that was his verie deare & intimate friend) he came acquainted with every part of the house, & prevailed so far, that one evening, when she and her husband supt at a neighbours house; he compassed accesse into the same bed chamber, where *Silvestra* used most to lodge. Finding the Curtaines ready drawne, he hid himselfe behinde them on the further side of the bed, and so tarried there untill *Silvestra* and her husband were returned home, and laide downe in bedde to take their rest. The husbands sences were soone overcome with sleepe, by reason of his painefull toyling all the day, and bodies that are exercised with much labour, are the more desirous to have ease. She staying up last, to put out the light, and hearing her husband sleepe so soundly, that his snoring gave good evidence thereof: layed her selfe down the more respectfully, as being very loath any way to disease him, but sweetly to let him enjoy his rest.

*Silvestra* lay on the same side of the bed, where *Jeronimo* had hid himselfe behinde the Curtaines; who stepping softly to her in the darke, and laying his hand gently on her brest, saide: Deare Love, forbear a little while to sleepe, for heere is thy loyall friend *Jeronimo*. The yong woman starting with amazement, would have cried out, but that hee entreated her to the contrary; protesting, that he came for no ill intent to her, but onely to take his latest leave of her. Alas *Jeronimo* (quoth she) those idle dayes are past and gone, when it was no way unseemly for our youth, to entertaine equality of those desires, which then well agreed with our young blood. Since when, you have lived in forraine Countries, which appeared to me to alter your former disposition: for, in the space of two whole yeares, either you grew forgetfull of me (as change of ayre, may change affection) or (at the best) made such account of mee, as I never heard the least salutation from you. Now you know me to be a married wife, in regard whereof, my thoughts have embraced that chaste and honourable resolution, not to minde any man but my husband; and therefore, as you are come hither without my love or license, so in like manner I do desire you to be gone. Let this priviledge of my Husbandes sound sleeping, be no colour to your longer continuing heere, or encourage you to finde any further favour at mine hand: for if mine husband shold awake, beside the danger that thereon may follow to you, I cannot but loose the sweet happinesse of peacefull life, which hitherto we have both mutually embraced.

The yong man, hearing these wordes, and remembring what loving kindnesse he had formerly found, what secret love Letters hee had sent from *Paris*, with other private intelligences and tokens, which never came to her receite and knowledge, so cunningly his Mother and Tutors had

carried the matter: immediately he felt his heart strings to break; and lying downe upon the beds side by her, uttered these his very last words. *Silvestra* farewell, thou hast kilde the kindest heart that ever loved a woman: and speaking no more, gave up the ghost. She hearing these words delivered with an entire sighe, and deepe-fetcht groane: did not imagine the strange consequence following thereon; yet was mooved to much compassion, in regard of her former affection to him. Silent shee lay an indifferent while, as being unable to returne him any answer; and looking when he would be gone, according as before she had earnestly entreated him. But when she perceyved him to lye so still, as neither word or motion came from him, she saide: Kinde *Jeronimo*, why doest thou not depart and get thee gone? So putting forth her hand, it hapned to light upon his face, which she felt to be as cold as yce: whereat marvelling not a little, as also at his continued silence: shee jogged him, and felt his hands in like manner, which were stiffely extended forth, and all his body cold, as not having any life remaining in him, which greatly amazing her, and confounding her with sorrow beyond all measure, shee was in such perplexity, that she could not devise what to do or say.

In the end, she resolved to try how her husband would take it, that so strange an accident should thus happen in his house, and putting the case as if it did not concerne them, but any other of the neighbours; awaking him first, demaunded of him what was best to bee done, if a man should steale into a neighbours house, unknowne to him, or any of his family; & in his bed chamber to be found dead. He presently replyed (as not thinking the case concerned himselfe) that, the onely helpe in such an unexpected extremity, was, to take the dead body, and convey it to his owne house, if he had any; whereby no scandall or reproach would followe to them, in whose house he had so unfortunately dyed. Heereupon, shee immediately arose, and lighting a candle, shewed him the dead bodie of *Jeronimo*, with protestation of every particular, both of her innocencie, either of knowledge of his comming thither, or any other blame that could concerne her. Which hee both constantly knowing and beleiving, made no more ceremonie, but putting on his Garments, tooke the dead bodie upon his shoulders, and carried it to the Mothers doore, where he left it, and afterward returned to his owne house againe.

When day light was come, and the dead body found lying in the Porch, it moved very much greefe and amazement, considering, he had bin seene the day before, in perfect health to outward appearance. Nor neede we to urge any question of his Mothers sorrow upon this straunge accident, who, causing his body to bee carefully searched, without any blow, bruise, wound, or hurt uppon it, the Physitians could not give any other opinion, but that some inward conceyte of greefe had caused his death, as it did indeed, and no way otherwise. To the cheefe Church was the dead body carried, to be generally seene of all the people, his mother and friends weeping heavily by it, as many more did the like beside, because he was beloved of every one. In which time of universall mourning, the honest man (in whose house he dyed) spake thus to his wife: disguise thyselfe in some decent manner, and go to the Church, where (as I heare) they have laide the body of *Jeronimo*. Crowde in amongst the Women, as I will doe the like amongst the men, to heare what opinion passeth of his death, and whether wee shall bee scandalized thereby, or no.

*Silvestra*, who was now become full of pittie too late, quickly condescended, as desiring to see him dead, whom sometime she dearly affected in life. And being come to the Church, it is a matter to bee admired, if advisedly we consider on the powerfull working of love; for the heart of this woman, which the prosperous fortune of *Jeronimo* could not pierce, now in his wofull death did split in sunder; and the ancient sparks of love so long concealed in the embers, brake forth into a furious flame; and being violently surprized with extraordinary compassion, no sooner did she come neere to the dead body, where many stode weeping round about it; but strangely shrieking out aloud, she fell downe upon it: & even as extremity of greefe finished his life, so did it hers in the same manner. For she moved neither hand nor foot, because her vitall powers had quite forsaken her. The women labouring to comfort her by al the best means they could devise; did not take any knowledge of her, by reason of her disguised garments: but finding her dead indeede, and knowing her also to be *Silvestra*, being overcome with unspeakable compassion, & danted with no meane admiration, they stood strangely gazing each upon other.

Wonderfull crowds of people were then in the Church; and this accident being now noysed among the men, at length it came to her Husbands understanding, whose greefe was so great, as it exceeded all capacitie of expression. Afterward, he declared what had hapned in his house the precedent night, according as his wife had truly related to him, with all the speeches, which past between *Silvestra* and *Jeronimo*; by which discourse, they generally conceived, the certaine occasion of both their sodaine deaths, which moved them to great compassion. Then taking the yong womans body, and ordering it as a coarse ought to bee: they layed it on the same Biere by the yong man, and when they had sufficiently sorrowed for their disastrous fortunes, they gave them honourable buriall both in one grave. So, this poore couple, whome love (in life) could not joyne together, death did unite in an inseparable conjunction.

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***Messer Guiglielmo of Rossiglione having slaine Messer Guiglielmo Guardastagno, whom hee imagined to love his wife, gave her his heart to eate. Which she knowing afterward, threw her selfe out of an high window to the ground; and being dead, was then buried with her friend.***

## The ninth Novell.

***Whereby appeareth, what ill successe attendeth on them, that love contrarie to reason:  
in offering injurie both to friendship and marriage together.***

When the Novell of Madam *Neiphila* was ended, which occasioned much compassion in the whole assembly; the King who wold not infringe the priviledge graunted to *Dioneus*, no more remaining to speake but they two, began thus. I call to minde (gentle Ladies) a Novell, which (seeing we are so farre entred into the lamentable accidents of successelesse love) will urge you unto as much commisseration, as that so lately reported to you. And so much the rather; because the persons of whom we are to speake, were of respective quality; which approveth the accident to bee more cruell, then those whereof wee have formerly discoursed.

According as the people of *Provence* do report, there dwelt sometime in that jurisdiction, two noble Knights, each well possessed of Castles & followers; the one beeing named *Messer Guiglielmo de Rossiglione*, and the other *Messer Guiglielmo Guardastagno*. Now, in regard that they were both valiant Gentlemen, and singularly expert in actions of Armes; they loved together the more mutually, and held it as a kinde of custom, to be seene in all Tiltes and Tournaments, or any other exercises of Armes, going commonly alike in their wearing garments. And although their Castles stood about five miles distant each from other, yet were they dayly conversant together, as very loving and intimate friends. The one of them, I meane *Messer Guiglielmo de Rossiglione*, had to wife a very gallant beautifull Lady, of whom *Messer Guardastagno* (forgetting the lawes of respect and loyall friendship) became over-fondly enamoured, expressing the same by such outward meanes, that the Lady her selfe tooke knowledge thereof, and not with any dislike, as it seemed, but rather lovingly entertained; yet she grew not so forgetfull of her honour and estimation, as the other did of faith to his friend.

With such indiscretion was this idle love carried, that whether it sorted to effect, or no, I know not: but the husband perceived some such manner of behaviour, as hee could not easily digest, nor thought it fitting to endure. Whereuppon, the league of friendly amity so long continued, began to faile in very strange fashion, and became converted into deadly hatred: which yet hee very cunningly concealed, bearing an outward shew of constant friendship still, but (in his heart) hee had vowed the death of *Guardastagno*. Nothing wanted, but by what meanes it might best be effected, which fell out to bee in this manner. A publicke Just or Tourney, was proclaimed by sound of Trumpet throughout all France, wherewith immediately, *Messer Guiglielmo Rossiglione* acquainted *Messer Guardastagno*, entreating him that they might further conferre thereon together, and for that purpose to come and visit him, if he intended to have any hand in the businesse. *Guardastagno* being exceeding gladde of this accident, which gave him liberty to see his Mistresse; sent answer backe by the messenger, that on the morrow at night, he would come and sup with *Rossiglione*; who upon this reply, projected to himselfe in what manner to kill him.

On the morrow, after dinner, arming himselfe, and two more of his servants with him, such as he had solemnly sworne to secrecy, hee mounted on horseback, and rode on about a mile from his owne Castle, where he lay closely ambushed in a Wood, through which *Guardastagno* must needs passe. After he had stayed there some two houres space and more, he espyed him come riding with two of his attendants, all of them being unarmed, as no way distrusting any such intended treason. So soone as he was come to the place, where he had resolved to do the deed; hee rushed forth of the ambush, and having a sharpe Lance readily charged in his rest, ran mainly at him, saying: False villain, thou art dead. *Guardastagno*, having nothing wherewith to defend himselfe, nor his servants able to give him any succour; being pierced quite through the body with the Lance, downe hee fell dead to the ground, and his men (fearing the like misfortune to befall them) galloped mainely backe againe to their Lords Castle, not knowing them who had thus murdered their Master, by reason of their armed disguises, which in those martiall times were usually worne.

*Messer Guiglielmo Rossiglione*, alighting from his horse, and having a keene knife ready drawne in his hand; opened therewith the brest of dead *Guardastagno*, and taking foorth his heart with his owne hands, wrapped it in the Banderole belonging to his Lance, commanding one of his men to the charge thereof, and never to disclose the deed. So, mounting on horse-backe againe, and darke night drawing on apace, he returned home to his Castle. The Lady, who had heard before of *Guardastagnoes* intent, to suppe there that night, and (perhaps) being earnestly desirous to see him; mervailing at his so long tarrying, saide to her husband. Beleeve me Sir (quoth she) me thinks it is somewhat strange, that *Messer Guiglielmo Guardastagno* delays his comming so long, he never used to do so till now. I received tidings from him wife (said he) that he cannot be heere till to morrow. Whereat the Lady appearing to bee displeased, concealed it to her selfe, and used no more words.

*Rossiglione* leaving his Lady, went into the Kitchin, where calling for the Cooke, he delivered him the heart, saying: Take this heart of a wilde Boare, which it was my good happe to kill this day, and dresse it in the daintiest manner thou canst devise to doe; which being so done, when I am set at the Table, send it to me in a silver dish, with sauce beseeming so dainty a morsell. The Cooke tooke the heart, beleeving it to be no otherwise, then as his Lord had saide: and using his utmost skill in dressing it, did divide it into artificiall small slices, and made it most pleasing to be tasted. When supper time was come, *Rossiglione* sate downe at the table with his Lady: but hee had little or no appetite at all to eate, the wicked deed which he had done so perplexed his soule, and made him to sit very strangely musing. At length, the Cook brought in the dainty dish, which he himselfe setting before his wife, began to finde fault with his own lack of stomach, yet provoked her with many faire speeches, to tast the Cooks cunning in so rare a dish.

The Lady having a good appetite indeede, when she had first tasted it, fed afterward so heartily thereon, that shee left very little, or none at all remaining. When he perceyved that all was eaten, he said unto her: Tel me Madam, how you do like this delicate kinde of meat? In good faith Sir (quoth she) in all my life I was never better pleased. Now trust mee Madam, answered the Knight, I doe verily beleeve you, nor do I greatly wonder thereat, if you like that dead, which you loved so dearly being alive. When she heard these words, a long while she sate silent, but afterward saide. I pray you tell mee Sir, what meate was this which you have made me to eate? Muse no longer (said he) for therein I will quickly resolve thee. Thou hast eaten the heart of *Messer Guiglielmo Guardastagno*, whose love was so deare and precious to thee, thou false, perfidious, and disloyall Lady: I pluckt it out of his vile body with mine owne hands, and made my Cooke to dresse it for thy diet.

Poor Lady, how strangely was her soule afflicted, hearing these harsh and unpleasing speeches? Teares flowed abundantly from her faire eies, and like tempestuous windes embowelled in the earth, so did vehement sighes breake mainly from her heart, and after a tedious time of silence, she spake in this manner. My Lord and husband, you have done a most disloyall and damnable deede, misguided by your owne wicked jealous opinion, and not by any just cause given you, to murther so worthie and Noble a Gentleman. I protest unto you uppon my soule, which I wish to bee confounded in eternall perdition, if ever I were unchaste to your bedde, or allowed him any other favour, but what might well become so honourable a friend. And seeing my bodie hath bene made the receptacle for so precious a kinde of foode, as the heart of so valiant and courteous a Knight, such as was the Noble *Guardastagno*; never shall any other foode heereafter, have entertainment there, or my selfe live the Wife to so bloody a husband.

So starting uppe from the Table, and stepping unto a great gazing Windowe, the Casement whereof standing wide open behinde her: violently shee leaped out thereat, which beeing an huge heighth in distance from the ground, the fall did not onely kill her, but also shivered her bodie into many peeces. Which *Rossiglione* perceyving, hee stoode like a bodie without a soule, confounded with the killing of so deare a friend, losse of a chaste and honourable wife, and all through his owne over-credulous conceit.

Uppon further conference with his private thoughtes, and remorsefull acknowledgement of his heinous offence, which repentance (too late) gave him eyes now to see, though rashnesse before would not permit him to consider; these two extremitities enlarged his dulled understanding. First, he grew fearfull of the friends and followers to murdered *Guardastagno*, as also the whole Countrey of *Provence*, in regarde of the peoples generall love unto him; which being two maine and important motives, both to the detestation of so horrid an acte, and immediate severe revenge to succeed thereon: hee made such provision as best hee could, and as so sodaine a warning would give leave, hee fled away secretly in the night season.

These unpleasing newes were soone spread abroad the next morning, not only of the unfortunate accidents, but also of *Rossigliones* flight; in regard whereof, the dead bodyes being found, and brought together, as well by the people belonging to *Guardastagno*, as them that attended on the Lady: they were layed in the Chappell of *Rossigliones* Castell; where, after so much lamentation for so great a misfortune to befall them, they were honourably enterred in one faire Tombe, with excellent Verses engraven thereon, expressing both their noble degree, and by what unhappy meanes, they chanced to have buriall there.

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***A Physitians wife laide a Lover of her Maids (supposing him to bee dead) in a Chest, by reason that he had drunke water, which usually was given to procure a sleepy entrancing. Two Lombard Usurers, stealing the Chest, in hope of a rich booty, carried it into their owne house, where afterward the man awaking, was apprehended for a Theefe. The Chamber-maide to the Physitians wife, going before the bench of Justice, accuseth her selfe for putting the imagined dead body into the Chest, by which meanes he escapeth hanging. And the theeves which stole away the Chest, were condemned to pay a great summe of money.***

## **The tenth Novell.**

***Wherein is declared, that sometime by adventurous accident, rather then anie reasonable comprehension, a man may escape out of manifold perilles, but especially in occurrences of Love.***

After that the King had concluded his Novell, there remained none now but *Dioneus* to tell the last; which himselfe confessing, and the King commaunding him to proceede, he beganne in this manner. So many miseries of unfortunate Love, as all of you have already related, hath not onely swolne your eyes with weeping, but also made sicke our hearts with sighing: yea (Gracious Ladies) I my selfe finde my spirits not meanly afflicted thereby. Wherefore the whole day hath bene very irkesome to me, and I am not a little glad, that it is so neere ending. Now, for the better shutting it up altogether, I would be very loath to make an addition, of any more such sad and mournfull matter, good for nothing but onely to feede melancholly humour, and from which (I hope) my faire Starres will defend me. Tragical discourse, thou art no fit companion for me, I will therefore report a Novell which may minister a more joviall kinde of argument, unto those tales



that must bee told to morrow, and with the expiration of our present Kings reigne, to rid us of all heart-greeving heereafter.

Know then (most gracious assembly) that it is not many yeares since, when there lived in *Salerne*, a verie famous Physitian, named Signieur *Mazzeo della Montagna*, who being already well entred into years, would (neverthesse) marrie with a beautifull young Mayden of the Cittie, bestowing rich garments, gaudie attyres, Ringes, and Jewelles on her, such as few Women else could any way equall, because hee loved her most deereley. Yet being an aged man, and never remembering, how vaine and idle a thing it is, for age to make such an unfitting Election, injurious to both; and therefore endangering that domesticke agreement, which ought to bee the sole and maine comfort of Marriage: it maketh mee therefore to misdoubt, that as in our former Tale of Signiour *Ricciardo de Cinzica*, some dayes of the Calender did heere seeme as distastefull, as those that occasioned the other Womans discontentment. In such unequall choyses, Parents commonly are more blame-woorthie, then any imputation, to bee layde on the young Women, who gladdely would enjoy such as in heart they have elected: but that their Parents, looking thorough the glasses of greedie lucre, doe overthrow both their owne hopes, and the faire fortunes of their children together.

Yet to speake uprightly of this young married Wife, she declared her selfe to be of a wise and chearefull spirit, not discouraged with her inequalitye of marriage: but bearing all with a contented browe, for feare of urging the very least mislike in her Husband. And hee, on the other side, when occasions did not call him to visite his pacients, or to be present at the Colledge among his fellow-Doctours, would alwayes bee chearing and comforting his Wife, as one that could hardly afford to bee out of her company. There is one especiall fatall misfortune, which commonly awaiteth on olde mens marriages; when freezing December will match with flouring May, and greene desires appeare in age, beyond all possibility of performance. Nor are there wanting good store of wanton Gallants, who hating to see Beauty in this manner betrayed, and to the embraces of a loathed bed, will make their folly seene in publike appearance, and by their dayly proffers of amorous services (seeming compassionate of the womans disaster) are usually the cause of jealous suspitions, & very heinous houshold discontentments.

Among divers other, that faine would bee nibling at this bayte of beautie, there was one, named *Ruggiero de Jeroly*, of honourable parentage, but yet of such a deboshed and disordered life, as neither Kindred or Friends, were willing to take any knowledge of him, but utterly gave him over to his dissolute courses: so that, thoroughout all *Salerne*, his conditions caused his generall contempt, and hee accounted no better, but even as a theeving and lewde companion. The Doctours Wife, had a Chamber-maide attending on her; who, notwithstanding all the ugly deformities in *Ruggiero*, regarding more his person then his imperfections (because hee was a compleate and well-featured youth) bestowed her affection most entirely on him, and oftentimes did supplie his wants, with her owne best meanes.

*Ruggiero* having this benefite of the Maides kinde love to him, made it an hopefull mounting Ladder, whereby to derive some good liking from the Mistresse, presuming rather on his outward comely parts, then anie other honest quality that might commend him. The Mistresse knowing what choyse her Maide had made, and unable by any perswasions to remooove her, tooke knowledge of *Ruggieroes* privat resorting to hir house, and in meere love to her Maide (who had very many especiall deservings in her) oftentimes she would (in kinde manner) rebuke him, and advise him to a more settled course of life; which counsell, that it might take the better effect; she graced with liberall gifts: one while with Gold, others with Silver, and often with garments, for his comelier accesse thether: which bounty, he (like a lewde mistaker) interpreted as assurances of her affection to him, and that he was more graceful in her eye, then any man else could be.

In the continuance of these proceedings, it came to passe, that master Doctor *Mazzeo* (being not onely a most expert Physitian, but likewise as skilfull in Chirurgerie beside) hadde a Pacient in cure, who by great misfortune, had one of his legges broken all in pieces; which some weaker judgement having formerly dealt withall, the bones and sinewes were become so fowly putrified, as he tolde the parties friends, that the legge must bee quite cut off, or else the Pacient must needes dye: yet he intended so to order the matter, that the perrill should proceede no further, to prejudice any other part of the bodie. The case beeing thus resolved on with the Pacient and his Friends, the day and time was appointed when the deede should be done: and the Doctor conceyving, that except the Patient were sleepily entranced, hee could not by anie meanes endure the paine, but must needes hinder what he meant to do: by distillation hee made such an artificiall Water, as (after the Pacient hath receyved it) it will procure a kinde of dead sleepe, and endure so long a space, as necessity requireth the use thereof, in full performance of the worke.

After he had made this sleepy water, he put it into a glasse, wherewith it was filled (almost) up to the brimme; and till the time came when hee should use it; hee set it in his owne Chamber-Windowe, never acquainting any one, to what purpose he had provided the water, nor what was his reason of setting it there; when it drew towards the evening, and he was returned home from his pacients, a Messenger brought him Letters from *Malfy*, concerning a great conflict hapning there between two Noble Families, wherein divers were very dangerously wounded on either side, and without his speedy repairing thither, it would prove to the losse of many lives. Heereupon, the cure of the mans leg must needes bee prolonged, untill he was returned backe againe, in regard that manie of the wounded persons were his worthy friends, and liberall bountie was there to be expected, which made him presently go aboard a small Barke, and forthwith set away towards *Malfy*.

This absence of Master Doctor *Mazzeo*, gave opportunity to adventurous *Ruggiero*, to visite his house (he being gone) in hope to get more Crownes, and courtesie from the Mistresse, under

formall colour of courting the Maide. And being closely admitted into the house, when divers Neighbours were in conference with her Mistresse, and helde her with such pleasing Discourse, as required longer time then was expected: the Maide, had no other room to conceale *Ruggiero* in, but onely the bed chamber of her Master, where she lockt him in; because none of the houshold people should descry him, and stayed attending on her Mistris, till all the Guests tooke their leave, and were gone. *Ruggiero* thus remayning alone in the Chamber, for the space of three long houres and more, was visited neither by Maide nor Mistris, but awaited when he should bee set at liberty.

Now, whether feeding on salt meats before his coming thither, or customary use of drinking, which maketh men unable any long while to abstain, as being never satisfied with excesse; which of these two extreames they were, I know not: but drink needs hee must. And, having no other meanes for quenching his thirst, espied the glasse of water standing in the Window, and thinking it to be some soveraigne kinde of water, reserved by the Doctor for his owne drinking, to make him lusty in his old years, he tooke the glasse; and finding the Water pleasing to his pallate, dranke it off every drop; then sitting downe on a Coffey by the beds side, soone after hee fell into a sound sleepe, according to the powerfull working of the water.

No sooner were all the Neighbours gone, and the Maide at libertie from her Mistresse, but unlocking the doore, into the chamber she went; and finding *Ruggiero* sitting fast asleepe, she began to hunch and punche him, entreating him (softly) to awake: but all was to no purpose, for hee neither mooved, or answered one word, whereat her patience being some what provoked, she punched him more rudely, and angerly said: Awake for shame thou drowsie dullard, and if thou be so desirous of sleeping, get thee home to thine owne lodging, because thou art not allowed to sleep heere. *Ruggiero* being thus rudely punched, fell from off the Coffey flat on the ground, appearing no other in all respects, then as if hee were a dead body. Whereat the Maide being fearfully amazed, plucking him by the nose and yong beard, and what else she could devise to do, yet all her labour proving still in vaine: she was almost beside her wits, stamping and raving all about the room, as if sence and reason had forsaken her; so violent was her extreame distraction.

Upon the hearing of this noise, her Mistris came sodainely into the Chamber, where being affrighted at so strange an accident, and suspecting that *Ruggiero* was dead indeed: she pinched him strongly, and burnt his fingers with a candle, yet all was as fruitlesse as before. Then sitting downe, she began to consider advisedly with her selfe, how much her honour and reputation would be endangered heereby, both with her Husband, and in vulgar opinion when this should come to publique notice. For (quoth she to her Maide) it is not thy fond love to this unruly fellow that can sway the censure of the monster multitude, in beleeving his accesse hither onely to thee: but my good name, and honest repute, as yet untoucht with the very least taxation, will be rackt on the tenter of infamous judgement, and (though never so cleare) branded with generall condemnation. It is wisdom therefore, that we should make no noise but (in silence) consider with our selves, how to cleare the house of this dead body, by some such helpfull and witty device, as when it shall bee found in the morning, his being heere may passe without suspition, and the worlds rash opinion no way touch us.

Weeping and lamenting is now laid aside, and all hope in them of his lives restoring: onely to rid his body out of the house, that now requires their care and cunning, whereupon the Maide thus beganne. Mistresse (quoth she) this evening, although it was very late, at our next Neighbours doore (who you know is a Joyner by his trade) I saw a great Chest stand; and, as it seemeth, for a publike sale, because two or three nightes together, it hath not bene thence removed: and if the owner have not lockt it, all invention else cannot furnish us with the like help. For therein will we lay his body, whereon I will bestow two or three wounds with my Knife, and leaving him so, our house can be no more suspected concerning his being heere, then any other in the streete beside; nay rather farre lesse, in regard of your husbands credit and authority. Moreover, heereof I am certaine, that he being of such bad and disordered qualities: it will the more likely be imagined, that he was slaine by some of his own loose companions, being with them about some pilfering business, and afterward hid his body in the chest, it standing so fitly for the purpose, and darke night also favouring the deed.

The Maids counsell past under the seale of allowance, only her Mistris thought it not convenient, that (having affected him so deerely) shee should mangle his body with any wounds; but rather to let it be gathered by more likely-hood, that villaines had strangled him, and then conveyed his body into the Chest. Away she sends the Maide, to see whether the Chest stood there still, or no; as indeede it did, and unlockt, whereof they were not a little joyfull. By the helpe of her Mistresse, the Maide tooke *Ruggiero* upon her shoulders, and bringing him to the doore, with diligent respect that no one could discover them; in the Chest they laide him, and so there left him, closing downe the lidde according as they found it.

In the same street, and not farre from the Joyner, dwelt two yong men who were Lombards, living upon the interest of their moneyes, coveting to get much, and spend little. They having observed where the chest stood, and wanting a necessary mooveable to houshold, yet loath to lay out mony for buying it: conspired together this very night, to steale it thence, and carry it home to their house, as accordingly they did; finding it somewhat heavy, and therefore imagining, that matter of woorth was contained therein. In the chamber where their wives lay, they left it; and so without any further search till the next morning, they laid them down to rest likewise.

*Ruggiero*, who had now slept a long while, the drinke being digested, & the vertue thereof fully consummated; began to awake before day. And although his naturall sleep was broken, and his sences had recoverd their former power, yet notwithstanding, there remained such an

astonishment in his braine, as not onely did afflict him all the day following, but also divers dayes and nights afterward. Having his eies wide open, & yet not discerning any thing, he stretched forth his armes every where about him, and finding himselfe to be enclosed in the chest, he grew more broad awake, and said to himselfe. What is this? Where am I? Do I wake or sleepe? Full well I remember, that not long since I was in my sweet-hearts Chamber, and now (me thinkes) I am mewed up in a chest. What shold I thinke heereof? Is master Doctor returned home, or hath some other inconvenience hapned, whereby finding me asleepe, she was enforced to hide me thus? Surely it is so, and otherwise it cannot bee: wherefore, it is best for mee to lye still, and listen when I can heare any talking in the Chamber.

Continuing thus a longer while then otherwise hee would have done, because his lying in the bare Chest was somewhat uneasie and painfull to him; turning divers times on the one side, and then as often again on the other, coveting still for ease, yet could not find any: at length, he thrust his backe so strongly against the Chests side, that (it standing on an un-even ground) it began to totter, and after fell downe. In which fall, it made so loud a noise, as the women (lying in the beds standing by) awaked, and were so overcome with feare, that they had not the power to speake one word. *Ruggiero* also being affrighted with the Chests fall, and perceiving how by that meanes it was become open: he thought it better, least some other sinister fortune should befall him, to be at open liberty, then inclosed up so strictly. And because he knew not where he was, as also hoping to meet with his Mistresse; he went all about groping in the dark, to finde either some staires or doore, whereby to get forth.

When the Women (being then awake) heard his trampling, as also his justling against the doores and Windowes; they demaunded, Who was there? *Ruggiero*, not knowing their voyces, made them no answer, wherefore they called to their husbands, who lay verie soundly sleeping by them, by reason of their so late walking abroad, and therefore heard not this noise in the house. This made the Women much more timorous, and therefore rising out of their beddes, they opened the Casements towards the streete, crying out aloude, Theeves, Theeves. The neighbours arose upon this outcry, running up and downe from place to place, some engirting the house, and others entering into it: by means of which troublesome noise, the two Lombards awaked, and seizing there uppon poore *Ruggiero*, (who was well-neere affrighted out of his wittes, at so strange an accident, and his owne ignorance, how he happened thither, and how to escape from them) he stood gazing on them without any answer.

By this time, the Sergeants and other Officers of the City, ordinarily attending on the Magistrate, beeing raised by the tumult of this uproare, were come into the house, and had poore *Ruggiero* committed unto their charge: who bringing him before the Governor, was forthwith called in question, and known to be of a most wicked life, a shame to al his friends and kindred. He could say little for himselfe, never denying his taking in the house, and therefore desiring to finish all his fortunes together, desperately confessed, that he came with a felonious intent to rob them, and the Governor gave him sentence to be hanged.

Soone were the newes spread throughout *Salerne*, that *Ruggiero* was apprehended, about robbing the house of the two usuring Lombardes: which when Mistresse Doctor and her Chamber-maide heard, they were confounded with most straunge admiration, and scarcely credited what they themselves had done the night before, but rather imagined all matters past, to be no more then meerely a dreame, concerning *Ruggieroes* dying in the house, and their putting him into the Chest, so that by no likely or possible meanes, hee could bee the man in this perillous extremitie.

In a short while after, Master Doctor *Mazzeo* was returned from *Malfy*, to proceede in his cure of the poore mans legge; and calling for his glasse of Water, which he left standing in his owne Chamber window, it was found quite empty, and not a drop in it: whereat hee raged so extremly, as never had the like impatience beene noted in him. His wife, and her Maide, who had another kinde of businesse in their braine, about a dead man so strangely come to life againe, knewe not well what to say; but at the last, his Wife thus replied somewhat angerly. Sir (quoth she) what a coyle is heere about a paltry glasse of Water, which perhaps hath bene spilt, yet neyther of us faulty therein? Is there no more such water to be had in the world? Alas deere Wife (saide hee) you might repute it to be a common kinde of Water, but indeede it was not so; for I did purposely compound it, onely to procure a dead-seeming sleepe: And so related the whole matter at large, of the Patients legge, and his Waters losse.

When she had heard these words of her husband, presently she conceived, that the water was drunke off by *Ruggiero*, which had so sleepily entranced his senses, as they verily thought him to bee dead, wherefore she saide. Beleeve me Sir, you never acquainted us with any such matter, which would have procured more carefull respect of it: but seeing it is gone, your skill extendeth to make more, for now there is no other remedy. While thus Master Doctor and his Wife were conferring together, the Maide went speedily into the Citie, to understand truely, whither the condemned man was *Ruggiero*, and what would now become of him. Beeing returned home againe, and alone with her Mistresse in the Chamber, thus she spake. Now trust me Mistresse, not one in the Citie speaketh well of *Ruggiero*, who is the man condemned to dye; and, for ought I can perceive, he hath neither Kinsman nor Friend that will doe any thing for him; but he is left with the Provost, and must be executed to morrow morning. Moreover Mistresse, by such instructions as I have received, I can well-neere informe you, by what meanes hee came to the two Lombards house, if all be true that I have heard.

You know the Joyner before whose doore the Chest stode, wherein we did put *Ruggiero*; there is now a contention betweene him and another man, to whom (it seemeth) the Chest doth belong; in regard whereof, they are readie to quarrell extremly each with other. For the one owning the

Chest, and trusting the Joyner to sell it for him, would have him to pay him for the Chest. The Joyner denieth any sale thereof, avouching, that the last night it was stolne from his doore. Which the other man contrarying, maintaineth that he solde the Chest to the two Lombard usurers, as himself is able to affirme, because he found it in the house, when he (being present at the apprehension of *Ruggiero*) sawe it there in the same house. Heereupon, the Joyner gave him the lye, because he never sold it to any man; but if it were there, they had robd him of it, as hee would make it manifest to their faces. Then falling into calmer speeches they went together to the Lombardes house, even as I returned home. Wherefore Mistresse, as you may easily perceiue, *Ruggiero* was (questionlesse) carried thither in the chest, and so there found; but how he revived againe, I cannot comprehend.

The Mistresse understanding now apparantly, the full effect of the whole businesse, and in what manner it had bene carried, revealed to the maide her husbands speeches, concerning the glasse of sleepe Water, which was the onely engine of all this trouble, clearly acquitting *Ruggiero* of the robbery, howsoever (in desperate fury, and to make an end of a life so contemptible) he had wrongfully accused himselfe. And notwithstanding this his hard fortune, which hath made him much more infamous then before, in all the dissolute behaviour of his life: yet it coulde not quaille her affection towards him; but being loath he should dye for some other mans offence, and hoping his future reformation; she fell on her knees before her mistresse, and (drowned in her teares) most earnestly entreated her, to advise her with some such happy course, as might bee the safety of poore *Ruggieroes* life. Mistresse Doctor, affecting her maide dearely, and plainly perceiving, that no disastrous fortune whatsoever, could alter her love to condemned *Ruggiero*; hoping the best heereafter, as the Maide her selfe did, and willing to save life rather then suffer it to be lost without just cause, she directed her in such discreet manner, as you will better conceyve by the successe.

According as she was instructed by hir Mistris, shee fell at the feete of Master Doctor, desiring him to pardon a great error, whereby shee had over-much offended him. As how? said Master Doctor. In this manner (quoth the Maid) and thus proceeded. You are not ignorant Sir, what a leud liver *Ruggiero de Jeroly* is, and notwithstanding all his imperfections, how dearely I love him, as hee protesteth the like to me, and thus hath our love continued a yeare, and more. You beeing gone to *Malfy*, and your absence granting me apt opportunity, for conference with so kinde a friend; I made the bolder, and gave him entrance into your house, yea even into mine owne Chamber, yet free from any abuse, neyther did hee (bad though he be) offer any. Thirsty he was before his coming thether, either by salt meats, or distempered diet, and I being unable to fetch him wine or water, by reason my Mistresse sate in the Hall, seriouslie talking with her Sisters; remembred, that I saw a viall of Water standing in your Chamber Windowe, which hee drinking quite off, I set it emptie in the place againe. I have heard your discontentment for the said Water, and confesse my fault to you therein: but who liveth so justly, without offending at one time or other? And I am heartily sorry for my transgression; yet not so much for the water, as the hard fortune that hath followd thereon; because thereby *Ruggiero* is in danger to lose his life, and all my hopes are utterly lost. Let me entreat you therefore (gentle Master) first to pardon me, and then to grant me permission, to succour my poore condemned friend, by all the best meanes I can devise.

When the Doctor had heard all her discourse, angry though he were, yet thus he answered with a smile. Much better had it bin, if thy follies punishment had falne on thy selfe, that it might have paide thee with deserved repentance, upon thy Mistresses finding thee sleeping. But go and get his deliverance if thou canst, with this caution, that if ever heereafter he be seene in my house, the peril thereof shall light on thy selfe. Receyving this answer, for her first entrance into the attempt, and as her Mistris had advised her, in all hast shee went to the prison, where shee prevailed so well with the Jaylor, that hee granted her private conference with *Ruggiero*. She having instructed him what he should say to the Provost, if he had any purpose to escape with life; went thither before him to the Provost, who admitting her into his presence, and knowing that shee was Master Doctors maid, a man especially respected of all the Citie, he was the more willing to heare her message, he imagining that shee was sent by her Master.

Sir (quoth shee) you have apprehended *Ruggiero de Jeroly*, as a theefe, and judgement of death is (as I heare) pronounced against him: but hee is wrongfully accused, and is clearly innocent of such a heinous detection. So entering into the History, she declared every circumstance, from the originall to the end: relating truly, that being her Lover, shee brought him into her Masters house, where he dranke the compounded sleepe water, and reputed for dead, she laide him in the Chest. Afterward, she rehearsed the speeches betweene the Joyner, and him that laide claime to the Chest, giving him to understand thereby, how *Ruggiero* was taken in the Lombards house.

The Provost presently gathering, that the truth in this case was easy to be knowne; sent first for Master Doctor *Mazzeo*, to know, whether hee compounded any such water, or no: which he affirmed to bee true, and upon what occasion he prepared it. Then the Joyner, the owner of the Chest, and the two Lombards, being severally questioned withall: it appeared evidently, that the Lombards did steale the chest in the night season, and carried it home to their owne house. In the end, *Ruggiero* being brought from the prison, and demanded, where hee was lodged the night before, made answer, that he knew not where. Only he well remembred, that bearing affection to the Chamber-maide of Master Doctor *Mazzeo della Montagna*, she brought him into a Chamber, where a violl of water stooode in the Window, and he being extreemly thirsty, dranke it off all. But what became of him afterward (till being awake, hee found himselfe enclosed in a Chest, and in the house of the two Lombards) he could not say any thing.

When the Provost had heard all their answers, which he caused them to repeate over divers

times, in regard they were very pleasing to him: he cleared *Ruggiero* from the crime imposed on him, and condemned the Lombards in three hundred Ducates, to be given to *Ruggiero* in way of an amends, and to enable his marriage with the Doctors Mayde, whose constancie was much commended, and wrought such a miracle on penitent *Ruggiero*; that, after his marriage, which was graced with great and honourable pompe, he regained the intimate love of all his kindred, and lived in most Noble condition, even as if he had never beene the disordered man.

If the former Novels had made all the Ladies sad and sighe, this last of *Dioneus* as much delighted them, as restoring them to their former jocond humour, and banishing Tragically discourse for ever. The King perceyving that the Sun was neere setting, and his government as neere ending, with many kinde and courteous speeches, excused himselfe to the Ladies, for being the motive of such an argument, as expressed the infelicity of poore Lovers. And having finished his excuse, up he arose, taking the Crowne of Lawrell from off his owne head, the Ladies awaiting on whose head he pleased next to set it, which proved to be the gracious Lady *Fiammetta*, and thus hee spake. Heere I place this Crowne on her head, that knoweth better then any other, how to comfort this fayre assembly to morrow, for the sorrow which they have this day endured.

Madame *Fiammetta*, whose lockes of haire were curled, long, and like golden wiers, hanging somewhat downe over her white & delicate shoulders, her visage round, wherein the Damaske Rose and Lilly contended for priority, the eyes in her head, resembling those of the Faulcon messenger, and a dainty mouth; her lippes looking like two little Rubyes with a commendable smile thus she replied.

*Philostratus*, gladly I do accept your gift; and to the end that ye may the better remember your selfe, concerning what you have done hitherto: I will and commaund, that generall preparation be made against to morrow, for faire and happy fortunes hapning to Lovers, after former cruell and unkinde accidents. Which proposition was very pleasing to them all.

Then calling for the Master of the Housholde, and taking order with him, what was most needfull to be done; shee gave leave unto the whole company (who were all risen) to go recreate themselves until supper time. Some of them walked about the Garden, the beauty whereof banished the least thought of wearinesse. Others walked by the River to the Mill, which was not farre off, and the rest fell to exercises, fitting their own fancies, untill they heard the summons for Supper. Hard by the goodly Fountaine (according to their wonted manner) they supped altogether, and were served to their no mean contentment: but being risen from the Table, they fell to their delight of singing and dancing. While *Philomena* led the dance, the Queene spake in this manner.

*Philostratus*, I intend not to varie from those courses heeretofore observed by my predecessors, but even as they have already done, so it is my authority, to command a Song. And because I am well assured, that you are not unfurnished of Songs answerable to the quality of the passed Novels: my desire is, in regard we would not be troubled heereafter, with any more discourses of unfortunate Love, that you shall sing a Song agreeing with your owne disposition. *Philostratus* made answer, that he was readie to accomplish her command, and without all further ceremony, thus he began.

*The Song.*

Chorus. *My teares do plainly prove,  
How justly that poore heart hath cause to greeve,  
Which (under trust) findes Treason in his love.*

*When first I saw her, that now makes me sigh,  
Distrust did never enter in my thoughts.  
So many vertues clearly shin'd in her,  
That I esteem'd all martyrdome was light  
Which Love could lay on me. Nor did I greeve,  
Although I found my liberty was lost.  
But now mine error I do plainly see:  
Not without sorrow, thus betray'd to bee.  
My teares do, &c.*

*For, being left by basest treachery  
Of her in whom I most reposed trust:  
I then could see apparant flatterie  
In all the fairest shewes that she did make.  
But when I strove to get forth of the snare,  
I found my selfe the further plunged in.  
For I beheld another in my place,  
And I cast off, with manifest disgrace.  
My teares do, &c.*

*Then felt my heart such hels of heavy woes,  
Not utterable. I curst the day and houre  
When first I saw her lovely countenance,  
Enricht with beautie, farre beyond all other,  
Which set my soule on fire, enflamde each part,*

*Making a martyrdome of my poore hart.  
My faith and hope being basely thus betrayde;  
I durst not moove, to speake I was affrayde.  
My teares do, &c.*

*Thou canst (thou powerfull God of Love) perceive,  
My ceasselesse sorrow, voide of any comfort,  
I make my moane to thee, and do not fable,  
Desiring, that to end my misery,  
Death may come speedily, and with his Dart  
With one fierce stroke, quite passing through my hart:  
To cut off future fell contending strife,  
An happy end be made of Love and Life.  
My teares do, &c.*

*No other meanes of comfort doth remaine,  
To ease me of such sharpe afflictions,  
But only death. Grant then that I may die,  
To finish greefe and life in one blest houre.  
For, being bereft of any future joyes,  
Come, take me quickly from so false a friend.  
Yet in my death, let thy great power approve,  
That I died true, and constant in my Love.  
My teares, &c.*

*Happy shall I account this sighing Song,  
If some (beside my selfe) doe learne to sing it,  
And so consider of my miseries,  
As may incite them to lament my wrongs.  
And to be warned by my wretched fate;  
Least (like my selfe) themselves do sigh too late.  
Learne Lovers learne, what tis to be unjust,  
And be betrayed where you repose best trust.*

Finis

The words contained in this Song, did manifestly declare, what torturing afflictions poore *Philostratus* felt, and more (perhaps) had beene perceived by the lookes of the Lady whom he spake of, being then present in the dance; if the sodaine ensuing darknesse had not hid the crimson blush, which mounted up into her face. But the Song being ended, & divers other beside, lasting till the houre of rest drew on; by command of the Queene, they all repaired to their Chambers.

### ***The End of the Fourth Day.***

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## **THE FIFT DAY.**

***Whereon, all the Discourses do passe under the Governement of the most Noble Lady  
Fiammetta: Concerning such persons, as have bene successfull in their Love, after  
many hard and perillous misfortunes.***

### **The Induction.**

Now began the Sunne to dart foorth his golden beames, when Madam *Fiammetta* (incited by the sweete singing Birdes, which since the breake of day, sat merrily chanting on the trees) arose from her bed: as all the other Ladies likewise did, and the three young Gentlemen descending downe into the fields, where they walked in a gentle pace on the greene grasse, until the Sunne were risen a little higher. On many pleasant matters they conferred together, as they walked in severall companies, till at the length the Queene, finding the heate to enlarge it selfe strongly, returned backe to the Castle; where when they were all arrived, shee commanded, that after this mornings walking, their stomackes should bee refreshed with wholesome Wines, as also divers sorts of banquetting stufte. Afterward, they all repaired into the Garden, not departing thence, untill the houre of dinner was come: at which time, the Master of the houshold, having prepared every thing in decent readinesse, after a solemne song was sung, by order from the Queene, they were seated at the Table.

When they had dined, to their owne liking and contentment, they began (in continuation of their former order) to exercise divers dances, and afterward voyces to their instruments, with many pretty Madrigals and Roundelays. Uppon the finishing of these delights, the Queene gave them leave to take their rest, when such as were so minded, went to sleep, others solaced themselves in the Garden. But after midday was overpast, they met (according to their wonted manner) and as the Queene had commanded, at the faire Fountaine; where she being placed in her seate

royall, and casting her eye upon *Pamphilus*, shee bad him begin the dayes discourses, of happy successe in love, after disastrous and troublesome accidents; who yeelding thereto with humble reverence, thus began.

Many Novels (gracious Ladies) do offer themselves to my memory, wherewith to beginne so pleasant a day, as it is her Highnesse desire that this should be, among which plenty, I esteeme one above all the rest: because you may comprehend thereby, not onely the fortunate conclusion, wherewith we intend to begin our day; but also, how mighty the forces of Love are, deserving to bee both admired and revered. Albeit there are many, who scarsely knowing what they say, do condemne them with infinite grosse imputations: which I purpose to disprove, & (I hope) to your no little pleasing.

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***Chynon, by falling in love, became wise, and by force of Armes, winning his faire Lady Iphigenia on the Seas, was afterward imprisoned at Rhodes. Being delivered by one named Lysimachus, with him he recovered his Iphigenia againe, and faire Cassandra, even in the midst of their mariage. They fled with them into Candye, where after they had married them, they were called home to their owne dwelling.***

## **The first Novell.**

***Wherein is approved, that Love (oftentimes) maketh a man both wise and valiant.***

According to the ancient Annales of the *Cypriots*, there sometime lived in *Cyprus*, a Noble Gentleman, who was commonly called *Aristippus*, and exceeded all other of the Countrey in the goods of Fortune. Divers children he had, but (amongst the rest) a Sonne, in whose birth he was more infortunate then any of the rest; and continually greeved, in regard, that having all the compleate perfections of beauty, good forme, and manly parts, surpassing all other youths of his age or stature, yet hee wanted the reall ornament of the soule, reason and judgement; being (indeed) a meere Ideot or Foole, and no better hope to be expected of him. His true name, according as he receyved it by Baptisme, was *Galesus*, but because neyther by the labourious paines of his Tutors, indulgence, and faire endeavour of his parents, or ingenuity of any other, he could bee brought to civility of life, understanding of Letters, or common carriage of a reasonable creature: by his grosse and deformed kinde of speech, his qualities also savouring rather of brutish breeding, then any way derived from manly education; as an epithite of scorne and derision, generally, they gave him the name of *Chynon*, which in their native Countrey language, and divers other beside, signifieth a very Sot or Foole, and so was he termed by every one.

This lost kinde of life in him, was no meane burthen of greefe unto his Noble Father, and all hope being already spent, of any future happy recovery, he gave command (because he would not alwayes have such a sorrow in his sight) that he should live at a Farme of his owne in a Country Village, among his Peazants and Plough-Swaines. Which was not any way distastefull to *Chynon*, but well agreed with his owne naturall disposition; for their rurall qualities, and grosse behaviour pleased him beyond the Cities civility. *Chynon* living thus at his Fathers Countrey Village, exercising nothing else but rurall demeanour, such as then delighted him above all other: it chanced upon a day about the houre of noone, as hee was walking over the fields, with a long Staffe on his necke, which commonly he used to carry; he entred into a small thicket, reputed the goodliest in all those quarters, and by reason it was then the month of May, the Trees had their leaves fairely shot forth.

When he had walked thorow the thicket, it came to passe, that (even as if good Fortune guided him) he came into a faire Meadow, on everie side engirt with Trees, and in one corner thereof stode a goodly Fountaine, whose current was both coole and cleare. Harde by it, uppon the greene grasse, he espied a very beautifull yong Damosell, seeming to bee fast asleepe, attired in such fine loose garments, as hidde verie little of her white body: onely from the girdle downward, shee ware a kirtle made close unto her, of interwoven delicate silke, and at her feete lay two other Damosels sleeping, and a servant in the same manner. No sooner hadde *Chynon* fixed his eie upon her, but he stood leaning uppon his staffe, and viewed her very advisedly, without speaking a word, and in no mean admiration, as if he had never seene the forme of a woman before. He began then to feele in his harsh rurall understanding (where into never till now, either by painfull instruction, or all other good meanes used to him, any honest civility had power of impression) a strange kinde of humour to awake, which informed his grosse and dull spirite, that this Damosell was the very fairest, which ever any living man beheld.

Then he began to distinguish her parts, commending the tresses of hir haire, which he imagined to be of gold; her forehead, nose, mouth, neck, armes, but (above all) her brests, appearing (as yet) but onely to shewe themselves, like two little mountainets. So that, of a fielden clownish lout, he would needs now become a judge of beauty, coveting earnestly in his soule, to see her eyes, which were veiled over with sound sleepe, that kept them fast enclosed together, and onely to looke on them, hee wished a thousand times, that she would awake. For, in his judgement, she excelled all the women that ever he had seene, and doubted, whether she were some Goddess or no; so strangely was he metamorphosed from folly, to a sensible apprehension, more then common. And so far did this sodaine knowledge in him extend; that he could conceive of divine and celestiall things, and that they were more to be admired & revered, then those of humane

or terrene consideration; wherefore the more gladly he contented himselfe, to tarry till she awaked of her owne accord. And although the time of stay seemed tedious to him, yet notwithstanding, he was overcome with such extraordinary contentment, as hee had no power to depart thence, but stood as if he had bin glued fast to the ground.

After some indifferent respite of time, it chanced that the young Damosel (who was named *Iphigenia*) awaked before any of the other with her, and lifting up her head, with her eyes wide open, shee saw *Chynon* standing before her, leaning still on his staffe; whereat mervailing not a little, she saide unto him: *Chynon*, whither wanderest thou, or what dost thou seeke for in this wood? *Chynon*, who not onely by his countenance, but likewise his folly, Nobility of birth, and wealthy possessions of his father, was generally knowne throughout the Countrey, made no answer at all to the demand of *Iphigenia*: but so soone as he beheld her eyes open, he began to observe them with a constant regard, as being perswaded in his soule, that from them flowed such an unutterable singularity, as he had never felt till then. Which the yong Gentlewoman well noting, she began to wax fearfull, least these stedfast lookes of his, should incite his rusticity to some attempt, which might redound to her dishonour: wherefore awaking her women and servant, and they all being risen, she saide. Farewell *Chynon*, I leave thee to thine owne good Fortune; whereto hee presently replyed, saying: I will go with you. Now, although the Gentlewoman refused his company, as dreading some acte of incivility from him: yet could she not devise any way to be rid of him, till he had brought her to her owne dwelling, where taking leave mannerly of her, hee went directly home to his Fathers house, saying; Nothing should compel him to live any longer in the muddy Countrey. And albeit his Father was much offended heereat, and all the rest of his kindred and friends: (yet not knowing how to helpe it) they suffered him to continue there still, expecting the cause of this his so sodaine alteration, from the course of life, which contented him so highly before.

*Chynon* being now wounded to the heart (where never any civil instruction could before get entrance) with loves piercing dart, by the bright beauty of *Iphigenia*, mooved much admiration (falling from one change to another) in his Father, Kindred, and all else that knew him. For first, he requested of his Father, that he might be habited and respected like to his other Brethren, whereto right gladly he condescended. And frequenting the company of civill youths, observing also the carriage of Gentlemen, especially such as were amorously enclined: he grew to a beginning in short time (to the wonder of every one) not onely to understande the first instruction of letters, but also became most skilfull, even amongst them that were best exercised in Philosophie. And afterward, love to *Iphigenia* being the sole occasion of this happy alteration, not only did his harsh and clownish voyce convert it selfe more mildely, but also hee became a singular Musitian, & could perfectly play on any Instrument. Beside, he tooke delight in the riding and managing of great horses, and finding himselfe of a strong and able body, he exercised all kinds of Military Disciplines, as wel by sea, as on the land. And, to be breefe, because I would not seeme tedious in the repetition of al his vertues, scarsly had he attained to the fourth yeare, after he was thus false in love, but hee became generally knowne, to bee the most civil, wise, and worthy Gentleman, as well for all vertues enriching the minde, as any whatsoever to beautifie the body, that very hardly he could be equalled throughout the whole kingdome of *Cyprus*.

What shall we say then, (vertuous Ladies) concerning this *Chynon*? Surely nothing else, but that those high and divine vertues, infused into his gentle soule, were by envious Fortune bound and shut uppe in some small angle of his intellect, which being shaken and set at liberty by love, (as having a farre more potent power then Fortune, in quickning and reviving the dull drowsie spirits); declared his mighty and soveraigne Authority, in setting free so many faire and precious vertues unjustly detayned, to let the worlds eye behold them truly, by manifest testimony, from whence he can deliver those spirits subjected to his power, & guide them (afterward) to the highest degrees of honour. And although *Chynon* by affecting *Iphigenia*, failed in some particular things; yet notwithstanding, his Father *Aristippus* duely considering, that love had made him a man, whereas (before) he was no better then a beast: not only endured all patiently, but also advised him therein, to take such courses as best liked himselfe. Nevertheless, *Chynon* (who refused to be called *Galesus*, which was his naturall name indeede) remembering that *Iphigenia* tearmed him *Chynon*, and coveting (under that title) to accomplish the issue of his honest amorous desire: made many motions to *Ciphæus* the Father of *Iphigenia*, that he would be pleased to let him enjoy her in marriage. But *Ciphæus* told him, that he had already passed his promise for her, to a Gentleman of *Rhodes*, named *Pasimondo*, which promise he religiously intended to performe.

The time being come, which was concluded on for *Iphigeniaes* marriage, in regard that the affianced husband had sent for her: *Chynon* thus communed with his owne thoughts. Now is the time (quoth he) to let my divine Mistresse see, how truly and honourably I doe affect her, because (by her) I am become a man. But if I could bee possessed of her, I should growe more glorious, then the common condition of a mortall man, and have her I will, or loose my life in the adventure. Beeing thus resolved, he prevailed with divers young Gentlemen his friends, making them of his faction, and secretly prepared a Shippe, furnished with all things for a Navall fight, setting sodainly forth to sea, and hulling abroad in those parts by which the vessell should passe, that must convey *Iphigenia* to *Rhodes* to her husband. After many honours done to them, who were to transport her thence unto *Rhodes*, being imbarked, they set saile upon their *Bon viaggio*.

*Chynon*, who slept not in a businesse so earnestly importing him, set on them (the day following) with his Ship, and standing aloft on the decke, cried out to them that had the charge of *Iphigenia*, saying. Strike your sayles, or else determine to be sunke in the Sea. The enemies to *Chynon*,



being nothing danted with his words, prepared to stand upon their own defence; which made *Chynon*, after the former speeches delivered, and no answer returned, to commaund the grappling Irons to bee cast forth, which tooke such fast hold on the Rhodians shippe, that (whether they would or no) both the vessels joynd close together. And hee shewing himselfe fierce like a Lyon, not tarrying to be seconded by any, stepped aboard the Rhodians ship, as if he made no respect at all of them, and having his sword ready drawne in his hand (incited by the vertue of unfaigned love) layed about him on all sides very manfully. Which when the men of *Rhodes* perceyved, calling downe their weapons, and all of them (as it were) with one voice, yeelded themselves his prisoners: whereupon he said.

Honest Friends, neither desire of booty, or hatred to you, did occasion my departure from *Cyprus*, thus to assaile you with drawne weapons: but that which heereto hath most mooved me, is a matter highly importing to me, and very easie for you to graunt, and so enjoy your present peace. I desire to have faire *Iphigenia* from you, whom I love above all other Ladies living, because I could not obtain her of her Father, to make her my lawfull wife in marriage. Love is the ground of my instant Conquest, and I must use you as my mortall enemies, if you stand upon any further tearmes with me, and do not deliver her as mine owne: for your *Pasimondo*, must not enjoy what is my right, first by vertue of my love, & now by conquest: Deliver her therefore, and depart hence at your pleasure.

The men of *Rhodes*, being rather constrained thereto, then of any free disposition in themselves; with teares in their eyes, delivered *Iphigenia* to *Chynon*; who beholding her in like manner to weepe, thus spake unto her. Noble Lady, do not any way discomfort your selfe, for I am your *Chynon*, who have more right and true title to you, and much better doe deserve to enjoy you, by my long continued affection to you, then *Pasimondo* can any way pleade; because you belong to him but only by promise. So, bringing her aboard his owne ship, where the Gentlemen his companions gave her kinde welcome, without touching any thing else belonging to the Rhodians, he gave them free liberty to depart.

*Chynon* being more joyfull, by the obtaining of his hearts desire, then any other conquest else in the world could make him, after hee had spent some time in comforting *Iphigenia*, who as yet sate sadly sighing; he consulted with his companions, who joynd with him in opinion, that their safest course was, by no meanes to returne to *Cyprus*; and therefore all (with one consent) resolved to set saile for *Candye*, where every one made account, but especially *Chynon*, in regard of ancient and newe combined Kindred, as also very intimate friends, to finde very worthy entertainment, and so to continue there safely with *Iphigenia*. But Fortune, who was so favourable to *Chynon*, in granting him so pleasing a Conquest, to shew her inconstancy, as sodainly changed the inestimable joy of our jocond Lover, into as heavy sorrow and disaster. For, foure houres were not fully compleated, since his departure from the Rhodians, but darke night came upon them, and he sitting conversing with his fayre Mistris, in the sweetest solace of his soule; the winds began to blow roughly, the Seas swelled angerly, & a tempest arose impetuously, that no man could see what his duty was to do, in such a great unexpected distresse, nor how to warrant themselves from perishing.

If this accident were displeasing to poore *Chynon*, I thinke the question were in vaine demanded: for now it seemed to him, that the Godds had granted his cheefe desire, to the end hee should dye with the greater anguish, in losing both his love and life together. His friends likewise, felte the selfesame affliction, but especially *Iphigenia*, who wept and greeved beyond all measure, to see the ship beaten, with such stormy billowes, as threatned her sinking every minute. Impatiently she cursed the love of *Chynon*, greatly blaming his desperate boldnesse, and maintaining, that so violent a tempest could never happen, but onely by the Gods displeasure, who would not permit him to have a wife against their will; and therefore thus punished his proud presumption, not only in his unavoidable death, but also that her life must perish for company.

She continuing in these wofull lamentations, and the Mariners labouring all in vaine, because the violence of the tempest increased more and more, so that every moment they expected wracking: they were carried (contrary to their owne knowledge) very neere unto the Isle of *Rhodes*, which they being no way able to avoid, and utterly ignorant of the coast; for safety of their lives, they laboured to land there if possibly they might. Wherein Fortune was somewhat furtherous to them, driving them into a small gulfe of the Sea, whereinto (but a little while before) the Rhodians, from whom *Chynon* had taken *Iphigenia*, were newly entred with their ship. Nor had they any knowledge each of other, till the breake of day (which made the heavens to looke more clearly) gave them discoverie, of being within a flight shoote together. *Chynon* looking forth, and espying the same ship which he had left the day before, hee grew exceeding sorrowfull, as fearing that which after followed, and therefore hee willed the Mariners, to get away from her by all their best endeavour, & let fortune afterward dispose of them as she pleased; for into a worse place they could not come, nor fall into the like danger.

The Mariners employed their very utmost paines, and all proved but losse of time: for the winde was so stern, and the waves so turbulent, that still they drove them the contrary way: so that striving to get forth of the gulfe, whether they would or no, they were driven on land, and instantly knowne to the Rhodians, whereof they were not a little joyful. The men of *Rhodes* being landed, ran presently to a neere neighbouring Village, where dwelt divers worthy Gentlemen, to whom they reported the arrivall of *Chynon*, what fortune befell them at Sea, and that *Iphigenia* might now be recovered againe, with chastisement to *Chynon* for his bold insolence. They being very joyfull of these good newes, tooke so many men as they could of the same Village, and ran immediately to the Sea side, where *Chynon* being newly Landed and his people, intending flight

into a neere adjoining Forrest, for defence of himselfe and *Iphigenia*, they were all taken, led thence to the Village, and afterwards to the chiefe City of *Rhodes*.

No sooner were they arrived, but *Pasimondo*, the intended Husband for *Iphigenia* (who had already heard the tydings) went and complayned to the Senate, who appointed a Gentleman of *Rhodes*, named *Lysimachus*, and being that yeare soveraigne Magistrate over the Rhodians, to go well provided for the apprehension of *Chynon* and all his company, committing them to prison, which accordingly was done. In this manner, the poore unfortunate lover *Chynon*, lost his faire *Iphigenia*, having won her in so short a while before, and scarsely requited with so much as a kisse. But as for *Iphigenia*, she was royally welcomed by many Lords and Ladies of *Rhodes*, who so kindly comforted her, that she soone forgotte all her greefe and trouble on the Sea, remaining in company of those Ladies and Gentlewomen, untill the day determined for her mariage.

At the earnest entreaty of divers Rhodian Gentlemen, who were in the Ship with *Iphigenia*, and had their lives courteously saved by *Chynon*: both he and his friends had their lives likewise spared, although *Pasimondo* laboured importunately, to have them all put to death; onely they were condemned to perpetuall imprisonment, which (you must thinke) was most greevous to them, as being now hopelesse of any deliverance. But in the meane time, while *Pasimondo* was ordering his nuptiall preparation, Fortune seeming to repent the wrongs shee had done to *Chynon*, prepared a new accident, whereby to comfort him in this deep distresse, and in such manner as I will relate unto you.

*Pasimondo* had a Brother, yonger then he in yeares, but not a jot inferiour to him in vertue, whose name was *Hormisda*, and long time the case had bene in question, for his taking to wife a faire yong Gentlewoman of *Rhodes*, called *Cassandra*; whom *Lysimachus* the Governour loved verie dearly, and hindred her marriage with *Hormisda*, by divers strange accidents. Now *Pasimondo* perceiving, that his owne Nuptials required much cost and solemnity, hee thought it very convenient, that one day might serve for both the Weddinges, which else would lanch into more lavish expences, and therefore concluded, that his brother *Hormisda* should marry *Cassandra*, at the same time as he wedded *Iphigenia*. Heereuppon, he consulted with the Gentlewomans parents, who liking the motion as well as he, the determination was set downe, and one day to effect the duties of both.

When this came to the hearing of *Lysimachus*, it was very greatly displeasing to him, because now he saw himselfe utterly deprived of al hope to attaine the issue of his desire, if *Hormisda* receyved *Cassandra* in marriage. Yet being a very wise and worthy man, hee dissembled his distaste, and began to consider on some apt meanes, whereby to disappoint the marriage once more, which he found impossible to bee done, except it were by way of rape or stealth. And that did not appear to him any difficult matter, in regard of his Office and Authority: onely it wold seeme dishonest in him, by giving such an unfitting example. Neverthelesse, after long deliberation, honour gave way to love, and resolutely he concluded to steale her away, whatsoever became of it.

Nothing wanted now, but a convenient company to assist him, & the order how to have it done. Then he remembred *Chynon* and his friends, whom he detained as his prisoners, and perswaded himself, that he could not have a more faithfull friend in such a business, then *Chynon* was. Hereupon, the night following, he sent for him into his Chamber, and being alone by themselves, thus he began. *Chynon* (quoth hee) as the Gods are very bountifull, in bestowing their blessings on men, so doe they therein most wisely make prooffe of their vertues, and such as they finde firme and constant, in all occurrences which may happen, them they make worthy (as valiant spirits) of the very best and highest merites. Now, they being willing to have more certain experience of thy vertues, then those which heeretofore thou hast shewne, within the bounds and limits of thy fathers possessions, which I know to be superabounding: perhaps do intend to present thee other occasions, of more important weight and consequence.

For first of all (as I have heard) by the piercing solicitudes of love, of a senselesse creature, they made thee to become a man endued with reason. Afterward, by adverse fortune, and now againe by wearisome imprisonment, it seemeth that they are desirous to make triall, whether thy manly courage be changed, or no, from that which heretofore it was, when thou enjoyedst a matchlesse beautie, and lost her againe in so short a while. Wherefore, if thy vertue be such as it hath bin, the Gods can never give thee any blessing more worthy of acceptance, then she whom they are now minded to bestow on thee: in which respect, to the end that thou mayst re-assume thy wonted heroicke spirit, and become more couragious then ever heretofore, I will acquaint thee withall more at large.

Understand then Noble *Chynon*, that *Pasimondo*, the onely glad man of thy misfortune, and diligent sutor after thy death, maketh all hast hee can possibly devise to do, to celebrate his marriage with thy faire mistris: because he would pleade possession of the prey, which Fortune (when she smiled) did first bestow, and (afterward frowning) took from thee again. Now, that it must needs be very irkesome to thee (at least if thy love bee such, as I am perswaded it is) I partly can collect from my selfe, being intended to be wronged by his brother *Hormisda*, even in the selfsame manner, and on his marriage day, by taking faire *Cassandra* from me, the onely Jewell of my love and life. For the prevention of two such notorious injuries, I see that Fortune hath left us no other meanes, but only the vertue of our courages, and the helpe of our right hands, by preparing our selves to Armes, opening a way to thee, by a second rape or stealth; and to me the first, for absolute possession of our divine Mistresses. Wherefore, if thou art desirous to recover thy losse, I will not onely pronounce liberty to thee (which I thinke thou dost little care for without her) but dare also assure thee to enjoy *Iphigenia*, so thou wilt assist mee in mine

enterprize, and follow me in my fortune, if the Gods do let them fall into our power.

You may well imagine, that *Chynons* dismayed soule was not a little cheared at these speeches; and therefore, without craving any long respite of time for answer, thus he replied. Lord *Lysimachus*, in such a business as this is, you cannot have a faster friend then my self, at least, if such good hap may betide me, as you have more then halfe promised: & therefore do no more but command what you would have to be effected by mee, and make no doubt of my courage in the execution: whereon *Lysimachus* made this answer. Know then *Chynon* (quoth hee) that three dayes hence, these marriages are to bee celebrated in the houses of *Pasimondo* and *Hormisda*, upon which day, thou, thy friends, and my self (with some others, in whom I repose especiall trust) by the friendly favour of night, will enter into their houses, while they are in the midst of theyr Joviall feasting; and (seizing on the two Brides) beare them thence to a Shippe, which I will have lye in secret, waiting for our comming, and kil all such as shall presume to impeach us. This direction gave great contentment to *Chynon*, who remained still in prison, without revealing a word to his owne friends, until the limited time was come.

Upon the Wedding day, performed with great and magnificent Triumph, there was not a corner in the Brethrens houses, but it sung joy in the highest key. *Lysimachus*, after he had ordered all things as they ought to be, and the houre for dispatch approached neere; he made a division in three parts, of *Chynon*, his followers, and his owne friendes, being all well armed under their outward habites. Having first used some encouraging speeches, for more resolute prosecution of the enterprize, he sent one troope secretly to the Port, that they might not be hindred of going aboard the ship, when the urgent necessity should require it. Passing with the other two traines of *Pasimondo*, he left the one at the doore, that such as were in the house might not shut them up fast, and so impeach their passage forth. Then with *Chynon*, and the third band of Confederates, he ascended the staires up into the Hall, where he found the Brides with store of Ladies and Gentlewomen, all sitting in comely order at Supper. Rushing in roughly among the attendants, downe they threw the Tables, and each of them laying hold of his Mistris, delivered them into the hands of their followers, commanding that they should be carried aboard the ship, for avoiding of further inconveniences.

This hurrie and amazement beeing in the house, the Brides weeping, the Ladies lamenting, and all the servants confusedly wondering; *Chynon* and *Lysimachus* (with their Friends) having their weapons drawn in their hands, made all opposers to give them way, and so gayned the stair head for their owne descending. There stode *Pasimondo*, with an huge long Staffe in his hand, to hinder their passage downe the stayres; but *Chynon* saluted him so soundly on the head, that it being cleft in twaine, hee fell dead before his feete. His Brother *Hormisda* came to his rescue, and sped in the selfe-same manner as he had done; so did divers other beside, whom the companions to *Lysimachus* and *Chynon*, either slew out-right, or wounded.

So they left the house, filled with bloode, teares, and out-cries, going on together, without any hinderance, and so brought both the Brides aboard the shippe, which they rowed away instantly with theyr Oares. For, now the shore was full of armed people, who came in rescue of the stolne Ladies: but all in vaine, because they were lanced into the main, and sayled on merrily towards *Candye*. Where beeing arrived, they were worthily entertained by honourable Friendes and Kinsmen, who pacified all unkindnesses betweene them and their Mistresses: And, having accepted them in lawfull marriage, there they lived in no meane joy and contentment: albeit there was a long and troublesome difference (about these rapes) betweene *Rhodes* and *Cyprus*.

But yet in the end, by the meanes of Noble Friends and Kindred on either side, labouring to have such discontentment appeased, endangering warre betweene the Kingdomes: after a limited time of banishment, *Chynon* returned joyfully with his *Iphigenia* home to *Cyprus*, and *Lysimachus* with his beloved *Cassandra* unto *Rhodes*, each living in their severall Countries, with much felicity.

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***Faire Constance of Liparis, fell in love with Martuccio Gomito: and hearing that he was dead, desperately she entred into a Barke, which being transported by the windes to Susa in Barbary, from thence she went to Thunis, where she found him to be living. There she made her selfe knowne to him, and he being in great authority, as a privy Counsellor to the King: he married the saide Constance, and returned richly home with her, to the Island of Liparis.***

## **The second Novell.**

***Wherein is declared the firme loyaltie of a true Lover: And how Fortune doth sometime humble men, to raise them afterward to a farre higher degree.***

When the Queene perceyved, that the Novell recited by *Pamphilus* was concluded, which she graced with especial commendations: she commaunded Madame *Æmillia*, to take her turne as next in order; whereupon, thus she began. Me thinkes it is a matter of equity, that every one should take delight in those things, whereby the recompence may be noted, answerable to their owne affection. And because I rather desire to walke along by the paths of pleasure, then dwell on any ceremonious or scrupulous affectation, I shall the more gladly obey our Queen to day, then yesterday I did our melancholly King.

Understand then (Noble Ladies) that neere to *Sicily*, there is a small Island, commonly called *Liparis*, wherein (not long since) lived a yong Damosell, named *Constance*, born of very sufficient parentage in the same Island. There dwelt also a young man, called *Martuccio Gomito*, of comely feature, well conditioned, and not unexpert in many vertuous qualities; affecting *Constance* in hearty manner: and she so answerable to him in the same kinde, that to be in his company, was her onely felicity. *Martuccio* coveting to enjoy her in marriage, made his intent knowne to her Father: who upbraiding him with poverty, tolde him plainly that hee should not have her. *Martuccio* greeving to see himselfe thus despised, because he was poore: made such good meanes, that he was provided of a small Barke; and calling such friends (as he thought fit) to his association, made a solemne vow, that hee would never returne backe to *Liparis*, untill he was rich, and in better condition.

In the nature and course of a Rover or Pirate, so put he thence to sea, coasting all about *Barbarie*, robbing and spoyling such as hee met with; who were of no greater strength then himselfe: wherein Fortune was so favourable to him, that he became wealthy in a very short while. But as felicities are not alwayes permanent, so hee and his followers, not contenting themselves with sufficient riches: by greedy seeking to get more, happened to be taken by certaine ships of the Sarazins, and so were robbed themselves of all that they had gotten, yet they resisted them stoutly a long while together, though it proved to the losse of many lives among them. When the Sarazens had sunke his shippe in the Sea, they tooke him with them to *Thunis*, where he was imprisoned, and lived in extreamest misery.

Newes came to *Liparis*, not onely by one, but many more beside, that all those which departed thence in the small Barke with *Martuccio* were drowned in the Sea, and not a man escaped. When *Constance* heard these unwelcome tydings (who was exceeding full of greefe, for his so desperate departure) she wept and lamented extraordinarily, desiring now rather to dye, then live any longer. Yet shee had not the heart, to lay any violent hand on her selfe, but rather to end her dayes by some new kinde of necessity. And departing privately from her Fathers house, shee went to the port or haven, where (by chance) she found a small Fisher-boate, lying distant from the other vessels, the owners whereof being all gone on shore, and it well furnished with Masts, Sailes, and Oares, she entred into it; and putting forth the Oares, beeing some-what skilfull in sayling, (as generally all the Women of that Island are) shee so well guyded the Sailes, Rudder, and Oares, that she was quickly farre off from the Land, and soly remained at the mercy of the windes. For thus she had resolved with her selfe, that the Boat being uncharged, and without a guide, wold either be over-whelmed by the windes, or split in peeces against some Rocke; by which meanes she could not escape although shee would, but (as it was her desire) must needs be drowned.

In this determination, wrapping a mantle about her head, and lying downe weeping in the boats bottome, she hourelly expected her finall expiration: but it fell out otherwise, and contrary to her desperate intention, because the winde turning to the North, and blowing very gently, without disturbing the Seas a jot, they conducted the small Boat in such sort, that after the night of her entering into it, and the morowes sailing untill the evening, it came within an hundred leagues of *Thunis*, and to a strond neere a Towne called *Susa*. The young Damosell knew not whether she were on the sea or land; as one, who not by any accident hapning, lifted up her head to look about her, neither intended ever to doe. Now it came to passe, that as the boate was driven to the shore, a poore woman stood at the Sea side, washing certaine Fishermens Nets; and seeing the boate comming towards her under saile, without any person appearing in it, she wondred thereat not a little. It being close at the shore, and she thinking the Fishermen to be asleepe therein: stept boldly, and looked into the boate, where she saw not any body, but onely the poore distressed Damosell, whose sorrowes having broght her now into a sound sleepe, the woman gave many calcs before she could awake her, which at the length she did, and looked very strangely about her.

The poore woman perceyving by her habite that she was a Christian, demanded of her (in speaking Latine) how it was possible for her, beeing all alone in the boate, to arrive there in this manner? When *Constance* heard her speake the Latine tongue, she began to doubt, least some contrary winde had turned her backe to *Liparis* againe, and starting up sodainly, to looke with better advice about her, shee saw her selfe at Land: and not knowing the Countrey, demanded of the poore woman where she was? Daughter (quoth she) you are heere hard by *Susa* in *Barbarie*. Which *Constance* hearing, and plainly perceyving, that death had denied to end her miseries, fearing least she should receive some dishonour, in such a barbarous unkinde Country, and not knowing what shold now become of her, she sate downe by the boates side, wringing her hands, & weeping bitterly.

The good Woman did greatly compassionate her case, and prevailed so well by gentle speeches, that shee conducted her into her owne poore habitation; where at length she understoode, by what meanes shee hapned thither so strangely. And perceyving her to be fasting, shee set such homely bread as she had before her, a few small Fishes, and a Crewse of Water, praying her for to accept of that poore entertainment, which meere necessity compelled her to do, and shewed her selfe very thankefull for it.

*Constance* hearing that she spake the Latine language so well; desired to know what she was. Whereunto the olde woman thus answered: Gentlewoman (quoth she) I am of *Trapanum*, named *Carapresa*, and am a servant in this Countrey to certaine Christian Fishermen. The yong Maiden (albeit she was very full of sorrow) hearing her name to be *Carapresa*, conceived it as a good augury to her selfe, & that she had heard the name before, although shee knew not what occasion should move her thus to do. Now began her hopes to quicken againe, and yet shee could

not tell upon what ground; nor was she so desirous of death as before, but made more precious estimation of her life, and without any further declaration of her selfe or countrey, she entreated the good woman (even for charities sake) to take pittie on her youth, and help her with such good advice, to prevent all injuries which might happen to her, in such a solitary wofull condition.

*Carapresa* having heard her request, like a good woman as shee was, left *Constance* in her poore Cottage, and went hastily to leave her nets in safety: which being done, she returned backe againe, and covering *Constance* with her Mantle, led her on to *Susa* with her, where being arrived, the good woman began in this manner. *Constance*, I will bring thee to the house of a very worthy Sarazine Lady, to whome I have done manie honest services, according as she pleased to command me. She is an ancient woman, full of charity, and to her I will commend thee as best I may, for I am well assured, that shee will gladly entertaine thee, and use thee as if thou wert her owne daughter. Now, let it be thy part, during thy time of remaining with her, to employ thy utmost diligence in pleasing her, by deserving and gaining her grace, till heaven shall blesse thee with better fortune: And as she promised, so she performed.

The Sarazine Lady, being well stept into yeares, upon the commendable speeches delivered by *Carapresa*, did the more seriously fasten her eye on *Constance*, and compassion provoking her to teares, she tooke her by the hand, and (in loving manner) kissed her fore-head. So she led her further into her house, where dwelt divers other women (but not one man) all exercising themselves in severall labours, as working in all sorts of silke, with Imbroideries of Gold and Silver, and sundry other excellent Arts beside, which in short time were verie familiar to *Constance*, and so pleasing grew her behaviour to the old Lady, and all the rest beside; that they loved and delighted in her wonderfully, and (by little and little) she attained to the speaking of their language, although it were verie harsh and difficult.

*Constance* continuing thus in the old Ladies service at *Susa*, & thought to be dead or lost in her owne Fathers house; it fortun'd, that one reigning then as King of *Thunis*, who named himselfe *Mariabdela*: there was a young Lord of great birth, and very powerfull, who lived as then in *Granada*, and pleaded that the Kingdome of *Thunis* belonged to him. In which respect, he mustred together a mighty Army, and came to assault the King, as hoping to expell him. These newes comming to the eare of *Martuccio Gomito*, who spake the Barbarian Language perfectly; and hearing it reported, that the King of *Thunis* made no meane preparation for his owne defence: he conferred with one of his keepers, who had the custody of him, and the rest taken with him, saying: If (quoth hee) I could have meanes to speake with the King, and he were pleased to allow of my counsell, I can enstruct him in such a course, as shall assure him to win the honour of the field. The Guard reported these speeches to his master, who presently acquainted the King therewith, and *Martuccio* being sent for; he was commanded to speake his minde: Whereupon he began in this manner.

My gracious Lord, during the time that I have frequented your countrey, I have heedfully observed, that the Militarie Discipline used in your fights and battailes, dependeth more upon your Archers, then any other men employed in your warre. And therefore, if it could bee so ordered, that this kinde of Artillery might fayle in your Enemies Campe, & yours be sufficiently furnished therewith, you neede make no doubt of winning the battaile: whereto the King thus replied. Doubtlesse, if such an acte were possible to be done, it would give great hope of successefull prevailing. Sir, said *Martuccio*, if you please it may bee done, and I can quickly resolve you how. Let the strings of your Archers Bowes bee made more soft and gentle, then those which heretofore they have formerly used; and next, let the nockes of the Arrowes be so provided, as not to receive any other, then those pliant gentle strings. But this must be done so secretly, that your enemies may have no knowledge thereof, least they should provide themselves in the same manner. Now the reason (Gracious Lord) why thus I counsell you, is to this end. When the Archers on the Enemies side have shot their Arrowes at your men, and yours in the like manner at them: it followeth, that (upon meere constraint) they must gather up your Arrowes, to shoote them backe againe at you, for so long while as the battell endureth, as no doubt but your men will do the like to them. But your enemies will finde themselves much deceived, because they can make no use of your peoples Arrowes, in regard that the nockes are too narrow to receive their boysterous strings. Which will fall out contrary with your followers, for the pliant strings belonging to your Bowes, are as apt for their enemies great nockt Arrowes, as their owne, and so they shall have free use of both, reserving them in plentiful store, when your adversaries must stand unfurnished of any, but them that they cannot any way use.

This counsell pleased the King very highly, and hee being a Prince of great understanding, gave order to have it accordingly followed, and thereby valiantly vanquished his enemies. Heereupon, *Martuccio* came to be great in his grace, as also consequently rich, and seated in no meane place of authority. Now, as worthy and commendable actions are soone spread abroad, in honour of the man by whome they hapned: even so the fame of this rare got victory, was quickly noysed throughout the Countrey, and came to the hearing of poore *Constance*, that *Martuccio Gomito* (whom she supposed so long since to be dead) was living, and in honourable condition. The love which formerly she bare unto him, being not altogether extinct in her heart; of a small sparke, brake forth into a sodaine flame, and so encreased day by day, that her hope (being before almost quite dead) revived againe in chearfull manner.

Having imparted all her fortunes to the good olde Lady with whome she dwelt; she told her beside, that she had an earnest desire to see *Thunis*, to satisfie her eyes as well as her eares, concerning the rumor blazed abroad. The good olde Lady commended her desire, and (even as if she had bene her mother) tooke her with her aboard a Barke, and so sayled thence to *Thunis*, where both she and *Constance* found honourable welcome, in the house of a kinsman to the

Sarazin Lady. *Carapresa* also went along with them thither, and her they sent abroad into the Citie, to understand the newes of *Martuccio Gomito*. After they knew for a certaintie that hee was living, and in great authority about the King, according as the former report went of him. Then the good old Lady, being desirous to let *Martuccio* know, that his faire friend *Constance* was come thither to see him; went her selfe to the place of his abiding, and spake unto him in this manner. Noble *Martuccio*, there is a servant of thine in my house, which came from *Liparis*, and requireth to have a little private conference with thee: but because I durst not trust any other with the message, my selfe (at her entreaty) am come to acquaint thee therewith. *Martuccio* gave her kinde and hearty thankes, and then went along with her to the house.

No sooner did *Constance* behold him, but shee was ready to dye with conceite of joy, and being unable to containe her passion: sodainely she threw her armes about his necke, and in meere compassion of her many misfortunes, as also the instant solace of her soule (not being able to utter one word) the teares trickled abundantly downe her cheekes. *Martuccio* also seeing his faire friend, was overcome with exceeding admiration, & stood awhile, as not knowing what to say; till venting forth a vehement sighe, thus he spake. My deerest love *Constance*! art thou yet living? It is a tedious long while since I heard thou wast lost, and never any tydinges knowne of thee in thine owne Fathers house. With which wordes, the teares standing his eyes, most lovingly he embraced her. *Constance* recounted to him all her fortunes, and what kindnesse she hadde receyved from the Sarazine Lady, since her first houre of comming to her. And after much other discourse passing betweene them, *Martuccio* departed from her, and returning to the King his master, tolde him all the historie of his fortunes, and those beside of his Love *Constance*, beeing purposely minded (with his gracious liking) to marry her according to the Christian Law.

The King was much amazed at so many strange accidents, and sending for *Constance* to come before him; from her own mouth he heard the whole relation of her continued affection to *Martuccio*, whereuppon hee saide. Now trust me faire Damosell, thou hast dearly deserved him to be thy husband. Then sending for very costly Jewels, and rich presents, the one halfe of them he gave to her, and the other to *Martuccio*, granting them license withall, to marry according to their owne mindes.

*Martuccio* did many honours, and gave great giftes to the aged Sarazine Lady, with whom *Constance* had lived so kindly respected: which although she had no neede of, neither ever expected any such rewarding; yet (conquered by their urgent importunity, especially *Constance*, who could not be thankfull enough to her) she was enforced to receive them, and taking her leave of them weeping, sayled backe againe to *Susa*.

Within a short while after, the King licensing their departure thence, they entred into a small Barke, and *Carapresa* with them, sailing on with prosperous gales of winde, untill they arrived at *Liparis*, where they were entertained with generall rejoycing. And because their marriage was not sufficiently performed at *Thunis*, in regard of divers Christian ceremonies there wanting, their Nuptials were againe most honourably solemnized, and they lived (many yeares after) in health and much happinesse.

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***Pedro Bocamazzo, escaping away with a yong Damosell which he loved, named Angelina, met with Theeves in his journey. The Damosell flying fearfully into a Forrest, by chance arriveth at a Castle. Pedro being taken by the Theeves, and happening afterward to escape from them; commeth (accidentally) to the same Castle where Angelina was. And marrying her, they then returned home to Rome.***

## **The third Novell.**

***Wherein, the severall powers both of Love and Fortune, is more at large approved.***

There was not any one in the whole company, but much commended the Novell reported by Madam *Emillia*, and when the Queene perceived it was ended, she turned towards Madam *Eliza*, commanding her to continue on their delightfull exercise: whereto shee declaring her willing obedience, began to speak thus. Courteous Ladies, I remember one unfortunate night, which happened to two Lovers, that were not indued with the greatest discretion. But because they had very many faire and happy dayes afterwarde, I am the more willing for to let you heare it.

In the Citie of *Rome*, which (in times past) was called the Ladie and Mistresse of the world, though now scarsely so good as the waiting maid: there dwelt sometime a yong Gentleman, named *Pedro Bocamazzo*, descended from one of the most honourable families in *Rome*, who was much enamoured of a beautifull Gentlewoman, called *Angelina*, daughter to one named *Gigliozzo Saullo*, whose fortunes were none of the fairest, yet he greatly esteemed among the Romaines. The intercourse of love between these twaine, had so equally enstructed their hearts and souls, that it could hardly be judged which of them was the more fervent in affection. But he, not being inured to such oppressing passions, and therefore the lesse able to support them, except he were sure to compass his desire, plainly made the motion, that he might enjoy her in honourable mariage. Which his parents and friends hearing, they went to conferre with him, blaming him with over-much basenesse, so farre to disgrace himselfe and his stocke. Beside, they advised the Father to the Maid, neither to credit what *Pedro* saide in this case, or to live in hope of any such match, because they all did wholly despise it.

*Pedro* perceiving, that the way was shut up, whereby (and none other) he was to mount the Ladder of his hopes; began to waxe weary of longer living: and if he could have won her fathers consent, he would have married her in the despite of all his friends. Nevertheless, he had a conceit hammering in his head, which if the maid would bee as forward as himselfe, should bring the matter to full effect. Letters and secret intelligences passing still betweene, at length he understood her ready resolution, to adventure with him thorough all fortunes whatsoever, concluding on their sodaine and secret flight from Rome. For which *Pedro* did so well provide, that very early in a morning, and well mounted on horsebacke, they tooke the way leading unto *Alagna*, where *Pedro* had some honest friends, in whom he reposed especiall trust. Riding on thus thorow the countrey, having no leysure to accomplish their marriage, because they stode in feare of pursuite: they were ridden above foure leagues from Rome, still shortning the way with their amorous discoursing.

It fortun'd, that *Pedro* having no certaine knowledge of the way, but following a trackt guiding too farre on the left hand; rode quite out of course, and came at last within sight of a small Castle, out of which (before they were aware) yssued twelve Villaines, whom *Angelina* sooner espyed, then *Pedro* could do, which made her cry out to him, saying: Help deere Love to save us, or else we shall be assayled. *Pedro* then turning his horse so expeditiously as he could, and giving him the spurres as neede required; mainly he galloped into a neere adjoining Forrest, more minding the following of *Angelina*, then any direction of his way, or then that endeavoured to be his hinderance. So that by often winding & turning about, as the passage appeared troublesome to him, when he thought him selfe free and furthest from them, he was round engirt, and seized on by them. When they had made him to dismount from his horse, questioning him of whence and what he was, and he resolving them therein, they fell into a secret consultation, saying thus among themselves. This man is a friend to our deadly enemies, how can wee then otherwise dispose of him, but bereave him of all he hath, and in despite of the *Orsini* (men in nature hatefull to us) hang him up heere on one of these Trees?

All of them agreeing in this dismall resolution, they commanded *Pedro* to put off his garments, which he yeelding to do (albeit unwillingly) it so fell out, that five and twenty other theeves, came sodainly rushing in upon them, crying, Kill, kill, and spare not a man.

They which before had surprized *Pedro*, desiring nowe to shifte for their owne safetie; left him standing quaking in his shirt, and so ranne away mainely to defend themselves. Which the new crewe perceyving, and that their number farre exceeded the other: they followed to robbe them of what they had gotten, accounting it as a present purchase for them. Which when *Pedro* perceyved, and saw none tarrying to prey upon him; hee put on his cloathes againe, and mounting on his owne Horsse, galloped that way, which *Angelina* before had taken: yet could hee not descry any tracke or path, or so much as the footing of a horse; but thought himselfe in sufficient securitie, beeing rid of them that first seized on him, and also of the rest, which followed in the pursuite of them.

For the losse of his beloved *Angelina*, he was the most wofull man in the world, wandering one while this way, and then againe another, calling for her all about the Forrest, without any answeere returning to him. And not daring to ride backe againe, on he travailed still, not knowing where to make his arrivall. And having formerly heard of savage ravenous beasts, which commonly live in such unfrequented Forrests: he not onely was in feare of loosing his owne life, but also despayred much for his *Angelina*, least some Lyon or Woolfe, had torne her body in peeces.

Thus rode on poore unfortunate *Pedro*, untill the breake of day appeared, not finding any meanes to get forth of the Forrest, still crying and calling for his fayre friend, riding many times backward, when as hee thought hee rode forward, untill hee became so weake and faint, what with extreame feare, lowd calling, and continuing so long a while without any sustenance, that the whole day beeing thus spent in vaine, and darke night sodainly come upon him, hee was not able to hold out any longer.

Now was hee in farre worse case then before, not knowing where, or how to dispose of himselfe, or what might best bee done in so great a necessity. From his Horse hee alighted, and tying him by the bridle unto a great tree, uppe he climbed into the same Tree, fearing to bee devoured (in the night time) by some wilde beast, choosing rather to let his Horsse perish, then himselfe. Within a while after, the Moone beganne to rise, and the skies appeared bright and cleare: yet durst hee not nod, or take a nap, lest he should fall out of the tree; but sate still greiving, sighing, and mourning, despairing of ever seeing his *Angelina* any more, for he could not be comforted by the smallest hopefull perswasion, that any good fortune might befall her in such a desolate Forrest, where nothing but dismall feares was to be expected, and no likelihood that she should escape with life.

Now, concerning poore affrighted *Angelina*, who (as you heard before) knew not any place of refuge to flye unto: but even as it pleased hir horse to carry her: she entred so farre into the Forest, that she could not devise where to seeke her owne safety. And therefore, even as it fared with her friend *Pedro*, in the same manner did it fall out with her, wandering the whole night, and all the day following, one while taking one hopefull tracke, and then another, calling, weeping, wringing hir hands, and greevously complaining of her hard fortune. At the length, perceyving that *Pedro* came not to her at all, she found a little path (which shee lighted on by great good fortune) even when dark night was apace drawing, and followed it so long, till it brought her within the sight of a small poore Cottage, whereto she rode on so fast as she could; and found therein a very old man, having a wife rather more aged then he, who seeing hir to be without company, the old man spake thus unto her.

Faire daughter (quoth he) whether wander you at such an unseasonable houre, and all alone in a place so desolate? The Damosell weeping, replied; that shee had lost her company in the forest, and enquired how neere shee was to *Alagna*. Daughter (answered the old man) this is not the way to *Alagna*, for it is above sixe leagues hence. Then shee desired to knowe, how farre off shee was from such houses, where she might have any reasonable lodging? There are none so neere, said the old man, that day light will give you leave to reach. May it please you then good Father (replied *Angelina*) seeing I cannot travaile any whether else; For Gods sake, to let me remaine heere with you this night. Daughter answered the good old man, wee can gladly give you entertainment here, for this night, in such poore manner as you see: but let mee tell you withall, that up and downe these wooddes (as well by night as day) walke companies of all conditions, and rather enimies then friends, who doe us many greevius displeasures and harmes. Now if by misfortune, you beeing heere, any such people should come, and seeing you so loovely faire, as indeed you are, offer you any shame or injurie: Alas you see it lies not in our power to lend you any helpe or succour. I thought it good (therefore) to acquaint you heerewith; because if any such mischance do happen, you should not afterward complaine of us.

The yong Maiden, seeing the time to be so farre spent, albeit the olde mans words did much dismay her, yet she thus replied. If it be the will of heaven, both you and I shall be defended from any misfortune: but if any such mischance do happen, I account the matter lesse deserving grief, if I fall into the mercy of men, then to be devoured by wild beasts in this Forrest. So, being dismounted from her horse, and entred into the homely house; she supt poorely with the olde man and his wife, with such mean cates as their provision afforded: and after supper, lay downe in hir garments on the same poore pallet, where the aged couple tooke their rest, and was very well contented therewith, albeit she could not refraine from sighing and weeping, to bee thus divided from her deare *Pedro*, of whose life and welfare she greatly despaired.

When it was almost day, she heard a great noise of people travailing by, whereupon sodainly she arose, and ranne into a Garden plot, which was on the backside of the poore Cottage, espying in one of the corners a great stacke of Hay, wherein she hid her selfe, to the end, that travelling strangers might not readily finde her there in the house. Scarsely was she fully hidden, but a great company of Theeves and Villaines, finding the doore open, rushed into the Cottage, where looking round about them for some booty, they saw the Damosels horse stand ready sadled, which made them demand to whom it belonged. The good olde man, not seeing the Maiden present there, but immagining that shee had made some shift for her selfe, answered thus. Gentlemen, there is no body here but my wife and my selfe: as for this Horse, which seemeth to bee escaped from the Owner; hee came hither yesternight, and we gave him house-roume heere, rather then to be devoured by Wolves abroad. Then said the principall of the Theevish crew; This horse shall be ours, in regard he hath no other master, and let the owner come claime him of us.

When they had searched every corner of the poore Cottage, & found no such prey as they looked for, some of them went into the backe side; where they had left their Javelins and Targets, wherewith they used commonly to travaile. It fortunated, that one of them, being more subtly suspitious then the rest, thrust his Javeline into the stacke of Hay, in the very same place where the Damosell lay hidden, missing very little of killing her; for it entred so farre, that the iron head pierced quite thorough her Garments, and touched her left bare brest: whereupon, shee was ready to cry out, as fearing that she was wounded: but considering the place where she was, she lay still, and spake not a word. This disordred company, after they had fed on some young Kids, and other flesh which they brought with them thither, they went thence about their theeving exercise, taking the Damosels horse along with them.

After they were gone a good distance off, the good old man beganne thus to question his Wife. What is become (quoth hee) of our young Gentlewoman, which came so late to us yesternight? I have not seen hir to day since our arising. The old woman made answer, that she knew not where she was, and sought all about to finde her. *Angelinaes* feares being well over-blowne, and hearing none of the former noise, which made her the better hope of their departure, came forth of the Hay-stack; whereof the good old man was not a little joyfull, and because she had so well escaped from them: so seeing it was now broad day-light, he sayde unto her. Now that the morning is so fairely begun, if you can be so well contented, we will bring you to a Castle, which stands about two miles and an halfe hence, where you will be sure to remaine in safety. But you must needs travaile thither on foote, because the night-walkers that happened hither, have taken away your horse with them.

*Angelina* making little or no account of such a losse, entreated them for charities sake, to conduct her to that Castle, which accordingly they did, and arrived there betweene seven and eight of the clocke. The Castle belonged to one of the *Orsini*, being called, *Liello di Campo di Fiore*, and by great good fortune, his wife was then there, she being a very vertuous and religious Lady. No sooner did shee looke upon *Angelina*, but shee knew her immediately, and entertaining her very willingly, requested, to know the reason of her thus arriving there: which shee at large related, and moved the Lady (who likewise knew *Pedro* perfectly well) to much compassion, because he was a kinsman and deare friend to her Husband; and understanding how the Theeves had surprized him, shee feared, that he was slaine among them, whereupon shee spake thus to *Angelina*. Seeing you know not what is become of my kinsman *Pedro*, you shall remaine here with me, untill such time, as (if we heare no other tidings of him) you may with safety be sent backe to *Rome*.

*Pedro* all this while sitting in the Tree, so full of grieffe, as no man could be more; about the houre of midnight (by the bright splendour of the Moone) espied about some twenty Wolves, who, so soone as they got a sight of the Horse, ran and engirt him round about. The Horse when he



perceived them so neere him, drew his head so strongly back-ward, that breaking the reines of his bridle, he laboured to escape away from them. But being beset on every side, and utterly unable to helpe himselfe, he contended with his teeth & feete in his owne defence, till they haled him violently to the ground, and tearing his body in peeces, left not a jot of him but the bare bones, and afterward ran ranging thorow the Forrest. At this sight, poore *Pedro* was mightily dismayed, fearing to speed no better then his Horse had done, and therefore could not devise what was best to be done; for he saw no likelihood now, of getting out of the Forrest with life. But day-light drawing on apace, and he almost dead with cold, having stood quaking so long in the Tree; at length by continuall looking every where about him, to discerne the least glimpse of any comfort; he espied a great fire, which seemed to be about halfe a mile off from him.

By this time it was broade day, when he descended downe out of the Tree, (yet not without much feare) and tooke his way towards the fire, where being arrived, he found a company of Shepherds banquetting about it, whom he curteously saluting, they tooke pity on his distresse, and welcommed him kindly. After he had tasted of such cheare as they had, and was indifferently refreshed by the good fire; hee discoursed his hard disasters to them, as also how he happened thither, desiring to know, if any Village or Castle were neere thereabout, where he might in better manner releevve himselfe. The Shepherds told him, that about a mile and an halfe from thence, was the Castle of *Signior Liello di Campo di Fiore*, and that his Lady was now residing there; which was no meane comfort to poore *Pedro*, requesting that one of them would accompany him thither, as two of them did in loving manner, to ridde him of all further feares.

When he was arrived at the Castle, and found there divers of his familiar acquaintance; he laboured to procure some meanes, that the Damosell might be sought for in the Forrest. Then the Lady calling for her, and bringing her to him; he ran and caught her in his armes, being ready to swoune with conceit of joy, for never could any man be more comforted, then he was at the sight of his *Angelina*, and questionlesse, her joy was not a jot inferiour to his, such a simpathy of firme love was sealed between them. The Lady of the Castle, after shee had given them very gracious entertainment, and understood the scope of their bold adventure; shee reproved them both somewhat sharpely, for presuming so farre without the consent of their Parents. But perceiving (notwithstanding all her remonstrances) that they continued still constant in their resolution, without any inequality on either side; shee saide to her selfe. Why should this matter be any way offensive to me? They love each other loyally; they are not inferiour to one another in birth, but in fortune; they are equally loved and allied to my Husband, and their desire is both honest and honourable. Moreover, what know I, if it be the will of Heaven to have it so? Theeves intended to hang him, in malice to his name and kinred, from which hard fate he hath happily escaped. Her life was endangered by a sharpe pointed Javeline, and yet her fairer starres would not suffer her so to perish: beside, they both have escaped the fury of ravenous wild beasts, and all these are apparant signes, that future comforts should recompence former passed misfortunes; farre be it therefore from me, to hinder the appointment of the Heavens.

Then turning her selfe to them, thus shee proceeded. If your desire be to joyne in honourable marriage, I am well contented therewith, and your nuptials shall here be solemnized at my Husbands charges. Afterward both he and I will endeavour, to make peace between you and your discontented Parents. *Pedro* was not a little joyfull at her kind offer, and *Angelina* much more then he; so they were married together in the Castle, and worthily feasted by the Lady, as Forrest entertainment could permit, and there they enjoyed the first fruits of their love. Within a short while after, the Lady and they (well mounted on Horse-backe, and attended with an honourable traine) returned to *Rome*; where her Lord *Liello* and shee prevailed so wel with *Pedroes* angry Parents: that all variance ended in love and peace, and afterward they lived lovingly together, till old age made them as honourable, as their true and mutuall affection formerly had done.

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***Ricciardo Manardy, was found by Messer Lizio da Valbonna, as he sate fast asleepe at his Daughters Chamber window, having his hand fast in hers, and shee sleeping in the same manner. Whereupon, they were joyned together in marriage, and their long loyall love mutually recompenced.***

## **The fourth Novell.**

***Declaring the discrete providence of Parents, in care of their Childrens love and their owne credit, to cut off inconveniences, before they doe proceede too farre.***

Madam *Eliza* having ended her Tale, and heard what commendations the whole company gave thereof; the Queene commanded *Philostratus*, to tell a Novell agreeing with his owne minde, who smiling thereat, thus replied. Faire Ladies, I have beene so often checkt & snapt, for my yester dayes matter and argument of discoursing, which was both tedious and offensive to you; that if I intended to make you any amends, I should now undertake to tell such a Tale, as might put you into a mirthfull humour. Which I am determined to doe, in relating a briefe and pleasant Novell, not any way offensive (as I trust) but exemplary for some good notes of observation.

Not long since, there lived in *Romania*, a Knight, a very honest Gentleman, and well qualified, whose name was *Messer Lizio da Valbonna*, to whom it fortun'd, that (at his entrance into age) by his Lady and wife, called *Jaquemina*, he had a Daughter, the very choycest and goodliest

gentlewoman in all those parts. Now because such a happy blessing (in their olde yeeres) was not a little comfortable to them; they thought themselves the more bound in duty, to be circumspect of her education, by keeping her out of over-frequent companies, but onely such as agreed best with their gravity, & might give the least ill example to their Daughter, who was named *Catharina*; as making no doubt, but by this their provident and wary respect, to match her in marriage answerable to their liking. There was also a young Gentleman, in the very flourishing estate of his youthfull time, descended from the Family of the *Manardy da Brettinoro*, named *Messer Ricciardo*, who oftentimes frequented the House of *Messer Lizio*, and was a continuall welcome guest to his Table, *Messer Lizio* and his wife making the like account of him, even as if he had beene their owne Sonne.

This young Gallant, perceiving the Maiden to be very beautifull, of singular behaviour, and of such yeeres as was fit for marriage, became exceedingly enamoured of her, yet concealed his affection so closely as he could; which was not so covertly caried, but that she perceived it, and grew in as good liking of him. Many times he had an earnest desire to have conference with her, which yet still he deferred, as fearing to displeas her; till at the length he lighted on an apt opportunity, and boldly spake to her in this manner. Faire *Catharina*, I hope thou wilt not let me die for thy love? *Signior Ricciardo* (replied shee suddenly againe) I hope you will extend the like mercy to me, as you desire that I should shew to you. This answere was so pleasing to *Messer Ricciardo*, that presently he saide. Alas deare Love, I have dedicated all my fairest fortunes onely to thy service, so that it remaineth soly in thy power, to dispose of me as best shall please thee, and to appoint such times of private conversation, as may yeeld more comfort to my poore afflicted soule.

*Catherina* standing musing awhile, at last returned him this answere. *Signior Ricciardo*, quoth shee, you see what a restraint is set on my liberty, how short I am kept from conversing with any one, that I hold this our enterparlance now almost miraculous. But if you could devise any convenient meanes, to admit us more familiar freedome, without any prejudice to mine honour, or the least distaste of my Parents; doe but enstruct it, and I will adventure it. *Ricciardo* having considered on many wayes and meanes, thought one to be the fittest of all; and therefore thus replied. *Catharina* (quoth he) the onely place for our more private talking together, I conceive to be the Gallery over your Fathers Garden. If you can winne your Mother to let you lodge there, I will make meanes to climbe over the wall, and at the goodly gazing window, we may discourse so long as we please. Now trust me deare Love (answered *Catharina*) no place can be more convenient for our purpose, there shall we heare the sweete Birds sing, especially the Nightingale, which I have heard singing there all the night long; I will breake the matter to my Mother, and how I speede, you shall heare further from me. So, with divers parting kisses, they brake off conference, till their next meeting.

On the day following, which was towards the ending of the moneth of *May*, *Catharina* began to complaine to her Mother, that the season was over-hot and tedious, to be still lodged in her Mothers Chamber, because it was an hinderance to her sleeping; and wanting rest, it would be an empairing of her health. Why Daughter (quoth the Mother) the weather (as yet) is not so hot, but (in my minde) you may very well endure it. Alas Mother, said shee, aged people, as you and my Father are, doe not feele the heates of youthfull bloud, by reason of your farre colder complexion, which is not to be measured by younger yeeres. I know that well Daughter, replied the Mother; but is it in my power, to make the weather warme or coole, as thou perhaps wouldst have it? Seasons are to be suffered, according to their severall qualities; and though the last night might seeme hot, this next ensuing may be cooler, and then thy rest will be the better. No Mother, quoth *Catherina*, that cannot be; for as Summer proceedeth on, so the heate encreaseth, and no expectation can be of temperate weather, untill it groweth to Winter againe. Why Daughter, saide the Mother, what wouldst thou have me to doe? Mother (quoth shee) if it might stand with my Fathers good liking and yours, I would be lodged in the Garden Gallery, which is a great deale more coole, and temperate. There shall I heare the sweete Nightingale sing, as every night shee useth to doe, and many other pretty Birds beside, which I cannot doe, lodging in your Chamber.

The Mother loving her Daughter dearely, as being some-what over-fond of her, and very willing to give her contentment; promised to impart her minde to her Father, not doubting but to compasse what shee requested. When shee had moved the matter to *Messer Lizio*, whose age made him somewhat froward and teasty; angerly he said to his wife. Why how now woman? Cannot our Daughter sleepe, except shee heare the Nightingale sing? Let there be a bed made for her in the Oven, and there let the Crickets make her melody. When *Catharina* heard this answere from her Father, and saw her desire to be disappointed; not onely could shee not take any rest the night following, but also complained more of the heate then before, not suffering her Mother to take any rest, which made her goe angerly to her Husband in the morning, saying. Why Husband, have we but one onely Daughter, whom you pretend to love right dearely, and yet can you be so carelesse of her, as to denie her a request, which is no more then reason? What matter is it to you or me, to let her lodge in the Garden Gallery? Is her young bloud to be compared with ours? Can our weake and crazie bodies, feele the frolicke temper of hers? Alas, shee is hardly (as yet) out of her childish yeeres, and Children have many desires farre differing from ours: the singing of Birds is rare musicke to them, and chiefly the Nightingale; whose sweete notes will provoke them to rest, when neither art or physicke can doe it.

Is it even so Wife? answered *Messer Lizio*. Must your will and mine be governed by our Daughter? Well be it so then, let her bed be made in the Garden Gallerie, but I will have the keeping of the key, both to locke her in at night, and set her at libertie every morning. Woman,

woman, young wenches are wily, many wanton crochets are busie in their braines, and to us that are aged, they sing like Lapwings, telling us one thing, and intending another; talking of Nightingales, when their mindes run on Cocke-Sparrowes. Seeing Wife, shee must needes have her minde, let yet your care and mine extend so farre, to keepe her chastity uncorrupted, and our credulity from being abused. *Catharina* having thus prevailed with her Mother, her bed made in the Garden Gallery, and secret intelligence given to *Ricciardo*, for preparing his meanes of accesse to her window; old provident *Lizio* lockes the doore to bed-ward, and gives her liberty to come forth in the morning, for his owne lodging was neere to the same Gallery.

In the dead and silent time of night, when all (but Lovers) take their rest; *Ricciardo* having provided a Ladder of Ropes, with grapling hookes to take hold above and below, according as he had occasion to use it. By helpe thereof, first he mounted over the Garden wall, and then climbde up to the Gallery window, before which (as is every where in *Italie*) was a little round engirting Tarras, onely for a man to stand upon, for making cleane the window, or otherwise repairing it. Many nights (in this manner) enjoyed they their meetings, entermixing their amorous conference with infinite kisses and kinde embraces, as the window gave leave, he sitting in the Tarras, and departing alwayes before breake of day, for feare of being discovered by any.

But, as excesse of delight is the Nurse to negligence, and begetteth such an over-presuming boldnesse, as afterward proveth to be sauced with repentance: so came it to passe with our overfond Lovers, in being taken tardy through their owne folly. After they had many times met in this manner, the nights (according to the season) growing shorter and shorter, which their stolne delight made them lesse respective of, then was requisite in an adventure so dangerous: it fortun'd, that their amorous pleasure had so farre transported them, and dulled their sences in such sort, by these their continued nightly watchings; that they both fell fast asleepe, he having his hand closed in hers, and shee one arme folded about his body, and thus they slept till broade day light. Old *Messer Lizio*, who continually was the morning Cocke to the whole House, going fourth into his Garden, saw how his Daughter and *Ricciardo* were seated at the window. In he went againe, and going to his wives Chamber, saide to her. Rise quickly wife, and you shall see, what made our Daughter so desirous to lodge in the Garden Gallery. I perceive that shee loved to heare the Nightingale, for shee hath caught one, and holds him fast in her hand. Is it possible, saide the Mother, that our Daughter should catch a live Nightingale in the darke? You shall see that your selfe, answered *Messer Lizio*, if you will make haste, and goe with me.

Shee, putting on her garments in great haste, followed her Husband, and being come to the Gallery doore, he opened it very softly, and going to the window, shewed her how they both sate fast asleepe, and in such manner as hath been before declared: whereupon, shee perceiving how *Ricciardo* and *Catharina* had both deceived her, would have made an outcry, but that *Messer Lizio* spake thus to her. Wife, as you love me, speake not a word, neither make any noyse: for, seeing shee hath loved *Ricciardo* without our knowledge, and they have had their private meetings in this manner, yet free from any blamefull imputation; he shall enjoy her, and shee him. *Ricciardo* is a Gentleman, well derived, and of rich possessions, it can be no disparagement to us, that *Catharina* match with him in mariage, which he neither shall, or dare denie to doe, in regard of our Lawes severity; for climbing up to my window with his Ladder of Ropes, whereby his life is forfeited to the Law, except our Daughter please to spare it, as it remaineth in her power to doe, by accepting him as her husband, or yeelding his life up to the Law, which surely shee will not suffer, their love agreeing together in such mutuall manner, and he adventuring so dangerously for her.

Madam *Jaquemina*, perceiving that her husband spake very reasonably, and was no more offended at the matter; stept aside with him behinde the drawne Curtaines, untill they should awake of themselves. At the last, *Ricciardo* awaked, and seeing it was so farre in the day, thought himselfe halfe dead, and calling to *Catharina*, saide. Alas deare Love! what shall we doe? we have slept too long, and shall be taken here. At which words, *Messer Lizio* stept forth from behind the Curtaines, saying. Nay, *Signior Ricciardo*, seeing you have found such an unbecoming way hither, we will provide you a better for your backe returning. When *Ricciardo* saw the Father and Mother both there present, he could not devise what to doe or say, his sences became so strangely confounded; yet knowing how hainously hee had offended, if the strictnesse of Law should be challenged against him, falling on his knees, he saide. Alas *Messer Lizio*, I humbly crave your mercy, confessing my selfe well worthy of death, that knowing the sharpe rigour of the Law, I would presume so audaciously to breake it. But pardon me worthy Sir, my loyall and unfeined love to your Daughter *Catharina*, hath beene the onely cause of my transgressing.

*Ricciardo* (replied *Messer Lizio*) the love I beare thee, and the honest confidence I doe repose in thee, step up (in some measure) to pleade thine excuse, especially in the regard of my Daughter, whom I blame thee not for loving, but for this unlawfull way of presuming to her. Nevertheless, perceiving how the case now standeth, and considering withall, that youth and affection were the ground of thine offence: to free thee from death, and my selfe from dishonour, before thou departest hence, thou shalt espouse my Daughter *Catharina*, to make her thy lawfull wife in mariage, and wipe off all scandall to my House and me. All this while was poore *Catharina* on her knees likewise to her Mother, who (notwithstanding this her bold adventure) made earnest suite to her Husband to remit all, because *Ricciardo* right gladly condescended, as it being the maine issue of his hope and desire; to accept his *Catharina* in mariage, whereto shee was as willing as he. *Messer Lizio* presently called for the Confessour of his House, and borrowing one of his Wives Rings, before they went out of the Gallery; *Ricciardo* and *Catharina* were espoused together, to their no little joy and contentment.

Now had they more leasure for further conference, with the Parents and kindred to *Ricciardo*,

who being no way discontented with this sudden match, but applauding it in the highest degree; they were publicly married againe in the Cathedrall Church, and very honourable triumphes performed at the nuptials, living long after in happy prosperity.

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**Guidotto of Cremona, departing out of this mortall life, left a Daughter of his, with Jacomino of Pavia. Giovanni di Severino, and Menghino da Minghole, fell both in love with the young Maiden, and fought for her; who being afterward knowne, to be the Sister to Giovanni, shee was given in mariage to Menghino.**

## The fifth Novell.

**Wherein may be observed, what quarrels and contentions are occasioned by Love; with some particular discription, concerning the sincerity of a loyall friend.**

All the Ladies laughing heartily, at the Novell of the Nightingale, so pleasingly delivered by *Philostratus*, when they saw the same to be fully ended, the Queene thus spake. Now trust me *Philostratus*, though yester-day you did much oppresse mee with melancholy, yet you have made me such an amends to day, as wee have little reason to complaine any more of you. So converting her speech to Madam *Neiphila*, shee commanded her to succede with her discourse, which willingly she yeelded to, beginning in this manner. Seeing it pleased *Philostratus*, to produce his Novell out of *Romania*: I meane to walke with him in the same jurisdiction, concerning what I am to say.

There dwelt sometime in the City of *Fano*, two Lombards, the one being named *Guidotto* of *Cremona*, and the other *Jacomino* of *Pavia*, men of sufficient entrance into yeeres, having followed the warres (as Souldiers) all their youthfull time. *Guidotto* feeling sicknesse to overmaster him, and having no sonne, kinsman, or friend, in whom he might repose more trust, then hee did in *Jacomino*: having long conference with him about his worldly affaires, and settled his whole estate in good order; he left a Daughter to his charge, about ten yeeres of age, with all such goods as he enjoyed, and then departed out of this life. It came to passe, that the City of *Faenza*, long time being molested with tedious warres, and subjected to very servile condition; beganne now to recover her former strength, with free permission (for all such as pleased) to returne and possesse their former dwellings. Whereupon, *Jacomino* (having sometime beene an inhabitant there) was desirous to live in *Faenza* againe, conveying thither all his goods, and taking with him also the young girle, which *Guidotto* had left him, whom hee loved, and respected as his owne childe.

As shee grew in stature, so shee did in beauty and vertuous qualities, as none was more commended throughout the whole City, for faire, civill, and honest demeanour, which incited many amorously to affect her. But (above all the rest) two very honest young men, of good fame and repute, who were so equally in love addicted to her, that being jealous of each others fortune, in preventing of their severall hopefull expectation; a deadly hatred grew suddenly betweene them, the one being named, *Giovanni de Severino*, and the other *Menghino da Minghole*. Either of these two young men, before the Maide was fiftene yeeres old, laboured to be possessed of her in marriage, but her Guardian would give no consent thereto: wherefore, perceiving their honest intended meaning to be frustrated, they now began to busie their braines, how to forestall one another by craft and circumvention.

*Jacomino* had a Maide-servant belonging to his House, somewhat aged, and a Man-servant beside, named *Grivello*, of mirthfull disposition, and very friendly, with whom *Giovanni* grew in great familiarity; and when he found time fit for the purpose, he discovered his love to him, requesting his furtherance and assistance, in compassing the height of his desire, with bountifull promises of rich rewarding; whereto *Grivello* returned this answer. I know not how to sted you in this case, but when my Master shall sup forth at some Neighbours House, to admit your entrance where she is: because, if I offer to speake to her, shee never will stay to heare me. Wherefore, if my service this way may doe you any good, I promise to performe it; doe you beside, as you shall find it most convenient for you. So the bargaine was agreed on betweene them, and nothing else now remained, but to what issue it should sort in the end.

*Menghino*, on the other side, having entred into the Chamber-maides acquaintance, sped so well with her, that shee delivered so many messages from him, as had (already) halfe won the liking of the Virgin; passing further promises to him beside, of bringing him to have conference with her, whensoever her Master should be absent from home. Thus *Menghino* being favoured (on the one side) by the olde Chamber-maide, and *Giovanni* (on the other) by trusty *Grivello*; their amorous warre was now on foote, and diligently followed by both their sollicitors. Within a short while after, by the procurement of *Grivello*, *Jacomino* was invited by a neighbour to supper, in company of divers his very familiar friends, whereof intelligence being given to *Giovanni*; a conclusion passed betweene them, that (upon a certaine signale given) he should come, and finde the doore standing ready open, to give him all accesse unto the affected Mayden.

The appointed night being come, and neither of these hot Lovers knowing the others intent, but their suspition being alike, and encreasing still more and more; they made choyce of certaine friends and associates, well armed and provided, for eithers safer entrance when neede should require. *Menghino* stayed with his troope, in a neere neighbouring house to the Mayden,

attending when the signall would be given: but *Giovanni* and his consorts, were ambushed somewhat further off from the House, and both saw when *Jacomino* went forth to supper. Now *Grivello* and the Chamber-maide began to vary, which should send the other out of the way, till they had effected their severall intention; whereupon *Grivello* said to her. What maketh thee to walke thus about the House, and why doest thou not get thee to bed? And thou (quoth the Maide) why doest thou not goe to attend on our Master, and tarry for his returning home? I am sure thou hast supt long agoe, and I know no businesse here in the House for thee to doe. Thus (by no meanes) the one could send away the other, but either remained as the others hinderance.

But *Grivello* remembring himselfe, that the houre of his appointment with *Giovanni* was come, he saide to himselfe. What care I whether our olde Maide be present, or no? If shee disclose any thing that I doe, I can be revenged on her when I list. So, having made the signall, he went to open the doore, even when *Giovanni* (and two of his confederates) rushed into the House, and finding the faire young Maiden sitting in the Hall, laide hands on her, to beare her away. The Damosell began to resist them, crying out for helpe so loude as shee could, as the olde Chamber-maide did the like: which *Menghino* hearing, he ranne thither presently with his friends, and seeing the young Damosell brought well-neere out of the House; they drew their Swords, crying out: Traytors, you are but dead men, here is no violence to be offered, neither is this a booty for such base groomes. So they layed about them lustily, and would not permit them to passe any further. On the other side, upon this mutinous noyse and out-cry, the Neighbours came forth of their Houses, with lights, staves, and clubbes, greatly reproving them for this out-rage, yet assisting *Menghino*: by meanes whereof, after a long time of contention, *Menghino* recovered the Mayden from *Giovanni*, and placed her peaceably in *Jacominoes* House.

No sooner was this hurly-burly somewhat calmed, but the Serjeants to the Captaine of the City, came thither, and apprehended divers of the mutiners: among whom were *Menghino*, *Giovanni*, and *Grivello*, committing them immediately to prison. But after every thing was pacified, and *Jacomino* returned home to his House from supper; he was not a little offended at so grosse an injury. When he was fully informed, how the matter happened, and apparantly perceived, that no blame at all could be imposed on the Mayden: he grew the better contented, resolving with himselfe (because no more such inconveniences should happen) to have her married so soone as possibly he could.

When morning was come, the kindred and friends on either side, understanding the truth of the error committed, and knowing beside, what punishment would be inflicted on the prisoners, if *Jacomino* pressed the matter no further, then as with reason and equity well he might; they repaired to him, and (in gentle speeches) entreated him, not to regard a wrong offered by unruly and youthfull people, meerely drawne into the action by perswasion of friends; submitting both themselves, and the offenders, to such satisfaction as he pleased to appoint them. *Jacomino*, who had seene and observed many things in his time, and was a man of sound understanding, returned them this answeare.

Gentlemen, if I were in mine owne Countrey, as now I am in yours; I would as forwardly confesse my selfe your friend, as here I must needes fall short of any such service, but even as you shall please to command me. But plainely, and without all further ceremonious complement, I must agree to whatsoever you can request; as thinking you to be more injured by me, then any great wrong that I have sustained. Concerning the young Damosell remaining in my House, shee is not (as many have imagined) either of *Cremona*, or *Pavia*, but borne a *Faentine*, here in this Citie: albeit neither my selfe, shee, or he of whom I had her, did ever know it, or yet could learne whose Daughter shee was. Wherefore, the suite you make to me, should rather (in duty) be mine to you: for shee is a native of your owne, doe right to her, and then you can doe no wrong unto mee.

When the Gentlemen understood, that the Mayden was borne in *Faenza*, they marvelled thereat, and after they had thanked *Jacomino* for his curteous answer; they desired him to let them know, by what meanes the Damosell came into his custody, and how he knew her to be borne in *Faenza*: when he, perceiving them attentive to heare him, began in this manner.

Understand worthy Gentlemen, that *Guidotto* of *Cremona*, was my companion and deare friend, who growing neere to his death, tolde me, that when this City was surprized by the Emperour *Frederigo*, and all things committed to sacke and spoile; he and certaine of his confederates entred into a House, which they found to be well furnished with goods, but utterly forsaken of the dwellers, onely this poore Mayden excepted, being then aged but two yeeres, or thereabout. As hee mounted up the steps, with intent to depart from the House; she called him Father, which word moved him so compassionately: that he went backe againe, brought her away with him, and all things of worth which were in the House, going thence afterward to *Fano*, and there deceasing, he left her and all his goods to my charge; conditionally, that I should see her married when due time required, and bestow on her the wealth which he had left her. Now, very true it is, although her yeeres are convenient for marriage, yet I could never find any one to bestow her on, at least that I thought fitting for her: howbeit, I will listen thereto much more respectively, before any other such accident shall happen.

It came to passe, that in the reporting of this discourse, there was then a Gentleman in the company, named *Guillemino da Medicina*, who at the surprisal of the City, was present with *Guidotto* of *Cremona*, and knew well the House which he had ransacked, the owner whereof was also present with him, wherefore taking him aside, he saide to him. *Bernardino*, hearest thou what *Jacomino* hath related? yes very wel, replied *Bernardino*, and remember withall, that in that dismall bloody combustion, I lost a little Daughter, about the age as *Jacomino* speaketh. Questionlesse then, replied *Guillemino*, shee must needes be the same young Mayden, for I was there at the same time, and in the House, whence *Guidotto* did bring both the girle and goods,

and I doe perfectly remember, that it was thy House. I pray thee call to minde, if ever thou sawest any scarre or marke about her, which may revive thy former knowledge of her, for my minde perswades me, that the Maide is thy Daughter.

*Bernardino* musing a while with himselfe, remembred, that under her left eare, shee had a scarre, in the forme of a little crosse, which happened by the byting of a Wolfe, and but a small while before the spoyle was made. Wherefore, without deferring it to any further time, he stept to *Jacomino* (who as yet staid there) and entreated him to fetch the Mayden from his house, because shee might be knowne to some in the company: whereto right willingly he condescended, and there presented the Maide before them. So soone as *Bernardino* beheld her, he began to be much inwardly moved; for the perfect character of her Mothers countenance, was really figured in her sweete face, onely that her beauty was somewhat more excelling. Yet not herewith satisfied, he desired *Jacomino* to be so pleased, as to lift up a little the lockes of haire, depending over her left eare. *Jacomino* did it presently, albeit with a modest blushing in the maide, and *Bernardino* looking advisedly on it, knew it to be the selfe same crosse; which confirmed her constantly to be his Daughter.

Overcome with excesse of joy, which made the teares to trickle downe his cheekes, he proffered to embrace and kisse the Maide: but she resisting his kindnesse, because (as yet) shee knew no reason for it, he turned himselfe to *Jacomino*, saying. My deare brother and friend, this Maide is my Daughter, and my House was the same which *Guidotto* spoyled, in the generall havocke of our City, and thence he carried this child of mine, forgotten (in the fury) by my Wife her Mother. But happy was the houre of his becomming her Father, and carrying her away with him; for else she had perished in the fire, because the House was instantly burnt downe to the ground. The Mayden hearing his words, observing him also to be a man of yeeres and gravity: shee beleevd what he saide, and humbly submitted her selfe to his kisses & embraces, even as instructed thereto by instinct of nature. *Bernardino* instantly sent for his wife, her owne mother, his daughters, sonnes, and kindred, who being acquainted with this admirable accident, gave her most gracious and kind welcome, he receiving her from *Jacomino* as his childe, and the legacies which *Guidotto* had left her.

When the Captaine of the City (being a very wise and worthy Gentleman) heard these tydings, and knowing that *Giovanni*, then his prisoner, was the Son to *Bernardino*, and naturall Brother to the newly recovered Maide; he bethought himselfe, how best he might qualifie the fault committed by him. And entring into the Hall among them, handled the matter so discreetly, that a loving league of peace was confirmed betweene *Giovanni* and *Menghino*, to whom (with free and full consent on all sides) the faire Maide, named *Agatha*, was given in marriage, with a more honourable enlargement of her dowry, and *Grivello*, with the rest, delivered out of prison, which for their tumultuous riot they had justly deserved. *Menghino* and *Agatha* had their wedding worthily sollemnized, with all due honours belonging thereto; and long time after they lived in *Faenza*, highly beloved, and graciously esteemed.

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***Guion di Procida, being found familiarly conversing with a young Damosell, which he loved; and had been given (formerly) to Frederigo, King of Sicilie: was bound to a stake; to be consumed with fire. From which danger (nevertheless) he escaped, being knowne by Don Rogiero de Oria, Lord Admirall of Sicilie, and afterward married the Damosell.***

## **The sixth Novell.**

***Wherein is manifested, that love can leade a man into numberlesse perils: out of which he escapeth with no meane difficulty.***

The Novell of Madam *Neiphila* being ended, which proved very pleasing to the Ladies: the Queene commanded Madam *Pampinea*, that shee should prepare to take her turne next, whereto willingly obeying, thus shee began. Many and mighty (Gracious Ladies) are the prevailing powers of love, conducting amorous soules into infinite travels, with inconveniences no way avoidable, and not easily to be foreseene, or prevented. As partly already hath beene observed, by divers of our former Novells related, and some (no doubt) to ensue hereafter; for one of them (comming now to my memory) I shall acquaint you withall, in so good tearmes as I can.

*Ischia* is an Iland very neere to *Naples*, wherein (not long since) lived a faire and lovely Gentlewoman, named *Restituta*, Daughter to a Gentleman of the same Isle, whose name was *Marino Bolgaro*. A proper youth called *Guion*, dwelling also in a neere neighbouring Isle, called *Procida*, did love her as dearely as his owne life, and she was as intimately affected towards him. Now because the sight of her was his onely comfort, as occasion gave him leave; he resorted to *Ischia* very often in the day time, and as often also in the night season, when any Barque passed from *Procida* to *Ischia*; if to see nothing else, yet to behold the walles that enclosed his Mistresse thus.

While this love continued in equall fervency, it chanced upon a faire Summers day, that *Restituta* walked alone upon the Sea-shoare, going from *Rocke* to *Rocke*, having a naked knife in her hand, wherewith shee opened such Oysters as shee found among the stones, seeking for small pearles enclosed in their shelles. Her walke was very solitary and shady, with a faire Spring or well adjoining to it, and thither (at that very instant time) certaine Sicilian young Gentlemen, which

came from *Naples*, had made their retreat. They perceiving the Gentlewoman to be very beautifull (shee as yet not having any sight of them) and in such a silent place alone by her selfe: concluded together, to make a purchase of her, and carry her thence away with them; as indeed they did, notwithstanding all her out-cryes and exclames, bearing her perforce aboard their Barque.

Setting sayle thence, they arrived in *Calabria*, and then there grew a great contention betweene them, to which of them this booty of beauty should belong, because each of them pleaded a title to her. But when they could not grow to any agreement, but doubted greater disaster would ensue thereon, by breaking their former league of friendship: by an equall conformity in consent, they resolved, to bestow her as a rich present, on *Frederigo* King of *Sicilie*, who was then young & joviall, and could not be pleased with a better gift; wherefore they were no sooner landed at *Palermo*, but they did according as they had determined. The King did commend her beauty extraordinarily, and liked her farre beyond all his other Loves: but, being at that time empaired in his health, and his body much distempered by ill dyet; he gave command, that untill he should be in more able disposition, shee must be kept in a goodly house of his owne, erected in a beautifull Garden, called the *Cube*, where shee was attended in most pompeous manner.

Now grew the noyse and rumor great in *Ischia*, about this rape or stealing away of *Restituta*; but the chiefest greevance of all, was, that it could not be knowne how, by whom, or by what meanes. But *Guion di Procida*, whom this injury concerned much more then any other; stood not in expectation of better tydings from *Ischia*, but hearing what course the Barke had taken, made ready another, to follow after with all possible speede. Flying thus on the winged minds through the Seas, even from *Minerva*, unto the *Scalea* in *Calabria*, searching for his lost Love in every angle: at length it was tolde him at the *Scalea*, that shee was carried away by certaine *Sicillian* Marriners, to *Palermo*, whither *Guion* set sayle immediately.

After some diligent search made there, he understood, that she was delivered to the King, and he had given strict command, for keeping her in his place of pleasure; called the *Cube*: which newes were not a little greevous to him, for now he was almost quite out of hope, not onely of ever enjoying her, but also of seeing her. Neverthelesse, Love would not let him utterly despaire, whereupon he sent away his Barque, and perceiving himselfe to be unknowne of any; he continued for some time in *Palermo*, walking many times by that goodly place of pleasure. It chanced on a day, that keeping his walke as he used to doe, Fortune was so favourable to him, as to let him have a sight of her at her window; from whence also she had a full view of him, to their exceeding comfort and contentment. And *Guion* observing, that the *Cube* was seated in a place of small resort; approached so neere as possibly he durst, to have some conference with *Restituta*.

As Love sets a keene edge on the dullest spirit, and (by a small advantage) makes a man the more adventurous: so this little time of unseene talke, inspired him with courage, and her with witty advice, by what meanes his accesse might be much neerer to her, and their communication concealed from any discovery, the scituation of the place, and benefit of time duly considered. Night must be the cloud to their amorous conclusion, and therefore, so much thereof being spent, as was thought convenient, he returned thither againe, provided of such grappling-yrons, as is required when men will clamber, made fast unto his hands and knees; by their helpe he attained to the top of the wall, whence discending downe into the Garden, there he found the maine yard of a ship, whereof before shee had given him instruction, and rearing it up against her chamber window, made that his meanes for ascending thereto, shee having left it open for his easier entrance.

You cannot denie (faire Ladies) but here was a very hopefull beginning, and likely to have as happy an ending, were it not true Loves fatall misery, even in the very height of promised assurance, to be thwarted by unkind prevention, and in such manner as I will tell you. This night, intended for our Lovers meeting, proved disastrous and dreadfull to them both: for the King, who at the first sight of *Restituta*, was highly pleased with her excelling beauty; gave order to his Eunuches and other women, that a costly bathe should be prepared for her, and therein to let her weare away that night, because the next day he intended to visit her. *Restituta* being royally conducted from her Chamber to the Bathe, attended on with Torch-light, as if shee had been a Queene: none remained there behind, but such women as waited on her, and the Guards without, which watched the Chamber.

No sooner was poore *Guion* aloft at the window, calling softly to his Mistresse, as if she had beene there; but he was over-heard by the women in the darke, and immediately apprehended by the Guard, who forthwith brought him before the Lord Marshall, where being examined, and he avouching, that *Restituta* was his elected wife, and for her he had presumed in that manner; closely was he kept in prison till the next morning. When he came into the Kings presence, and there boldly justified the goodnesse of his cause: *Restituta* likewise was sent for, who no sooner saw her deare Love *Guion*, but shee ran and caught him fast about the necke, kissing him in teares, and greeving not a little at his hard fortune. Hereat the King grew exceedingly enraged, loathing and hating her now, much more then formerly he did affect her, and having himselfe seene, by what strange meanes he did climbe over the wall, and then mounted to her Chamber window; he was extremely impatient, and could not otherwise be perswaded, but that their meetings thus had beene very many.

Forthwith he sentenced them both with death, commanding, that they should be conveyed thence to *Palermo*, and there (being stript starke naked) be bound to a stake backe to backe, and so to stand the full space of nine houres, to see if any could take knowledge, of whence, or what they were; then afterward, to be consumed with fire. The sentence of death, did not so much daunt or dismay the poore Lovers, as the uncivill and unsightly manner, which (in feare of the Kings

wrathfull displeasure) no man durst presume to contradict. Wherefore, as he had commanded, so were they carried thence to *Palermo*, and bound naked to a stake in the open Market place, and (before their eyes) the fire and wood brought, which was to consume them, according to the houre as the King had appointed. You need not make any question, what an huge concourse of people were soone assembled together, to behold such a sad and wofull spectacle, even the whole City of *Palermo*, both men and women. The men were stricken with admiration, beholding the unequalled beauty of faire *Restituta*, & the selfe same passion possessed the women, seeing *Guion* to be such a goodly and compleat young man: but the poore infortunate Lovers themselves, they stood with their lookes dejected to the ground, being much pittied of all, but no way to be holpen or rescued by any, awaiting when the happy houre would come, to finish both their shame and lives together.

During the time of this tragicall expectation, the fame of this publike execution being noysed abroad, calling all people farre and neere to behold it; it came to the eare of *Don Rogiero de Oria*, a man of much admired valour, and then the Lord high Admirall of *Sicily*, who came himselfe in person, to the place appointed for their death. First he observed the Mayden, confessing her (in his soule) to be a beauty beyond all compare. Then looking on the young man, thus he saide within himselfe: If the inward endowments of the mind, doe paralell the outward perfections of body; the World cannot yeeld a more compleate man. Now, as good natures are quickly incited to compassion (especially in cases almost commanding it) and compassion knocking at the doore of the soule, doth quicken the memory with many passed recordations: so this noble Admirall, advisedly beholding poore condemned *Guion*, conceived, that he had somewhat seene him before this instant, and upon this perswasion (even as if divine vertue had tutured his tongue) he saide: Is not thy name *Guion di Procida*?

Marke now, how quickly misery can receive comfort, upon so poore and silly a question; for *Guion* began to elevate his dejected countenance, and looking on the Admirall, returned him this answer. Sir, heretofore I have been the man which you spake of; but now, both that name and man must die with me. What misfortune (quoth the Admirall) hath thus unkindly crost thee? Love (answered *Guion*) and the Kings displeasure. Then the Admirall would needs know the whole history at large, which briefly was related to him, and having heard how all had happened; as he was turning his Horse to ride away thence, *Guion* called to him, saying. Good my Lord, entreate one favour for me, if possible it may be. What is that? replied the Admirall. You see Sir (quoth *Guion*) that I am very shortly to breathe my last; all the grace which I doe most humbly entreate, is, that as I am here with this chaste Virgin, (whom I honour and love beyond my life) and miserably bound backe to backe: our faces may be turned each to other, to the end, that when the fire shall finish my life, by looking on her, my soule may take her flight in full felicity. The Admirall smyling, saide; I will doe for thee what I can, and (perhaps) thou mayest so long looke on her, as thou wilt be weary, and desire to looke off her.

At his departure, he commanded them that had the charge of this execution, to proceede no further, untill they heard more from the King, to whom hee galloped immediately, and although hee beheld him to be very angerly moved; yet he spared not to speake in this manner. Sir, wherein have those poore young couple offended you, that are so shamefully to be burnt at *Palermo*? The King told him: whereto the Admirall (pursuing still his purpose) thus replied. Beleeve me Sir, if true love be an offence, then theirs may be termed to be one; and albeit it did deserve death, yet farre be it from thee to inflict it on them: for as faults doe justly require punishment, so doe good turnes as equally merit grace and requitall. Knowest thou what and who they are, whom thou hast so dishonourably condemned to the fire? Not I, quoth the King. Why then I will tell thee, answered the Admirall, that thou mayest take the better knowledge of them, and forbear hereafter, to be so over-violently transported with anger.

The young Gentleman, is the Sonne to *Landolfo di Procida*, the onely Brother to Lord *John di Procida*, by whose meanes thou becamest Lord and King of this Countrey. The faire young Damosell, is the Daughter to *Marino Bolgario*, whose power extendeth so farre, as to preserve thy prerogative in *Ischia*, which (but for him) had long since beene out-rooted there. Beside, these two maine motives, to challenge justly grace and favour from thee; they are in the floure and pride of their youth, having long continued in loyall love together, and compelled by fervency of endeared affection, not any will to displease thy Majesty: they have offended (if it may be termed an offence to love, and in such lovely young people as they are.) Canst thou then find in thine heart to let them die, whom thou rather oughtest to honour, and recompence with no meane rewards?

When the King had heard this, and beleeved for a certainty, that the Admirall told him nothing but truth: he appointed not onely, that they should proceede no further, but also was exceeding sorrowfull for what he had done, sending presently to have them released from the Stake, and honourably to be brought before him. Being thus enstructed in their severall qualities, and standing in duty obliged, to recompence the wrong which he had done, with respective honours: he caused them to be cloathed in royall garments, and knowing them to be knit in unity of soule; the like he did by marrying them sollemnly together, and bestowing many rich gifts and presents on them, sent them honourably attended home to *Ischia*; where they were with much joy and comfort received, and lived long after in great felicity.

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***Theodoro falling in love with Violenta, the Daughter to his Master, named Amarigo, and shee conceiving with childe by him; was condemned to be hanged. As they were leading***



*him to the Gallows, beating and misusing him all the way: he happened to be knowne by his owne Father, whereupon hee was released, and afterward enjoyed Violenta in marriage.*

## The seventh Novell.

*Wherein is declared, the sundry travels and perillous accidents, occasioned by those two powerfull Commanders, Love and Fortune, the insulting Tyrants over humaine life.*

Greatly were the Ladies minds perplexed, when they heard, that the two poore Lovers were in danger to be burned: but hearing afterward of their happy deliverance, for which they were as joyfull againe; upon the concluding of the Novell, the Queene looked on Madam *Lauretta*, enjoying her to tell the next Tale, which willingly she undertooke to doe, and thus began.

Faire Ladies, at such time as the good King *William* reigned in *Sicily*, there lived within the same Dominions a young Gentleman, named *Signior Amarigo*, Abbot of *Trapani*, who (among his other worldly blessings, commonly termed the goods of Fortune) was not unfurnished of children; and therefore having neede of servants, he made his provision of them as best he might. At that time, certaine Gallies of *Geneway* Pyrates comming from the Easterne parts, which coasting along *Armenia*, had taken divers children; he bought some of them, thinking that they were Turkes. They all resembling clownish Peazants, yet there was one among them, who seemed to be of more tractable and gentle nature, yea, and of a more affable countenance then any of the rest, being named, *Theodoro*: who growing on in yeeres, (albeit he lived in the condition of a servant) was educated among *Amarigoes* Children, and as enstructed rather by nature, then accident, his conditions were very much commended, as also the feature of his body, which proved so highly pleasing to his Master *Amarigo*, that he made him a free man, and imagining him to be a Turke, caused him to be baptized, and named *Pedro*, creating him superintendent of all his affaires, and reposing his chiefest trust in him.

As the other Children of *Signior Amarigo* grew in yeeres and stature, so did a Daughter of his, named *Violenta*, a very goodly and beautifull Damosell, somewhat over-long kept from marriage by her Fathers covetousnesse, and casting an eye of good liking on poore *Pedro*. Now, albeit shee loved him very dearely, and all his behaviour was most pleasing to her, yet maiden modesty forbad her to reveale it, till Love (too long concealed) must needs disclose itselfe. Which *Pedro* at the length tooke notice of, and grew so forward towards her in equality of affection, as the very sight of her was his onely happinesse. Yet very fearefull he was, least it should be noted, either by any of the House, or the Maiden her selfe: who yet well observed it, and to her no meane contentment, as it appeared no lesse (on the other side) to honest *Pedro*.

While thus they loved together meerely in dumbe shewes, not daring to speake to each other, (though nothing more desired) to find some ease in this their oppressing passions: Fortune, even as if shee pittied their so long languishing, enstructed them how to find out a way, whereby they might both better releeveth themselves. *Signior Amarigo*, about some two or three miles distance from *Trapani*, had a Countrey-House or Farme, whereto his Wife, with her Daughter and some other women, used oftentimes to make their resort, as it were in sportfull recreation; *Pedro* alwayes being diligent to man them thither. One time among the rest, it came to passe, as often it falleth out in the Summer season, that the faire Skie became suddenly over-clouded, even as they were returning home towards *Trapani*, threatning a storme of raine to overtake them, except they made the speedier haste.

*Pedro*, who was young, and likewise *Violenta*, went farre more lightly then her Mother and her company, as much perhaps provoked by love, as feare of the sudden raine falling, and paced on so fast before them, that they were wholly out of sight. After many flashes of lightning, and a few dreadfull clappes of thunder, there fell such a tempestuous shower of hayle, as compelled the Mother and her traine to shelter themselves in a poore Countrey-mans Cottage. *Pedro* and *Violenta*, having no other refuge, ranne likewise into a poore Sheepe-coate, so over ruined, as it was in danger to fall on their heads; for no body dwelt in it, neither stood any other house neere it, and it was scarcely any shelter for them, howbeit, necessity enforceth to make shift with the meanest. The storme encreasing more & more, and they coveting to avoide it so well as they could; sighes and drie hemmes were often inter-vented, as dumbly (before) they were wont to doe, when willingly they could affoord another kind of speaking.

At last *Pedro* tooke heart, and saide: I would this shower would never cease, that I might be alwayes where I am. The like could I wish, answered *Violenta*, so we were in a better place of safety. These wishes drew on other gentle language, with modest kisses and embraces, the onely ease to poore Lovers soules; so that the raine ceased not, till they had taken order for their oftner conversing, and absolute plighting of their faithes together. By this time the storme was fairely over-blowne, and they attending on the way, till the Mother and the rest were come, with whom they returned to *Trapani*, where by wise and provident meanes, they often conferred in private together, and enjoyed the benefit of their amorous desires; yet free from any ill surmise or suspicion.

But, as Lovers felicities are sildome permanent, without one encountring crosse or other: so these stolne pleasures of *Pedro* and *Violenta*, met with as sowre a sauce in the farewell. For, shee proved to be conceived with childe, then which could befall them no heavier affliction, and *Pedro* fearing to loose his life therefore, determined immediate flight, and revealed his purpose to *Violenta*. Which when she heard, she told him plainly, that if he fled, forth-with shee would kill

her selfe. Alas deare Love (quoth *Pedro*) with what reason can you wish my tarrying here? This conception of yours, doth discover our offence, which a Fathers pity may easily pardon in you: but I being his servant and vassall, shall be punished both for your sinne and mine, because he will have no mercy on me. Content thy selfe *Pedro*, replied *Violenta*, I will take such order for mine owne offence, by the discreete counsell of my loving Mother, that no blame shall any way be laide on thee, or so much as a surmise, except thou wilt fondly betray thy selfe. If you can doe so, answered *Pedro*, and constantly maintaine your promise; I will not depart, but see that you prove to be so good as your word.

*Violenta*, who had concealed her amisse so long as shee could, and saw no other remedy, but now at last it must needes be discovered; went privately to her Mother, and (in teares) revealed her infirmity, humbly craving her pardon, and furtherance in hiding it from her Father. The Mother being extraordinarily displeased, chiding her with many sharpe and angry speeches, would needes know with whom shee had thus offended. The Daughter (to keepe *Pedro* from any detection) forged a Tale of her owne braine, farre from any truth indeede, which her Mother verily beleeving, and willing to preserve her Daughter from shame, as also the fierce anger of her Husband, he being a man of very implacable nature: conveyed her to the Countrey-Farme, whither *Signior Amarigo* sildome or never resorted, intending (under the shadow of sicknesse) to let her lie in there, without the least suspicion of any in *Trapani*.

Sinne and shame can never be so closely carried, or clouded with the greatest cunning; but truth hath a loop-light whereby to discover it, even when it supposeth it selfe in the surest safety. For, on the very day of her deliverance, at such time as the Mother, and some few friends (sworne to secrecy) were about the businesse: *Signior Amarigo*, having beene in company of other Gentlemen, to flye his Hawke at the River, upon a sudden, (but very unfortunately, albeit he was alone by himselfe) stept into his Farme house, even to the next roome where the women were, and heard the new-borne Babe to cry, whereat marvelling not a little, he called for his Wife, to know what young childe cryed in his House. The Mother, amazed at his so strange comming thither, which never before he had used to doe, and pittying the wofull distresse of her Daughter, which now could be no longer covered, revealed what happened to *Violenta*. But he, being nothing so rash in believe, as his Wife was, made answeare, that it was impossible for his Daughter to be conceived with childe, because he never observed the least signe of love in her to any man whatsoever, and therefore he would be satisfied in the truth, as shee expected any favour from him, for else there was no other way but death.

The Mother laboured by all meanes shee could devise, to pacifie her Husbands fury, which proved all in vaine; for being thus impatiently incensed, he drew foorth his Sword, and stepping with it drawne into the Chamber (where she had been delivered of a goodly Sonne) he said unto her. Either tell me who is the Father of this Bastard, or thou and it shall perish both together. Poore *Violenta*, lesse respecting her owne life, then she did the childe; forgot her sollemne promise made to *Pedro*, and discovered all. Which when *Amarigo* had heard, he grew so desperately enraged, that hardly he could forbear from killing her. But after he had spoken what his fury enstructed him, hee mounted on Horse-backe againe, ryding backe to *Trapani*, where he disclosed the injury which *Pedro* had done him, to a noble Gentleman, named *Signior Conrado*, who was Captaine for the King over the City.

Before poore *Pedro* could have any intelligence, or so much as suspected any treachery against him; he was suddenly apprehended, and being called in question, stood not on any deniall, but confessed truly what he had done: whereupon, within some few dayes after, he was condemned by the Captaine, to be whipt to the place of execution, and afterward to be hanged by the necke. *Signior Amarigo*, because he would cut off (at one and the same time) not onely the lives of the two poore Lovers, but their childe also; as a franticke man, violently carried from all sense of compassion, even when *Pedro* was led and whipt to his death: he mingled strong poyson in a Cup of wine, delivering it to a trusty servant of his owne, and a naked Rapier withall, speaking to him in this manner. Goe carry these two presents to my late Daughter *Violenta*, and tell her from me, that in this instant houre, two severall kinds of death are offered unto her, and one of them she must make choyce of, either to drinke the poyson, and so die, or to run her body on this Rapiers point, which if she denie to doe, she shall be haled to the publike market place, and presently be burned in the sight of her lewd companion, according as shee hath worthily deserved. When thou hast delivered her this message, take her bastard brat, so lately since borne, and dash his braines out against the walles, and afterward throw him to my Dogges to feede on.

When the Father had given this cruell sentence, both against his own Daughter, and her young Sonne, the servant, readier to doe evill, then any good, went to the place where his Daughter was kept. Poore condemned *Pedro*, (as you have heard) was ledde whipt to the Jybbet, and passing (as it pleased the Captaines Officers to guide him) by a faire Inne: at the same time were lodged there three chiefe persons of *Armenia*, whom the King of the Countrey had sent to *Rome*, as Ambassadors to the Popes Holinesse, to negociate about an important businesse neerely concerning the King and State. Reposing there for some few dayes, as being much wearied with their journey, and highly honoured by the Gentlemen of *Trapani*, especially *Signior Amarigo*; these Ambassadors standing in their Chamber window, heard the wofull lamentations of *Pedro* in his passage by.

*Pedro* was naked from the middle upward, and his hands bound fast behind him, but being well observed by one of the Ambassadors, a man aged, and of great authority, named *Phineo*: he espied a great red spot uppon his breast, not painted, or procured by his punishment, but naturally imprinted in the flesh, which women (in these parts) terme the Rose. Uppon the sight hereof, he suddenly remembered a Sonne of his owne, which was stolne from him about fiftene

yeeres before, by Pyrates on the Sea-coast of *Laiazzo*, never hearing any tydings of him afterward. Upon further consideration, and comparing his Sonnes age with the likelyhood of this poore wretched mans; thus he conferred with his owne thoughts. If my Sonne (quoth he) be living, his age is equall to this mans time, and by the redde blemish on his brest, it plainly speakes him for to be my Sonne.

Moreover, thus he conceived, that if it were he, he could not but remember his owne name, his Fathers, and the Armenian Language; wherefore, when hee was just opposite before the window, hee called aloud to him, saying: *Theodoro. Pedro* hearing the voyce, presently listed up his head, and *Phineo* speaking *Armenian*, saide: Of whence art thou, and what is thy Fathers name? The Sergeants (in reverence to the Lord Ambassadour) stayed a while, till *Pedro* had returned his answer, who saide. I am an *Armenian* borne, Sonne to one *Phineo*, and was brought hither I cannot tell by whom. *Phineo* hearing this, knew then assuredly, that this was the same Sonne which he had lost; wherefore, the teares standing in his eyes with conceite of joy: downe he descended from the window, and the other Ambassadors with him, running in among the Sergeants to embrace his Sonne, and casting his owne rich Cloake about his whipt body, entreating them to forbear and proceed no further, till they heard what command he should returne withall unto them; which very willingly they promised to doe.

Already, by the generall rumour dispersed abroad, *Phineo* had understood the occasion, why *Pedro* was thus punished, and sentenced to be hanged; wherefore, accompanied with his fellow Ambassadors, and all their attending traine, he went to *Signior Conrado*, and spake thus to him. My Lord, he whom you have sent to death as a slave, is a free Gentleman borne, and my Sonne, able to make her amends whom he hath dishonoured, by taking her in mariage as his lawfull Wife. Let me therefore entreate you, to make stay of the execution, untill it may be knowne, whether she will accept him as her Husband, or no; least (if she be so pleased) you offend directly against your owne Law. When *Signior Conrado* heard, that *Pedro* was Sonne to the Lord Ambassadour, he wondered thereat not a little, and being somewhat ashamed of his fortunes error, confessed, that the claime of *Phineo* was conformable to Law, and ought not to be denied him; going presently to the Councill Chamber, sending for *Signior Amarigo* immediately thither, and acquainting him fully with the case.

*Amarigo*, who beleevd that his Daughter and her Child were already dead, was the wofullest man in the World, for his so rash proceeding, knowing very well, that if shee were not dead, the scandall would easily be wipt away with credit. Wherefore he sent in all poast haste, to the place where his Daughter lay, that if his command were not already executed, by no meanes to have it done at all. He who went on this speedy errand, found there *Signior Amarigoes* servant standing before *Violenta*, with the Cup of poyson in his one hand, and the drawne Rapier in the other, reproaching herewith very foule and injurious speeches, because shee had delayed the time so long, and would not accept the one or other, striving (by violence) to make her take the one. But hearing his Masters command to the contrary, he left her, and returned backe to him, certifying him how the case stood.

Most highly pleased was *Amarigo* with these glad newes, and going to the Ambassadour *Phineo*, in teares excused himselfe (so well as he could) for his severity, and craving pardon; assured him, that if *Theodoro* would accept his Daughter in mariage, willingly he would bestow her on him. *Phineo* allowed his excuses to be tollerable, and saide beside; If my Sonne will not mary your Daughter, then let the sentence of death be executed on him. *Amarigo* and *Phineo* being thus accorded, they went to poore *Theodoro*, fearefully looking every minute when he should die, yet joyfull that he had found his Father, who presently moved the question to him. *Theodoro* hearing that *Violenta* should be his Wife, if he would so accept her: was overcome with such exceeding joy, as if he had leapt out of hell into Paradise; confessing, that no greater felicity could befall him, if *Violenta* her selfe were so well pleased as he.

The like motion was made to her, to understand her disposition in this case, who hearing what good hap had befallne *Theodoro*, and now in like manner must happen to her: whereas not long before, when two such violent deaths were prepared for her, and one of them she must needs embrace, shee accounted her misery beyond all other womens, but shee now thought her selfe above all in happinesse, if she might be wife to her beloved *Theodoro*, submitting herselfe wholly to her Fathers disposing. The mariage being agreed on betweene them, it was celebrated with great pompe and sollemnity, a generall Feast being made for all the Citizens, and the young married couple nourished up their sweete Son, which grew to be a very comely childe.

After that the Embassie was dispatched at *Rome*, and *Phineo* (with the rest) was returned thither againe; *Violenta* did reverence him as her owne naturall Father, and he was not a little proud of so lovely a Daughter, beginning a fresh feasting againe, and continuing the same a whole moneth together. Within some short while after, a Galley being fairely furnished for the purpose, *Phineo*, his Sonne, Daughter, and their young Son went aboard, sayling away thence to *Laiazzo*, where afterward they lived long in much tranquility.

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**Anastasio, a Gentleman of the Family of the Honesti, by loving the Daughter to Signior Paulo Traversario, lavishly wasted a great part of his substance, without receiving any love from her againe. By perswasion of some of his kindred and friends, he went to a Countrey dwelling of his, called Chiasso, where he saw a Knight desperately pursue a young Damosell, whom he slew, and afterward gave her to be devoured by his Hounds.**

**Anastasio invited his friends, and hers also whom he so dearely loved, to take part of a dinner with him, who likewise saw the same Damosell so torne in peeces: which his unkind Love perceiving, and fearing least the like ill fortune should happen to her; shee accepted Anastasio to be her Husband.**

## **The eighth Novell.**

**Declaring, that Love not onely makes a man prodigall, but also an enemy to himselfe. Moreover, adventure oftentimes bringeth such matters to passe, as wit and cunning in man can never comprehend.**

So soone as Madam *Lauretta* held her peace, Madam *Philomena* (by the Queenes command) began, and saide. Lovely Ladies, as pittie is most highly commended in our Sexe, even so is cruelty in us as severely revenged (oftentimes) by divine ordination. Which that you may the better know, and learne likewise to shun, as a deadly evill; I purpose to make apparant by a Novell, no lesse full of compassion, then delectable.

*Ravenna* being a very ancient City in *Romania*, there dwelt sometime a great number of worthy Gentlemen, among whom I am to speake of one more especially, named *Anastasio*, descended from the Family of the *Honesti*, who by the death of his Father, and an Unkle of his, was left extraordinarily abounding in riches, and growing to yeeres fitting for marriage, (as young Gallants are easily apt enough to doe) he became enamoured of a very beautifull Gentlewoman, who was Daughter to *Signior Paulo Traversario*, one of the most ancient and noble Families in all the Countrey. Nor made he any doubt, but by his meanes and industrious endeavour, to derive affection from her againe; for hee carried himselfe like a brave minded Gentleman, liberall in his expences, honest and affable in all his actions, which commonly are the true notes of a good nature, and highly to be commended in any man. But, howsoever Fortune became his enemy, these laudable parts of manhood did not any way friend him, but rather appeared hurtfull to him: so cruell, unkind, and almost meerely savage did she shew her selfe to him; perhaps in pride of her singular beauty, or presuming on her nobility by birth, both which are on her blemishes, then ornaments in a woman, especially when they be abused.

The harsh and uncivill usage in her, grew very distastefull to *Anastasio*, and so unsufferable, that after a long time of fruitlesse service, requited still with nothing but coy disdain; desperate resolutions entred into his brain, and often he was minded to kill himselfe. But better thoughts supplanting those furious passions, he abstained from any such violent act; & governed by more manly consideration, determined, that as she hated him, he would requite her with the like, if he could: wherein he became altogether deceived, because as his hopes grew to a dayly decaying, yet his love enlarged it selfe more and more.

Thus *Anastasio* persevering still in his bootelesse affection, and his expences not limited within any compasse; it appeared in the judgement of his Kindred and Friends, that he was falne into a mighty consumption, both of his body and meanes. In which respect, many times they advised him to leave the City of *Ravenna*, and live in some other place for such a while; as might set a more moderate stint upon his spendings, and bridle the indiscreete course of his love, the onely fuell which fed this furious fire.

*Anastasio* held out thus a long time, without lending an eare to such friendly counsell: but in the end, he was so neerely followed by them, as being no longer able to deny them, he promised to accomplish their request. Whereupon, making such extraordinary preparation, as if he were to set thence for *France* or *Spaine*, or else into some further distant countrey: he mounted on horsebacke, and accompanied with some few of his familiar friends, departed from *Ravenna*, and rode to a country dwelling house of his owne, about three or foure miles distant from the Cittie, which was called *Chiasso*, and there (upon a very goodly greene) erecting divers Tents and Pavillions, such as great persons make use of in the time of a Progresse: he said to his friends, which came with him thither, that there hee determined to make his abiding, they all returning backe unto *Ravenna*, and might come to visite him againe so often as they pleased.

Now, it came to passe, that about the beginning of May, it being then a very milde and serrene season, and he leading there a much more magnificent life, then ever he had done before, inviting divers to dine with him this day, and as many to morrow, and not to leave him till after supper: upon the sodaine, falling into remembrance of his cruell Mistris, hee commanded all his servants to forbear his company, and suffer him to walke alone by himselfe awhile, because he had occasion of private meditations, wherein he would not (by any meanes) be troubled. It was then about the ninth houre of the day, and he walking on solitary all alone, having gone some halfe miles distance from his Tents, entred into a Grove of Pine-trees, never minding dinner time, or any thing else, but only the unkind requitall of his love.

Sodainly he heard the voice of a woman, seeming to make most mournfull complaints, which breaking of his silent considerations, made him to lift up his head, to know the reason of this noise. When he saw himselfe so farre entred into the Grove, before he could imagine where he was; hee looked amazedly round about him, and out of a little thicket of bushes & briars, round engirt with spreading trees, hee espyed a young Damosell come running towards him, naked from the middle upward, her haire dishevelled on her shoulders, and her faire skinne rent and torne with the briars and brambles, so that the blood ran trickling downe mainly; shee weeping, wringing her hands, and crying out for mercy so lowde as shee could. Two fierce Blood-hounds also followed swiftly after, and where their teeth tooke hold, did most cruelly bite her. Last of all

(mounted on a lusty blacke Courser) came gallopping a Knight, with a very sterne and angry countenance, holding a drawne short Sword in his hand, giving her very vile and dreadfull speeches, and threatning everie minute to kill her.

This strange and uncouth sight, bred in him no meane admiration, as also kinde compassion to the unfortunate woman; out of which compassion, sprung an earnest desire, to deliver her (if he could) from a death so full of anguish and horror: but seeing himselfe to be without Armes, hee ran and pluckt up the plant of a Tree, which handling as if it had beene a staffe, he opposed himselfe against the Dogges and the Knight, who seeing him comming, cryed out in this manner to him. *Anastasio*, put not thy selfe in any opposition, but referre to my Hounds and me, to punish this wicked woman as she hath justly deserved. And in speaking these words, the Hounds tooke fast hold on her body, so staying her, untill the Knight was come neerer to her, and alighted from his horse: when *Anastasio* (after some other angry speeches) spake thus unto him. I cannot tell what or who thou art, albeit thou takest such knowledge of me: yet I must say, that it is meere cowardize in a Knight, being armed as thou art, to offer to kill a naked woman, and make thy dogges thus to seize on her, as if she were a savage beast; therefore beleeeve me, I will defend her so farre as I am able.

*Anastasio*, answered the Knight, I am of the same City as thou art, and do well remember, that thou wast a little Ladde, when I (who was then named *Guido Anastasio*, and thine Unckle) became as intirely in love with this woman, as now thou art of *Paulo Traversarioes* daughter. But through her coy disdain and cruelty, such was my heavy fate, that desperately I slew my selfe with this short sword which thou beholdest in mine hand: for which rash sinfull deede, I was and am condemned to eternall punishment. This wicked woman, rejoycing immeasurably in mine unhappie death, remained no long time alive after me, and for her mercillesse sinne of cruelty, and taking pleasure in my oppressing torments; dying unrepentant, and in pride of her scorne, she had the like sentence of condemnation pronounced on her, and sent to the same place where I was tormented.

There the three impartiall Judges, imposed this further infliction on us both; namely, that shee should flye in this manner before mee, and I (who loved her so deerely while I lived) must pursue her as my deadly enemy, not like a woman that had any taste of love in her. And so often as I can overtake her, I am to kill her with this sword, the same Weapon wherewith I slew my selfe. Then am I enjoyned, therewith to open her accursed body, and teare out her hard and frozen heart, with her other inwards, as now thou seest me doe, which I give unto my hounds to feede on. Afterward, such is the appointment of the supream powers, that she re-assumeth life againe, even as if she had not bene dead at all, and falling to the same kinde of flight, I with my houndes am still to follow her, without any respite or intermission. Every Friday, and just at this houre, our course is this way, where shee suffereth the just punishment inflicted on her. Nor do we rest any of the other dayes, but are appointed unto other places, where she cruelly executed her malice against me, being now (of her dear affectionate friend) ordained to be her endlesse enemy, and to pursue her in this manner, for so many yeeres, as she exercised monthes of cruelty towards me. Hinder me not then, in being the executioner of divine justice; for all thy interposition is but in vaine, in seeking to crosse the appointment of supream powers.

*Anastasio* having attentively heard all this discourse, his haire stode upright like Porcupines quills, and his soule was so shaken with the terror, that he stept back to suffer the Knight to doe what he was enjoyned, looking yet with milde commiseration on the poore woman. Who kneeling most humbly before the Knight, & sternly seised on by the two blood hounds, he opened her brest with his weapon, drawing forth her heart and bowels, which instantly he threw to the dogges, and they devoured them very greedily. Soone after, the Damosell (as if none of this punishment had bene inflicted on her) started up sodainly, running amaine towards the Sea shore, and the Hounds swiftly following her, as the Knight did the like, after he had taken his sword, and was mounted on horseback; so that *Anastasio* had soon lost all sight of them, and could not gesse what was become of them.

After he had heard and observed all these things, he stode awhile as confounded with feare and pittie, like a simple silly man, hoodwinkt with his owne passions, not knowing the subtle enemies cunning illusions, in offering false suggestions to the sight, to worke his owne ends thereby, & encrease the number of his deceived servants. Forthwith hee perswaded himself, that he might make good use of this womans tormenting, so justly imposed on the Knight to prosecute, if thus it should continue still every Friday. Wherefore, setting a good note or marke upon the place, hee returned backe to his owne people, and at such time as hee thought convenient, sent for divers of his kindred and friends from *Ravenna*, who being present with him, thus hee spake to them.

Deare Kinsmen and Friends, ye have a long while importuned mee, to discontinue my over doating love to her, whom you all think, and I find to be my mortall enemy: as also, to give over my lavish expences, wherein I confesse my selfe too prodigal; both which requests of yours, I will condescend to, provided, that you will performe one gracious favour for mee; Namely, that on Friday next, Signior *Paulo Traversario*, his wife, daughter, with all other women linked in linage to them, and such beside onely as you shall please to appoynt, will vouchsafe to accept a dinner heere with mee; as for the reason thereto mooving mee, you shall then more at large be acquainted withall. This appeared no difficult matter for them to accomplish: wherefore, being returned to *Ravenna*, and as they found the time answerable to their purpose, they invited such as *Anastasio* had appointed them. And although they found it somewhat an hard matter, to gain her company whom he so deerely affected; yet notwithstanding, the other women won her along with them.

A most magnificent dinner had *Anastasio* provided, and the tables were covered under the Pine-

trees, where hee saw the cruell Lady so pursued and slaine: directing the guests so in their seating, that the yong Gentlewoman his unkinde Mistresse, sate with her face opposite unto the place, where the dismall spectacle was to be seene. About the closing up of dinner, they beganne to heare the noise of the poore prosecuted Woman, which drove them all to much admiration; desiring to know what it was, and no one resolving them, they arose from the tables, and looking directly as the noise came to them, they espied the wofull Woman, the Dogges eagerly pursuing her; and the armed Knight on horseback, galloping fiercely after them with his drawn weapon, and came very nere unto the company, who cryed out with lowd exclames against the dogs and the Knight, stepping forth in assistance of the injured woman.

The Knight spake unto them, as formerly hee had done to *Anastasio*, (which made them draw backe, possessed with feare and admiration) acting the same cruelty as hee did the Friday before, not differing in the least degree. Most of the Gentlewomen there present, being neere allyed to the unfortunate Woman, and likewise to the Knight, remembring well both his love and death, did shed teares as plentifully, as if it had bin to the very persons themselves, in visiall performance of the action indeede. Which tragicall Scene being passed over, and the Woman and Knight gone out of their sight: all that had seene this straunge accident, fell into diversity of confused opinions, yet not daring to disclose them, as doubting some further danger to ensue thereon.

But beyond al the rest, none could compare in feare and astonishment with the cruell yong Maide affected by *Anastasio*, who both saw and observed all with a more inward apprehension, knowing very well, that the morall of this dismall spectacle, carried a much neerer application to her then any other in all the company. For now she could call to mind, how unkinde and cruell she had shewn her selfe to *Anastasio*, even as the other Gentlewoman formerly did to her Lover, still flying from him in great contempt and scorne: for which, shee thought the Blood-hounds also pursued her at the heeles already, and a sword of due vengeance to mangle her body. This feare grew so powerfull in her, that, to prevent the like heavy doome from falling on her; she studied (by all her best & commendable meanes, and therein bestowed all the night season) how to change her hatred into kinde love, which at the length shee fully obtayned, and then purposed to prosecute in this manner.

Secretly she sent a faithfull Chamber-maide of her owne, to greete *Anastasio* on her behalfe; humbly entreating him to come see her: because now she was absolutely determined, to give him satisfaction in all which (with honour) he could request of her. Whereto *Anastasio* answered, that he accepted her message thankfully, and desired no other favour at her hand, but that which stood with her owne offer, namely, to be his Wife in honourable marriage. The Maide knowing sufficiently, that hee could not be more desirous of the match, then her Mistresse shewed her selfe to be, made answeere in her name, that this motion would bee most welcome to her.

Heereupon, the Gentlewoman her selfe, became the solicitour to her Father and Mother, telling them plainly, that she was willing to bee the Wife of *Anastasio*: which newes did so highly content them, that uppon the Sunday next following, the mariage was very worthily sollemnized, and they lived and loved together very kindly. Thus the divine bounty, out of the malignant enemies secret machinations, can cause good effects to arise and succede. For, from this conceite of fearfull imagination in her, not onely happened this long desired conversion, of a Maide so obstinately scornfull and proud: but likewise al the women of *Ravenna* (being admonished by her example) grew afterward more kinde and tractable to mens honest motions, then ever they shewed themselves before. And let me make some use hereof (faire Ladies) to you, not to stand over-nicely conceited of your beauty and good parts, when men (growing enamored of you by them) sollicite you with their best and humblest services. Remember then this disdainfull Gentlewoman, but more especially her, who being the death of so kinde a Lover, was therefore condemned to perpetuall punishment, and hee made the minister thereof, whom she had cast off with coy disdaine, from which I wish your minds to be as free, as mine is ready to do you any acceptable service.

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***Frederigo, of the Alberighi Family, loved a Gentlewoman, and was not requited with like love againe. By bountifull expences, and over liberall invitations, he wasted and consumed all his lands and goods, having nothing left him, but a Hawke or Faulcon. His unkinde Mistresse happeneth to come visite him, and he not having any other foode for her dinner; made a daintie dish of his Faulcone for her to feede on. Being conquered by this his exceeding kinde courtesie, she changed her former hatred towardes him, accepting him as her Husband in marriage, and made him a man of wealthy possessions.***

## **The ninth Novell.**

***Wherein is figured to the life, the notable kindnesse and courtesie, of a true and constant Lover: As also the magnanimous minde of a famous Lady.***

Madame *Philomena* having finished her discourse, the Queene perceiving, that her turne was the next, in regard of the priviledge granted to *Dioneus*; with a smiling countenance thus she spake. Now or never am I to maintaine the order which was instituted when we beganne this

commendable exercise, whereto I yeeld with all humble obedience. And (worthy Ladies) I am to acquaint you with a Novell, in some sort answerable to the precedent, not onely to let you know, how powerfully your kindnesses do prevaile, in such as have a free and gentle soule: but also to advise you, in being bountifull, where vertue doth justly challenge it. And evermore, let your favours shine on worthy deservers, without the direction of chaunce or Fortune, who never bestoweth any gift by discretion; but rashly without consideration, even to the first she blindly meets withall.

You are to understand then, that *Coppo di Borghese Domenichi*, who was of our owne City, and perhaps (as yet) his name remaineth in great and reverend authority, now in these dayes of ours, as well deserving eternal memory; yet more for his vertues and commendable qualities, then any boast of Nobility from his predecessors. This man, being well entred into yeares, and drawing towards the finishing of his dayes; it was his only delight and felicity, in conversation among his neighbours, to talke of matters concerning antiquity, and some other things within compasse of his owne knowledge: which he would deliver in such singular order, (having an absolute memory) and with the best Language, as verie few or none could do the like. Among the multiplicity of his quaint discourses, I remember he told us, that sometime there lived in *Florence* a yong Gentleman, named *Frederigo*, Sonne to Signior *Philippo Alberigho*, who was held and reputed, both for Armes, and all other actions beseeming a Gentleman, hardly to have his equall through all *Tuscany*.

This *Frederigo* (as it is no rare matter in yong Gentlemen) became enamored of a Gentlewoman, named Madam *Giana*, who was esteemed (in her time) to be the fairest and most gracious Lady in all *Florence*. In which respect, and to reach the height of his desire, he made many sumptuous Feasts and Banquets, Joustes, Tiltes, Tournaments, and all other noble actions of Armes, beside, sending her infinite rich and costly presents, making spare of nothing, but lashing all out in lavish expence. Notwithstanding, shee being no lesse honest then faire, made no reckoning of whatsoever he did for her sake, or the least respect of his owne person. So that *Frederigo*, spending thus daily more, then his meanes and ability could maintaine, and no supplies any way redounding to him, or his faculties (as very easily they might) diminished in such sort, that he became so poore; as he had nothing left him, but a small poore Farme to live upon, the silly revenewes whereof were so meane, as scarcely allowed him meat and drinke; yet had he a Faire Hawke or Faulcon, hardly any where to be fellowed, so expeditious and sure she was of flight. His low ebbe and poverty, no way quailing his love to the Lady, but rather setting a keener edge thereon; he saw the City life could no longer containe him, where most he coveted to abide: and therefore, betooke himselfe to his poore Countrey Farme, to let his Faulcon get him his dinner and supper, patiently supporting his penurious estate, without suite or meanes making to one, for helpe or reliefe in any such necessity.

While thus he continued in this extremity, it came to passe, that the Husband to Madam *Giana* fell sicke, and his debility of body being such, as little, or no hope of life remained: he made his last will and testament, ordaining thereby, that his Sonne (already growne to indifferent stature) should be heire to all his Lands and riches, wherein hee abounded very greatly. Next unto him, if he chanced to die without a lawfull heire, hee substituted his Wife, whom most dearely he affected, and so departed out of this life. Madam *Giana* being thus left a widow; as commonly it is the custome of our City Dames, during the Summer season, shee went to a House of her owne in the Countrey, which was somewhat neere to poore *Frederigoes* Farme, and where he lived in such an honest kind of contented poverty.

Hereupon, the young Gentleman her Sonne, taking great delight in Hounds and Hawkes; grew into familiarity with poore *Frederigo*, and having seene many faire flights of his Faulcon, they pleased him so extraordinarily, that he earnestly desired to enjoy her as his owne; yet durst not move the motion for her, because he saw how choycely *Frederigo* esteemed her. Within a short while after, the young Gentleman, became very sicke, whereat his Mother grieved exceedingly, (as having no more but he, and therefore loved him the more entirely) never parting from him either night or day, comforting him so kindly as shee could, and demanding, if he had a desire to any thing, willing him to reveale it, and assuring him withall, that (if it were within the compasse of possibility) he should have it. The youth hearing how many times shee had made him these offers, and with such vehement protestations of performance, at last thus spake.

Mother (quoth he) if you can doe so much for me, as that I may have *Frederigoes* Faulcon, I am perswaded, that my sicknesse soone will cease. The Lady hearing this, sate some short while musing to her selfe, and began to consider, what shee might best doe to compasse her Sonnes desire: for well shee knew, how long a time *Frederigo* had most lovingly kept it, not suffering it ever to be out of his sight. Moreover, shee remembered, how earnest in affection he had beene to her, never thinking himselfe happy, but onely when he was in her company; wherefore, shee entred into this private consultation with her owne thoughts. Shall I send, or goe my selfe in person, to request the Faulcon of him, it being the best that ever flew? It is his onely Jewell of delight, and that taken from him, no longer can he wish to live in this World. How farre then voide of understanding shall I shew my selfe, to rob a Gentleman of his sole felicity, having no other joy or comfort left him? These and the like considerations, wheeled about her troubled braine, onely in tender care and love to her Sonne, perswading her selfe assuredly, that the Faulcon were her own, if shee would but request it: yet not knowing whereon it were best to resolve, shee returned no answer to her Sonne, but sate still in her silent meditations. At the length, love to the youth, so prevailed with her, that she concluded on his contentation, and (come of it what could) shee would not send for it; but goe her selfe in person to request it, and then returne home againe with it, whereupon thus she spake. Sonne, comfort thy selfe, and let

languishing thoughts no longer offend thee: for here I promise thee, that the first thing I doe to morrow morning, shall be my journey for the Faulcon, and assure thy selfe, that I will bring it with me. Whereat the youth was so joyed, that he imagined, his sicknesse began instantly a little to leave him, and promised him a speedy recovery.

Somewhat early the next morning, the Lady, in care of her sicke Sons health, was up and ready betimes, and taking another Gentlewoman with her; onely as a mornings recreation, shee walked to *Frederigoes* poore Countrey Farme, knowing that it would not a little glad him to see her. At the time of her arrivall there, he was (by chance) in a silly Garden, on the backe-side of his House, because (as yet) it was no convenient time for flight: but when he heard, that Madam *Giana*, was come thither, and desired to have some conference with him; as one almost confounded with admiration, in all haste he ran to her, and saluted her with most humble reverence. Shee in all modest and gracious manner, requited him with the like salutations, thus speaking to him. *Signior Frederigo*, your owne best wishes befriend you, I am now come hither, to recompence some part of your passed travailes, which heretofore you pretended to suffer for my sake, when your love was more to me, then did well become you to offer, or my selfe to accept. And such is the nature of my recompence, that I make my selfe your guest, and meane this day to dine with you, as also this Gentlewoman, making no doubt of our welcome: whereto, with lowly reverence, thus he replied.

Madam, I doe not remember, that ever I sustained any losse or hinderance by you, but rather so much good, as if I was woorth any thing, it proceeded from your great deservings, and by the service in which I did stand engaged to you. But my present happinesse can no way bee equalled, derived from your super-abounding gracious favour, and more then common course of kindnesse, vouchsafing (of your owne liberal nature) to come and visit so poore a servant. Oh that I had as much to spend againe, as heeretofore riotously I have run thorow: what a welcome wold your poore Host bestow upon you, for gracing this homely house with your divine presence? With these wordes, hee conducted her into his house, and then into his simple Garden, where having no convenient company for her, he saide. Madam, the poverty of this place is such, that it affoordeth none fit for your conversation: this poore woman, wife to an honest Husbandman will attend on you, while I (with some speede) shall make ready dinner.

Poore *Frederigo*, although his necessity was extreame, and his greefe great, remembering his former inordinate expences, a moity whereof would now have stood him in some sted; yet hee had a heart as free and forward as ever, not a jotte dejected in his minde, though utterly overthrowne by Fortune. Alas! how was his good soule afflicted, that he had nothing wherewith to honour his Lady? Up and downe he runnes, one while this way, then againe another, exclaiming on his disastrous Fate, like a man enraged, or bereft of senses: for he had not one peny of mony neither pawne or pledge, wherewith to procure any. The time hasted on, and he would gladly (though in meane measure) expresse his honourable respect of the Lady. To begge of any, his nature denied it, and to borrow he could not, because his neighbours were all as needie as himselfe.

At last, looking round about, and seeing his Faulcon standing on her perch, which he felt to be very plumpe and fat, being voide of all other helps in his neede, and thinking her to be a Fowle meete for so Noble a Lady to feede on: without any further demurring or delay, he pluckt off her necke, and caused the poore woman presently to pull her Feathers: which being done, he put her on the spit, and in short time she was daintily roasted. Himselfe covered the table, set bread and salt on, and laid the Napkins, whereof he had but a few left him. Going then with chearfull lookes into the Garden, telling the Lady that dinner was ready, and nothing now wanted, but her presence. Shee, and the Gentlewoman went in, and being seated at the table, not knowing what they fed on, the Falcon was all their foode; and *Frederigo* not a little joyfull, that his credite was so well saved. When they were risen from the table, and had spent some small time in familiar conference: the Lady thought it fitte, to acquaint him with the reason of her comming thither, and therefore (in very kinde manner) thus began.

*Frederigo*, if you do yet remember your former carriage towards me, as also my many modest and chaste denials, which (perhaps) you thought to favour of a harsh, cruell, and un-womanly nature: I make no doubt, but you will wonder at my present presumption, when you understande the occasion, which expressly mooved me to come hither. But if you were possessed of children, or ever had any, whereby you might comprehend what love (in nature) is due unto them: then I durst assure my self, that you would partly hold mee excused.

Now, in regard that you never had any, and I my selfe (for my part) have but onely one, I stand not exempted from those Lawes, which are in common to other mothers. And being compelled to obey the power of those Lawes; contrary to mine owne will, and those duties which reason ought to maintaine: I am to request such a gift of you, which I am certaine, that you do make most precious account of, as in manly equity you can do no lesse. For, Fortune hath bin so extreemly adverse to you, that she hath robbed you of all other pleasures, allowing you no comfort or delight, but onely that poore one, which is your faire Faulcone. Of which Bird, my Sonne is become so strangely desirous, as, if I doe not bring it to him at my comming home; I feare so much the extremity of his sicknesse, as nothing can ensue thereon, but his losse of life. Wherefore I beseech you, not in regard of the love you have born me, for thereby you stand no way obliged: but in your owne true gentle nature (the which hath alwayes declared it selfe ready in you, to do more kinde offices generally, then any other Gentleman that I know) you will be pleased to give her me, or at the least, let me buy her of you. Which if you do, I shall freely then confesse, that onely by your meanes, my Sonnes life is saved, and wee both shall for ever remaine engaged to you.



When *Frederigo* had heard the Ladies request, which was now quite out of his power to graunt, because it had bene her service at dinner: he stood like a man meerely dulle in his senses, the teares trickling amaine downe his cheekes: and he not able to utter one word. Which shee perceiving, began to conjecture immediately, that these teares and passions proceeded rather from greefe of minde, as being loather to part with his Faulcon, then any other kinde of matter: which made her readie to say, that she would not have it. Neverthelesse shee did not speake, but rather tarried to attend his answer. Which, after some small respite and pawse, he returned in this manner.

Madame, since the houre, when first mine affection became soly devoted to your service; Fortune hath bene crosse and contrary to mee, in many occasions, as justly, and in good reason I may complain of her. Yet all seemed light and easie to be indured, in comparison of her present malicious contradiction, to my utter overthrow, and perpetuall molestation. Considering, that you are come hither to my poore house, which (while I was rich and able) you would not so much as vouchsafe to look on. And now you have requested a small matter of mee, wherein shee hath also most crookedly thwarted me, because she hath disabled mee, in bestowing so meane a gift, as your selfe will confesse, when it shall be related to you in very few words.

So soone as I heard, that it was your gracious pleasure to dine with me, having regard to your excellency, and what (by merit) is justly due unto you: I thought it a part of my bounden dutie, to entertaine you with such exquisite viands, as my poore power could any way compas, and farre beyond respect or welcome, to other common and ordinarie persons. Whereupon, remembring my Faulcon, which nowe you aske for; and her goodnesse, excelling all other of her kinde; I supposed, that she would make a dainty dish for your dyet, and having drest hir, so well as I could devise to do: you have fed hartily on her, and I am proud that I have so well bestowne her. But perceiving now, that you would have her for your sicke Sonne; it is no meane affliction to mee, that I am disabled of yeelding you contentment, which all my lifetime I have desired to doe.

To approve his words, the feathers, feete, and beake were brought in, which when she saw, she greatly blamed him for killing so rare a Falcon, to content the appetite of any woman whatsoever. Yet she commended his height of spirit, which poverty had no power to abase. Lastly, her hopes being frustrate for enjoying the Faulcon, and fearing besides the health of her Sonne: she thanked *Frederigo* for his honourable kindnesse, returning home againe sad and melancholly. Shortly after, her sonne either greiving that he could not have the Faulcone, or by extreimity of his disease, chanced to dye, leaving his mother a most wofull Lady.

After so much time was expired, as conveniently might agree with sorrow and mourning; her Brethren made many motions to her, to joyne her selfe in marriage againe, because she was extraordinarily rich, and as yet but yong in yeares. Now, although she was well contented never to be married any more; yet being continually importuned by them, and remembring the honourable honesty of *Frederigo*, his last poore, yet magnificent dinner, in killing his Faulcone for her sake, shee saide to her Brethren. This kinde of widdowed estate doth like me so well, as willingly I would never leave it: but seeing you are so earnest for my second marriage, let me plainly tell you, that I will never accept of any other husband, but onely *Frederigo di Alberino*.

Her brethren in scornfull manner reprooved her, telling her, that hee was a begger, and had nothing left to keepe him in the world. I knowe it well (quoth she) and am heartily sorry for it. But give me a man that hath neede of wealth, rather then wealth that hath neede of a man. The Brethren hearing how shee stode addicted, and knowing *Frederigo* to bee a worthy Gentleman, though poverty had disgraced him in the Worlde: consented thereto, so she bestowed her selfe and her riches on him. He on the other side, having so noble a Lady to his Wife, and the same whome he had so long and deerely loved: submitted all his fairest Fortunes unto her, became a better husband (for the world) then before, and they lived and loved together in equall joy and happinesse.

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***Pedro di Vinciolo went to sup at a friends House in the City. His Wife (in the meane while) had a young man (whom shee loved) at supper with her. Pedro returning whom upon a sudden, the young man was hidden under a Coope for Hennes. Pedro, in excuse of his so soone comming home, declareth, how in the House of Herculano (with whom he should have supt) a friend of his Wives was found, which was the reason of the Suppers breaking off. Pedroes Wife reproving the error of Herculanoes Wife; An Asse (by chance) treads on the young mans fingers, that lay hidden under the Hen-Coope. Uppon his crying out, Pedro steppeth thither, sees him, knowes him, and findeth the fallacy of his Wife: with whom (neverthelesse) he groweth to agreement, in regard of some imperfections in himselfe.***

## **The tenth Novell.**

***Reprehending the cunning shifts, of light headed and immodest Women, who, by abusing themselves, doe throw evill aspersions on all the Sexe.***

The Queenes Novell being ended, and all the company applauding the happy fortune of *Frederigo*, as also the noble nature of Madam *Giana: Dioneus*, who never expected any command,

preparing to deliver his discourse, began in this manner. I know not, whether I should terme it a vice accidental, and ensuing through the badnesse of complexions uppon us mortals; or else an error in Nature, to joy and smile rather at lewd accidents, then at deeds that justly deserve commendation, especially, when they doe not any way concerne our selves. Now, in regard that all the paines I have hitherto taken, and am also to undergoe at this present, aymeth at no other end, but onely to purge your mindes of melancholly, and entertaine the time with mirthful matter: pardon me I pray you (faire Ladies) if my Tale trip in some part, and favour a little of immodesty; yet in hearing it, you may observe the same course, as you doe in pleasing and delightfull Gardens, plucke a sweete Rose, and yet preserve your fingers from pricking. Which very easily you may doe, wincking at the imperfections of a foolish man, and smiling at the amorous subtilties of his Wife, compassionating the misfortune of others, where urgent necessity doth require it.

There dwelt (not long since) in *Perugia*, a wealthy man, named *Pedro di Vinciolo*, who (perhaps) more to deceive some other, and restraine an evill opinion, which the *Perugians* had conceived of him, in matter no way beseeming a man, then any beauty or good feature remaining in the woman, entred into the estate of marriage. And Fortune was so conforme to him in his election, that the woman whom he had made his wife, had a young, lusty, and well enabled body, a red hairde wench, hot and fiery spirited, standing more in neede of three Husbands, then he, who could not any way well content one Wife, because his minde ran more on his money, then those offices and duties belonging to wed-lock, which time acquainting his Wife withall, contrary to her owne expectation, and those delights which the estate of marriage afforded, knowing her selfe also to be of a sprightly disposition, and not to be easily tamed by household cares and attendances; shee waxed weary of her Husbands unkind courses, upbraided him daily with harsh speeches, making his owne home meere as a hell to him.

When shee saw that this domesticke disquietnesse returned her no benefit, but rather tended to her owne consumption, then any amendment in her miserable Husband; shee began thus to conferre with her private thoughts. This Husband of mine liveth with me, as if he were no Husband, or I his Wife; the marriage bed, which should be a comfort to us both, seemeth hatefull to him, and as little pleasing to me, because his minde is on his money, his head busied with worldly cogitations, and early and late in his counting-house, admitting no familiar conversation with me. Why should not I be as respectlesse of him, as he declares himselfe to be of me? I tooke him for an Husband, brought him a good and sufficient dowry, thinking him to be a man, and affected a woman as a man ought to doe, else he had never beene any Husband of mine. If he be a Woman hater, why did he make choyce of me to be his Wife? If I had not intended to be of the World, I could have coopt my selfe up in a Cloyster, and shorne my selfe a Nunne, but that I was not borne to such severity of life. My youth shall be blasted with age, before I can truly understand what youth is, and I shall be branded with the disgracefull word barrennesse, knowing my selfe meete and able to be a Mother, were my Husband but worthy the name of a Father, or expected issue and posterity, to leave our memoriall to after times in our race, as all our predecessours formerly have done, and for which mariage was chiefly instituted. Castles long besieged, doe yeeld at the last, and women wronged by their owne Husbands, can hardly warrant their owne frailty, especially living among so many temptations, which flesh and bloud are not alwayes able to resist. Well, I meane to be advised in this case, before I will hazard my honest reputation, either to suspition or scandall, then which, no woman can have two heavier enemies, and very few there are that can escape them.

Having thus a long while consulted with her selfe, and (perhaps) oftner then twice or thrice; shee became secretly acquainted with an aged woman, generally reputed to be more then halfe a Saint, walking alwayes very demurely in the streetes, counting (over and over) her *Pater nosters*, and all the Cities holy pardons hanging at her girdle, never talking of any thing, but the lives of the holy Fathers, or the wounds of Saint *Frances*, all the World admiring her sanctity of life, even as if shee were divinely inspired: this she Saint must be our distressed womans Councillour, and having found out a convenient season, at large she imparted all her mind to her, in some such manner as formerly you have heard, whereto shee returned this answer.

Now trust me Daughter, thy case is to be pittied, and so much the rather, because thou art in the floure and spring time of thy youth, when not a minute of time is to be left: for there is no greater an error in this life, then the losse of time, because it cannot be recovered againe; and when the fiends themselves affright us, yet if we keepe our embers still covered with warme ashes on the hearth, they have nor any power to hurt us. If any one can truly speake thereof, then I am able to deliver true testimony; for I know, but not without much perturbation of minde, and piercing afflictions in the spirit; how much time I lost without any profit. And yet I lost not all, for I would not have thee thinke me to be so foolish, that I did altogether neglect such an especiall benefit; which when I call to minde, and consider now in what condition I am, thou must imagine, it is no small hearts grieffe to me, that age should make me utterly despised, and no fire afforded to light my tinder.

With men it is not so, they are borne apt for a thousand occasions, as well for the present purpose we talke of, as infinite other beside; yea, and many of them are more esteemed being aged, then when they were yong. But women serve onely for mens contentation, and to bring children, and therefore are they generally beloved, which if they faile of, either it is by unfortunate marriage, or some imperfection depending on nature, not through want of good will in themselves. We have nothing in this world but what is given us, in which regard, we are to make use of our time, and employ it the better while we have it. For, when we grow to be old, our Husbands, yea, our very dearest and nearest friends, will scarcely looke on us. We are then fit for

nothing, but to sit by the fire in the Kitchen, telling tales to the Cat, or counting the pots and pannes on the shelves. Nay, which is worse, rimes and songs is made of us, even in meere contempt of our age, and commendation of such as are young, the daintiest morsels are fittest for them, and we referred to feed on the scrappes from their trenchers, or such reversion as they can spare us. I tell thee Daughter, thou couldst not make choyce of a meeter woman in all the City, to whom thou mightest safely open thy minde, and knowes better to advise thee then I doe. But remember withall, that I am poore, and it is your part not to suffer poverty to be unsupplied. I will make thee partaker of all these blessed pardons, at every Altar I will say a *Pater noster*, and an *Ave Maria*, that thou maist prosper in thy hearts desires, and be defended from foule sinne and shame, and so shee ended her Motherly counsell.

Within a while after, it came to passe, that her Husband was invited foorth to Supper, with one named *Herculano*, a kind friend of his, but his Wife refused to goe, because shee had appointed a friend to supper with her, to whom the old woman was employed as her messenger, and was well recompenced for her labour. This friend was a gallant proper youth, as any all *Perugia* yeelded, and scarcely was he seated at the Table, but her Husband was returned backe, and called to be let in at the doore. Which when shee perceived, shee was almost halfe dead with feare, and coveting to hide the young man, that her Husband should not have any sight of him, shee had no other meanes, but in an entry, hard by the Parlour where they purposed to have supt, stood a Coope or Hen-pen, wherein she used to keepe her Pullen, under which he crept, and then shee covered it with an old empty sacke, and after ran to let her Husband come in. When he was entred into the House; as halfe offended at his so sudden returne, angerly she saide: It seemes Sir you are a shaver at your meate, that you have made so short a supper. In troth Wife (quoth he) I have not supt at all, no, not so much as eaten one bit. How hapned that? said the woman. Mary wife (quoth he) I will tell you, and then thus he began.

As *Herculano*, his wife, and I were sitting downe at the Table, very neere unto us we heard one sneeze, whereof at the first we made no reckoning, untill we heard it againe the second time, yea, a third, fourth, and fifth, and many more after, whereat we were not a little amazed. Now Wife I must tell you, before we entred the roome where we were to sup, *Herculanoes* wife kept the doore fast shut against us, and would not let us enter in an indifferent while; which made him then somewhat offended, but now much more, when he had heard one to sneeze so often. Demanding of her a reason for it, and who it was that thus sneezed in his House: he started from the Table, and stepping to a little doore neere the staires head, necessarily there made, to set such things in, as otherwise would be troublesome to the roome, (as in all Houses we commonly see the like) he perceived, that the party was hidden there, which wee had heard so often to sneeze before.

No sooner had he opened the doore, but such a smell of brimston came foorth (whereof we felt not the least savour before) as made us likewise to cough and sneeze, being no way able to refraine it. She seeing her Husband to be much moved, excused the matter thus, that (but a little while before) shee had whited certaine linnen with the smoake of brimstone, as it is an usuall thing to doe, and then set the pan into that spare place, because it should not be offensive to us. By this time, *Herculano* had espied him that sneezed, who being almost stifled with the smell, and closenesse of the small roome wherein he lay, had not any power to helpe himselfe, but still continued coughing and sneezing, even as if his heart would have split in twaine. Foorth he pluckt him by the heeles, and perceiving how matters had past, he saide to her. I thanke you Wife, now I see the reason, why you kept us so long from comming into this roome, let me die, if I beare this wrong at your hands. When his Wife heard these words, and saw the discovery of her shame; without returning either excuse or answere, foorth of doores she ran, but whither, we know not. *Herculano* drew his Dagger, and would have slaine him that still lay sneezing; but I disswaded him from it, as well in respect of his, as also mine owne danger, when the Law should censure on the deede. And after the young man was indifferently recovered; by the perswasion of some Neighbours comming in: he was closely conveyed out of the house, and all the noyse quietly pacified. Onely (by this meanes, and the flight of *Herculanoes* wife) we were disappointed of our Supper; and now you know the reason of my so soone returning.

When she had heard this whole discourse, then she perceived, that other Women were subject to the like infirmity, and as wise for themselves, as shee could be, though these and the like sinister accidents might sometimes crosse them, and gladly she wished, that *Herculanoes* Wifes excuse, might now serve to acquite her: but because in blaming others errors, our owne may sometime chance to escape discovery, and cleare us, albeit we are as guilty; in a sharpe reprehending manner, thus she began. See Husband, here is handsome behaviour, of an holy faire seeming, and Saint-like woman, to whom I durst have confest my sinnes, I conceived such a religious perswasion of her lives integrity, free from the least scruple of taxation. A woman, so farre stept into yeeres, as shee is, to give such an evill example to other younger women, is it not a sinne beyond all sufferance? Accursed be the houre, when she was borne into this World, and her selfe likewise, to be so lewdly and incontinently given; an universall shame and slaunder, to all the good women of our City.

Shall I terme her a woman, or rather some savage monster in a womans shape? Hath shee not made an open prostitution of her honesty, broken her plighted faith to her Husband, and all the womanly reputation shee had in this World? Her Husband, being an honourable Citizen, entreating her alwayes, as few men else in the City doe their wives; what an heart-breake must this needes be to him, good man? Neither I, nor any honest man else, ought to have any pity on her; but (with our owne hands) teare her in peeces, or dragge her along to a good fire in the market place, wherein she and her minion should be consumed together, and their base ashes

dispersed abroad in the winde, least the pure Aire should be infected with them.

Then, remembring her owne case, and her poore affrighted friend, who lay in such distresse under the Hen-coope; shee began to advise her Husband, that he would be pleased to goe to bed, because the night passed on apace. But *Pedro*, having a better will to eate, then to sleepe, desired her to let him have some meate, else hee must goe to bed with an empty bellie; whereto shee answered. Why Husband (quoth shee) do I make any large provision, when I am debarred of your company? I would I were the wife of *Herculano*, seeing you cannot content your selfe from one nights feeding, considering, it is now over-late to make any thing ready.

It fortun'd, that certaine Husbandmen, which had the charge of *Pedroes* Farme house in the Countrey, and there followed his affaires of Husbandry, were returned home this instant night, having their Asses laden with such provision, as was to be used in his City-house. When the Asses were unladen, and set up in a small Stable, without watering; one of them being (belike) more thirsty then the rest, brake loose, and wandering all about smelling to seeke water, happened into the entry, where the young man lay hidden under the Hen-pen. Now, he being constrained (like a Carpe) to lie flat on his belly, because the Coope was over-weighty for him to carry, and one of his hands more extended forth, then was requisite for him in so urgent a shift: it was his hap (or ill fortune rather) that the Asse set his foote on the young mans fingers, treading so hard, and the paine being very irkesome to him, as he was enforced to cry out aloud, which *Pedro* hearing, he wondered thereat not a little.

Knowing that this cry was in his house, he tooke the candle in his hand, and going forth of the Parlour, heard the cry to be louder and louder; because the Asse removed not his foote, but rather trod the more firmly on his hand. Comming to the Coope, driving thence the Asse, and taking off the old sacke, he espyed the young man, who, beside the painfull anguish he felt of his fingers, arose up trembling, as fearing some outrage beside to be offered him by *Pedro*, who knew the youth perfectly, and demanded of him, how he came thither. No answer did he make to that question, but humbly entreated (for charities sake) that he would not doe him any harme. Feare not (quoth *Pedro*) I will not offer thee any violence: onely tel me how thou camest hither, and for what occasion; wherein the youth fully resolved him.

*Pedro* being no lesse joyfull for thus finding him, then his wife was sorrowfull, tooke him by the hand, and brought him into the Parlour, where shee sate trembling and quaking, as not knowing what to say in this distresse. Seating himselfe directly before her, and holding the youth still fast by the hand, thus he began. Oh Wife! what bitter speeches did you use (even now) against the wife of *Herculano*, maintaining that shee had shamed all other women, and justly deserved to be burned? Why did you not say as much of your selfe? Or, if you had not the heart to speake it, how could you be so cruell against her, knowing your offence as great as hers? Questionlesse, nothing else urged you thereto, but that all women are of one and the same condition, covering their owne grosse faults by farre inferiour infirmities in others. You are a perverse generation, meere false in your fairest shewes.

When she saw that he offered her no other violence, but gave her such vaunting and reproachfull speeches, holding still the young man before her face, meere to vexe and despight her: shee began to take heart, and thus replied. Doest thou compare me with the wife of *Herculano*, who is an olde, dissembling hypocrite? yet she can have of him whatsoever she desireth, and he useth her as a woman ought to be, which favour I could never yet find at thy hands. Put the case, that thou keepest me in good garments, allowing me to goe neatly hosed and shod; yet well thou knowest, there are other meete matters belonging to a woman, and every way as necessarily required, both for the preservation of Houshold quietnesse, and those other rites betweene a Husband and Wife. Let me be worsed garmented, courser dieted, yea, debarred of all pleasure and delights; so I might once be worthy the name of a Mother, and leave some remembrance of woman-hood behind me. I tell thee plainly *Pedro*, I am a woman as others are, and subject to the same desires, as (by nature) attendeth on flesh and blood: look how thou failest in kindnesse towards me, thinke it not amisse, if I doe the like to thee, and endeavour thou to win the worthy title of a Father, because I was made to be a Mother.

When *Pedro* perceived, that his Wife had spoken nothing but reason, in regard of his over-much neglect towards her, and not using such houshold kindnesse, as ought to be between Man and Wife, he returned her this answer. Well Wife (quoth he) I confesse my fault, and hereafter will labour to amend it; conditionally, that this youth, nor any other, may no more visite my House in mine absence. Get me therefore something to eate, for doubtlesse, this young man and thy selfe fell short of your supper, by reason of my so soone returning home. In troth Husband, saide shee, we did not eate one bit of anything, and I will be a true and loyall Wife to thee, so thou wilt be the like to me. No more words then wife, replied *Pedro*, all is forgotten and forgiven, let us to supper, and we are all friends. She seeing his anger was so well appeased, lovingly kissed him, and laying the cloth, set on the supper, which shee had provided for her selfe & the youth, and so they supt together merrily, not one unkind word passing betweene them. After supper, the youth was sent away in friendly manner, and *Pedro* was always afterward more loving to his Wife, then formerly he had been, and no complaint passed on either side, but mutuall joy and houshold contentment, such as ought to be betweene man and wife.

*Dioneus* having ended his Tale, for which the Ladies returned him no thanks, but rather angerly frowned on him: the Queene, knowing that her government was now concluded, arose, and taking off her Crowne of Lawrell, placed it graciously on the head of Madam *Eliza*, saying. Now Madam, it is your turne to command. *Eliza* having received the honour, did (in all respects) as others formerly had done, and after she had enstructed the Master of the Houshold, concerning his charge during the time of her regiment, for contentation of all the company; thus she spake.

We have long since heard, that with witty words, ready answers, and sudden jests or taunts, many have checkt & reprov'd great folly in others, and to their owne no meane commendation. Now, because it is a pleasing kind of argument, ministring occasion of mirth and wit: my desire is, that all our discourse to morrow shall tend thereto. I meane of such persons, either Men or Women, who with some sudden witty answer, have encountred a scorner in his owne intention, and layed the blame where it justly belonged. Every one commended the Queenes appointment, because it savoured of good wit and judgement; and the Queene being risen, they were all discharged till supper time, falling to such severall exercises as themselves best fancied.

When supper was ended, and the instruments layed before them; by the Queenes consent, Madam *Æmillia* undertooke the daunce, and the Song was appointed to *Dioneus*, who began many, but none that proved to any liking, they were so palpably obscene and idle, savouring altogether of his owne wanton disposition. At the length, the Queene looking stearnely on him, and commanding him to sing a good one, or none at all; thus he began.

*The Song.*

*Eyes, can ye not refraine your houely weeping?  
Eares, how are you deprivde of sweete attention?  
Thoughts, have you lost your quiet silent sleeping?  
Wit, who hath robde thee of thy rare invention?  
The lacke of these, being life and motion giving:  
Are sencelesse shapes, and no true signes of living.*

*Eyes, when you gazde upon her Angell beauty;  
Eares, while you heard her sweete delicious straines,  
Thoughts (sleeping then) did yet performe their duty,  
Wit, then tooke sprightly pleasure in his paines.  
While shee did live, then none of these were scanting,  
But now (being dead) they all are gone and wanting.*

After that *Dioneus* (by proceeding no further) declared the finishing of his Song; many more were sung beside, and that of *Dioneus* highly commended. Some part of the night being spent in other delightfull exercises, and a fitting houre for rest drawing on: they betooke themselves to their Chambers, where we will leave them till to morrow morning.

***The end of the Fifth Day.***

**FINIS.**

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE DECAMERON (DAY 1 TO DAY 5) \*\*\*

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