THE TUDOR TRANSLATIONS
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THE DECAMERON
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THE TABLE

The Eighth Day, governed under Madame Lauretta

Whereon all the Discourses, is, Concerning such Witty deceivings, as have, or may be put in practise, by Wives to their Husbands, Husbands to their Wives, Or one man towards another.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FIRST NOVELL

Gulfardo made a match or wager, with the wife of Gasparuolo, for the obtaining of her amorous favour, in regard of a summe of money first to be given her. The money he borrowed of her Husband, and gave it in payment to her, as in case of discharging him from her Husbands debt. After his returne home from Geneway, he told him in the presence of his wife, how hee had payde the whole summe to her, with charge of delivering it to her Husband, which she confessed to be true, albeit greatly against her will.

THE MORALL

Wherein is declared, That such women as will make sale of their honestie, are sometimes over-reached in their payment, and justly served as they should be. 2

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SECOND NOVELL

A lusty Priest of Varlungo, fell in love with a pretty woman, named Monna Belcolore. To compasse his amorous desire, hee left his cloake (as a pledge of further payment) with 4 : b
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her. By a subtile sleight afterward, he borrowed a morter of her, which when hee sent home againe in the presence of her husband, he demanded to have his Cloake sent him, as having left it in pawne for the Morter. To pacifie her Husband, offended that she did not lend the Priest the Morter without a pawne: she sent him backe his Cloake againe, albeit greatly against hir will.

THE MORALL

Approving, that no promise is to be kept with such women as will make sale of their honesty for Coine.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE THIRD NOVELL

Calandrino, Bruno, and Buffalmaco, being Painters by profession, travailed to the Plaine of Mugnone, to finde the precious stone called Helitropium. Calandrino perswading himselfe to have found it, returned home to his house heavy loaden with stones. His wife rebuking him for his absence, he growth into anger, and shrewdly beates her. Afterward, when the case is debated by his other friends Bruno and Buffalmaco, all is found to be meere folly.

THE MORALL

Reprehending the simplicity of such men, as are too much addicted to credulity, and will give credit to every thing they heare.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FOURTH NOVELL

The Provost belonging to the Cathedrall Church of Fiesola, fell in love with a Gentlewoman, being a Widow, and named Piccarda, who hated him as much as he loved her. He imaging that he lay with her: by the Gentlewomans Brethren, and the Bishop under whom he served, was taken in bed with her Mayde, an ugly, foule, deformed Slut.

THE MORALL

Wherein is declared, how love oftentimes is so powerfull in aged men, and driveth them to such doating, that it redoundeth to their great disgrace and punishment.
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THE ARGUMENT OF THE FIFT NOVELL

Three pleasant companions, plaid a merry prank with a Judge (belonging to the Marquesate of Ancona) at Florence, at such time as he sat on the bench, and hearing criminall causes.

THE MORALL

Giving admonition, that for the managing of publike affaires, no other persons are or ought to bee appointed, but such as be honest, and meet to sit on the seate of Authority

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SIXT NOVELL

Bruno and Buffalmaco stole a yong Brawne from Calandrino, and for his recovery thereof, they used a kinde of pretended conjuration, with Pils made of Ginger and strong Malmesey. But insted of this application, they gave him two pils of a Dogges dates or dousets, confected in Alloes, by meanes whereof they made him beleeve, that hee had robd himselfe. And for feare they should report this theft to his Wife, they made him to buy another Brawne.

THE MORALL

Wherein is declared, how easily a plaine and simple man may bee made a foole, when he dealeth with crafty companions

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SEAVENTH NOVELL

A yong Gentleman being a Scholler, fell in love with a Ladie, named Helena, she being a woman, and addicted in affection unto another Gentleman. One whole night in cold winter, she caused the Scholler to expect her comming, in an extreme frost and snow. In revenge wherof, by his imagined Art and skill, he made her to stand naked on the top of a Tower, the space of a whole day, and in the hot moneth of July, to be Sun-burnt and bitten with Waspes and Flies.

THE MORALL

Serving as an admonition to all Gentlewomen, not to mocke Gentlemen Schollers, when they make meanes of love to them, except they intend to seeke their owne shame by disgracing them
Two neere dwelling Neighbours, the one bbeing named Spinelloccio Tavena, and the other Zeppa di Mino, frequenting each others company daily together; Spinelloccio Cuckolded his Friend and Neighbour. Which happening to the knowledge of Zeppa, hee prevailed so well with the Wife of Spinelloccio, that he being lockt up in a Chest, hee revenged his wrong at that instant, so that nether of them complained of his misfortune.

THE MORALL
Wherein is approved, that hee which offereth shame and disgrace to his neighbor, may receive the like injury (if not worse) by the same man.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE NINTH NOVELL
Maestro Simone, an idle headed Doctor of Physicke, was thrown by Bruno and Buffalmaco into a common Leystall of filth: the Physitian fondly beieving, that (in the night time) he should be made one of a new created company, who usually went to see wonders at Corsica, and there in the Leystall they left him.

THE MORALL
Approving, that titles of honour, learning, and dignity, are not always bestowne on the wisest men.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE TENTH NOVELL
A Cicilian Curtezan, named Madam Biancafiore, by her subtle policy deceived a yong Merchant called Salabetto, of all his mony he had taken for his wares at Palermo. Afterward he making shew of coming thither againe with far richer Merchandises then before: made the meanes to borrow a great summe of money, leaving her so base a pawne, as well requited her for her former cousenage.

THE MORALL
Approving, that such as meet with cunning Harlots, suffering themselves to be deceyved, must sharpen their wits, to make them requital in the same kind.
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The Ninth Day, governed under Madame Æmillia

Whereon, the Argument of each severall Discourse, is not limited to any one peculiar subject: but everie one remaineth at liberty, to speake of whatsoever themselves best pleaseth.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FIRST NOVELL

Madam Francesca, a Widow of Pistoya, being affected by two Florentine Gentlemen, the one named Rinuccio Palermini, and the other Alessandro Chiarmontesi, and she bearing no good will to either of them, ingeniously freed her selfe from both their importunate suites. One of them shee caused to lye as dead in a grave, and the other to fetch him from thence: so neither of them accomplishing what they were enjoyned, failed of their expectation.

THE MORALL

Approving, that chast and honest women, ought rather to deny importunate suiters, by subtle and ingenious means, then fall into the danger of scandall and slander.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SECOND NOVELL

Madame Usimbalda, Lady Abbesse of a Monastery of Nuns in Lombardie, arising hastily in the night time without a Candle, to take one of her Daughter Nunnes in bed with a yong Gentleman, whereof she was envously accused, by certaine of her other Sisters: The Abbesse her selfe (being at the same time in bed with a Priest) imagining to have put on her head her plaited vayle, put on the Priests breeches. Which when the poore Nunne perceyved; by causing the Abbesse to see her owne error, she got her selfe to be absolved, and had the freer liberty afterward, to be more familiar with her frend, then formerly she had bin.

Whereby is declared, that whosoever is desirous to reprehend sinne in other men, should first examine himselfe, that he be not guiltie of the same crime.
THE ARGUMENT OF THE THIRD NOVELL

Master Simon the Physitian, by the perswasions of Bruno, Buffalmaco, and a third Companion, named Nello, made Calandrino to beleeve, that he was conceived great with childe. And having Physicke ministred to him for the disease: they got both good fatte Capons and money of him, and so cured him, without any other manner of deliverance.

Discovering the simplicity of some silly witted men, and how easie a matter it is to abuse and beguile them.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FOURTH NOVELL

Francesco Fortarigo, played away all that he had at Buon-convento, and likewise the money of Francesco Aniolliero, being his Master: Then running after him in his shirt, and avouching that hee had robbed him: he caused him to be taken by Pezants of the Country, clothed himselfe in his Masters wearing garments, and (mounted on his horse) rode thence to Sienna, leaving Aniolliero in his shirt, and walked bare-footed.

Serving as an admonition to all men, for taking Gamesters and Drunkards into their service.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FIFTE NOVELL

Calandrino became extraordinarily enamoured of a young Damosell, named Nicholetta. Bruno prepared a Charme or writing for him, avouching constantly to him, that so soone as he touched the Damosell therewith, she should follow him whithersoever hee would have her. She being gone to an appointed place with him, hee was found there by his wife, and dealt withall according to his deserving.

In just reprehension of those vaine-headed fooles, that are led and governed by idle perswasions.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SIXTH NOVELL

Two yong Gentlemen, the one named Panuccio, and the other Adriano, lodged one night in a poore Inne, whereof one
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of them went to bed to the Hostes daughter, and the other (by mistaking his way in the dark) to the Hostes wife. He which lay with the daughter, hapned afterward to the Hostes bed, and told him what he had done, as thinking he spake to his owne companion. Discontentment growing betweene them, the mother perceiving her error, went to bed to her daughter, and with discreet language, made a generall pacification.

Wherein is manifested, that an offence committed ignorantly, and by mistaking; ought to be covered with good advise, and civill discretion.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SEAVENOTH NOVELL

Talano de Molese dreamed, That a Wolfe rent and tore his wives face and throate. Which dreame he told to her, with advise to keep her selfe out of danger; which she refusing to doe, received what followed.

Whereby (with some indifferent reason) it is concluded, that Dreames do not alwayes fall out to be leasings.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE EIGHT NOVELL

Blondello (in a merry maner) caused Guiotto to beguile himselfe of a good dinner: for which deceit, Guiotto became cunningly revenged, by procuring Blondello to be unreasonably beaten and misused.

Whereby plainly appeareth, that they which take delight in deceiving others, do well deserve to be deceived themselves.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE NINTH NOVELL

Two yong Gentlemen, the one named Melisso, borne in the City of Laiazzo: and the other Giosefo of Antioche, travailed together unto Salomon, the famous King of Great Britaine. The one desiring to learne what he should do, whereby to compasse and winne the love of men. The other craved to be enstructed, by what meanes hee might reclaime an headstrong and unruly wife. And what
answeres the wise King gave unto them both, before they departed away from him.

Containing an excellent admonition, that such as covet to have the love of other men, must first learne themselves, how to love: Also, by what meanes such women as are curst and self-willed, may be reduced to civill obedience

John de Barolo, at the instance and request of his Gossip Pietro da Tresanti, made an enchantment, to have his Wife become a Mule. And when it came to the fastening on of the taile, Gossip Pietro by saying she should have no taile at all, spoyled the whole enchantment.

In just reproofe of such foolish men, as will be governed by over-light beleefe.

Whereon the severall Arguments doe Concerne such persons, as either by way of Liberality, or in Magnificent manner, performed any worthy action, for love, favour, friendship, or another honourable occasion.

A Florentine knight, named Signior Rogiero de Figiovanni, became a servant to Alphonso, King of Spaine, who (in his owne opinion) seemed but sleightly to respect and reward him. In regard whereof, by a notable experiment, the King gave him a manifest testimony, that it was not through any defect in him, but onely occasioned by the Knights ill fortune; most bountifully recompencing him afterward.

Wherin may evidently be discerned, that Servants to Princes and great Lords, are many times recompenced, rather by their good fortune, then in any regard of their dutifull services.
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THE ARGUMENT OF THE SECOND NOVELL

Ghinotto di Tacco tooke the Lord Abbot of Clugni as his prisoner, and cured him of a grievous disease, which he had in his stomacke, and afterward set him at liberty. The same Lord Abbot, when hee returned from the Court of Rome, reconciled Ghinotto to Pope Boniface; who made him a Knight, and Lord Prior of a goodly Hospitall. Wherein is declared that good men doe sometimes fall into bad conditions, onely occasioned thereto by necessity: And what means are to be used, for their reducing to goodnesse againe.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE THIRD NOVELL

Mithridanes envying the life and liberality of Nathan, and travelling thither, with a setled resolution to kill him: chaunceth to conferre with Nathan unknowne. And being instructed by him, in what manner he might best performe the bloody deede, according as hee gave direction, hee meeteth with him in a small Thicket or Woode, where knowing him to be the same man, that taught him how to take away his life: Confounded with shame, hee acknowledgeth his horrible intention, and becommeth his loyall friend. Shewing in an excellent and lively demonstration, that any especiall honourable vertue, persevering and dwelling in a truly noble soule, cannot be violated or confounded, by the most politicke attemptes of malice and envy.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FOURTH NOVELL

Signior Gentile de Carisendi, being come from Modena, took a Gentlewoman, named Madam Catharina, forth of a grave, wherein she was buried for dead: which act he did, in regard of his former honest affection to the said Gentlewoman. Madame Catharina remaining there afterward, and delivered of a goodly Sonne: was (by Signior Gentile) delivered to her owne Husband, named Signior Nicoluccio Caccianimico, and the yong infant with her.
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Wherein is shewn, that true love hath always been, and so still is, the occasion of many great and worthy courtesies.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FIFT NOVELL

Madame Dianora, the Wife of Signior Gilberto, being immodestly affected by Signior Ansaldo, to free her selfe from his tedious importunity, she appointed him to performe (in her judgement) an act of impossibility; namely, to give her a Garden, as plentifully stored with fragrant Flowers in January, as in the flourishing moneth of May. Ansaldo, by meanes of a bond which he made to a Magitian, performed her request. Signior Gilberto, the Ladies Husband, gave consent, that his Wife should fulfill her promise made to Ansaldo. Who hearing the bountifull mind of her Husband; released her of her promise: And the Magitian likewise discharged Signior Ansaldo, without taking any thing of him.

Admonishing all Ladies and Gentlewomen, that are desirous to preserve their chastity, free from all blemish and taxation: to make no promise of yeelding to any, under a compact or covenant, how impossible soever it may seeme to be.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SIXT NOVELL

Victorious King Charles, sirnamed the Aged, and first of that Name, fell in love with a yong Maiden, named Genevera, daughter to an ancient Knight, called Signior Neri degli Uberti. And waxing ashamed of his amorous folly, caused both Genevera, and her fayre Sister Isotta, to be joyned in marriage with two Noble Gentlemen; the one named Signior Maffeo da Palizzi, and the other, Signior Gulielmo della Magna.

Sufficiently declaring, that how mighty soever the power of Love is: yet a magnanimous and truly generous heart, it can by no meanes fully conquer.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SEAVENTH NOVELL

Lisana, the Daughter of a Florentine Apothecary, named Bernardo Puccino, being at Palermo, and seeing Piero, King of Aragon run at the Tilt; fell so affectionately enamored of him, that she languished in an extreame xvi
and long sickenesse. By her owne devise, and means of a Song, sung in the hearing of the King: he vouchsafed to visite her, and giving her a kisse, terming himselfe also to bee her Knight for ever after, hee honourably bestowed her in marriage on a young Gentleman, who was called Perdicano, and gave him liberall endowments with her.

Wherein is covertly given to understand, that howsoever a Prince may make use of his absolute power and authority, towards Maides or Wives that are his Subjects: yet he ought to deny and reject all things, as shall make him forgetfull of himselfe, and his true honour.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE EIGHT NOVELL

Sopronia, thinking her selfe to be the maried wife of Gisippus, was (indeed) the wife of Titus Quintus Fulvius, and departed thence with him to Rome. Within a while after, Gisippus also came thither in very poore condition, and thinking that he was despised by Titus, grew weary of his life, and confessed that he had murdred a man, with ful intent to die for the fact. But Titus taking knowledge of him, and desiring to save the life of Gisippus, charged himself to have done the bloody deed. Which the murderer himself (standing then among the multitude) seeing, truly confessed the deed. By meanes whereof, all three were delivered by the Emperor Octavius; and Titus gave his Sister in marriage to Gisippus, giving them also the most part of his goods and inheritances.

Declaring, that notwithstanding the frownes of Fortune, diversity of occurrences, and contrary accidents happening: yet love and friendship ought to be preciously preserved among men.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE NINTH NOVELL

Saladine, the great Soldan of Babylon, in the habite of a Merchant, was honourably received and welcommed, into the house of Signior Thorello d’Istria. Who travelling to the Holy Land, prefixed a certaine time to his Wife, for his returne backe to her againe, wherein, if he failed, it was lawfull for her to take another Husband. By clouding himselfe in the disguise of a Faulkner, the Soldan tooke
notice of him, and did him many great honours. Afterward, Thorello falling sicke, by Magical Art, he was conveighed in one night to Pavia, when his Wife was to be married on the morrow: where making himselfe knowne to her, all was disappointed, and shee went home with him to his owne house.

Declaring what an honourable vertue Courtesie is, in them that truely know how to use them.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE TENTH NOVELL

The Marquesse of Saluzzo, named Gualtiero, being constrained by the importunate solliciting of his Lords, and other inferiour people, to joyne himselfe in marriage; tooke a woman according to his owne liking, called Grizelda, she being the daughter of a poore Countriman, named Janiculo, by whom he had two children, which he pretended to be secretly murdered. Afterward, they being grown to yeres of more stature, and making shew of taking in marriage another wife, more worthy of his high degree and Calling: made a seeming publique liking of his owne daughter, expulsing his wife Grizelda poorely from him. But finding her incomparable patience; more dearely (then before) hee received her into favour againe, brought her home to his owne Pallace, where (with her children) hee caused her and them to be respectively honoured, in despight of all her adverse enemies.

Set downe as an example or warning to all wealthie men, how to have care of marrying themselves. And likewise to poore and meane women, to be patient in their fortunes, and obedient to their husbands.
THE EIGHT DAY

Whereon all the Discourses, passe under the Rule and Government, of the Honourable Ladie Lau-retta. And the Argument imposed, is, Concerning such Wittie deceyvings; as have, or may be put in practise, by Wives to their Husbands; Husbands to their Wives: Or one man towards another.

THE INDUCTION

ARELY on the Sunday Morning, Aurora shewing her selfe bright and lovely; the Sunnes Golden beames beganne to appeare, on the toppes of the neere adjoyning Mountaines; so, that Hearbes, Plants, Trees, and all things else, were verie evidently to be discerned. The Queene and her Companie, being all come foorth of their Chambers, and having walked a while abroad, in the goodly greene Meadowes, to taste the sweetnesse of the fresh and wholesome ayre they returned backe againe into the Palace, because it was their dutie so to do.

Afterward, betweene the houres of seaven and eight, they went to heare Masse, in a faire Chappell neere at hand, and thence returned to their Lodgings. When they had dined merrily together, they fell to their wonted singing and dauncing: Which beeing done, such as were so pleased (by 4: A
License of the Queene first obtained) went either to their rest, or such exercises as they tooke most delight in. When midday, and the heate thereof was well over-past, so that the aire seemed mild and temperate: according as the Queene had commanded; they were all seated againe about the Fountaine, with intent to prosecute their former past-time. And then Madame Neiphila, by the charge imposed on her, as first speaker for this day, beganne as followeth.

Gulfardo made a match or wager, with the Wife of Gasparuolo, for the obtaining of her amorous favour, in regard of a summe of money first to be given her. The money hee borrowed of her Husband, and gave it in payment to her, as in case of discharging him from her Husbands debt. After his returne home from Geneway, hee told him in the presence of his wife, how he had payde the whole summe to her, with charge of delivering it to her Husband, which she confessed to be true, albeit greatly against her will.

**THE FIRST NOVELL**

Wherein is declared, that such women as will make sale of their honestie, are sometimes over-reached in their payment, and justly served as they should be.

SEEING it is my fortune, Gracious Ladies, that I must give beginning to this dayes discoursing, by some such Novel which I thinke expedient; as duty bindeth me, I am therewith well contented. And because the deceits of Women to men, have beene at large and liberally related; I will tell you a subtile tricke of a man
THE EIGHT DAY

to a Woman. Not that I blame him for the deede, or thinke
the deceyte not well fitted to the woman: but I speake it
in a contrarie nature, as commending the man, and con-
demning the woman very justly, as also to shew, how men
can as well beguile those crafty companions, which least
beleeve any such cunning in them, as they that stand most
on their artificiall skill.

Howbeit, to speake more properly, the matter by me to be
reported, deserveth not the reproachfull title of deceite, but
rather of a recompense duly returned: because women ought
to be chaste and honest, and to preserve their honour as
their lives, without yeelding to the contamination thereof,
for any occasion whatsoever. And yet nevertheless (in
regard of our frailty) many times we proove not so constant
as we should be: yet I am of opinion, that she which
selleth her honestie for money, deserveth justly to be
burned. Whereas on the contrary, she that falleth into the
offence, onely through intire affection (the powerfull lawes
of Love beeing above all resistance) in equity meriteth
pardon, especially of a Judge not over-rigorous: as not long
since wee heard from Philostratus, in revealing what hapned
to Madam Phillippa de Prato, upon the dangerous Edict.

Understand then, my most worthy Auditors, that there
lived sometime in Millaine an Almaigne Soldiour, named
Gulfardo, of commendable carriage in his person, and very
faithfull to such as he served, a matter not common among
the Almaignes. And because he made just repayment, to
every one which lent him monies; he grew to such especiall
credit, and was so familiar with the very best Marchants; as
(manie times) he could not be so ready to borrow, as they
were willing alwaies to lend him. He thus continuing in
the Cittie of Millaine, fastened his affection on a verie
beautifull Gentlewoman, named Mistresse Ambrosia, Wife
unto a rich Merchant, who was called Signior Gasparuolo
Sagastraccio, who had good knowledge of him, and respec-
tively used him. Loving this Gentlewoman with great
disseretion, without the least apprehension of her husband:
he sent upon a day to entreate conference with her, for
enjoying the fruition of her love, and she should find him
ready to fulfill whatsoever she pleased to command him, as, at any time he would make good his promise.

The Gentlewoman, after divers of these private solicitings, resolutely answered, that she was as ready to fulfill the request of Gulfardo, provided, that two especiall considerations might ensue thereon. First, the faithfull concealing thereof from any person living. Next, because she knew him to be rich, and she had occasion to use two hundred Crowns, about businesse of important consequence: he should freely bestow so many on her, and (ever after) she was to be commanded by him. Gulfardo perceiving the covetousnesse of this woman, who (notwithstanding his doting affection) he thought to be intirely honest to her Husband: became so deeply offended at her vile answere, that his fervent love converted into as earnest loathing her; determining constantlie to deceive her, and to make her avaritious motion, the only means wherby to effect it.

He sent her word, that he was willing to performe her request, or any farre greater matter for her: in which respect, he onely desired for to know, when she would be pleased to have him come see her, and to receive the money of him? No creature hee acquainted with his setled purpose, but onely a deere friend and kinde companion, who always used to keepe him company, in the neerest occasions that concerned him. The Gentlewoman, or rather most disloyall wife, uppon this answer sent her, was extraordinarily jocond and contented, returning him a secret Letter, wherein she signified: that Gasparuolo her husband, had important affaires which called him to Geneway: but he should understand of his departure, and then (with safety) he might come see her, as also his bringing of the Crownes.

In the meane while, Gulfardo having determined what he would do, watched a convenient time, when he went unto Gasparuolo, and sayde: Sir, I have some businesse of maune importance, and shall neede to use but two hundred Crownes onely: I desire you to lend me so many Crownes, upon such profite as you were wont to take of mee, at other times when I have made use of you, and I shall not faile you at my day.
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Gasparuolo was well contented with the motion, and made no more ado, but counted downe the Crownes: departing thence (within few dayes after) for Geneway, according to his Wives former message; she giving Gulfardo also intelligence of his absence, that now (with safety) hee might come see her, and bring the two hundred Crownes with him.

Gulfardo, taking his friend in his company, went to visite Mistresse Ambrosia, whom he found in expectation of his arrivall, and the first thing he did, he counted downe the two hundred Crownes; and delivering them to her in the presence of his friend, saide: Mistresse Ambrosia, receive these two hundred Crownes, which I desire you to pay unto your Husband on my behalfe, when he is returned from Geneway. Ambrosia, receyved the two hundred Crownes, not regarding wherefore Gulfardo used these words: because shee verily beleevd, that hee spake in such manner, because his friend should take no notice, of his giving them to her, upon any covenant passed betweene them; whereupon, she sayde. Sir, I will pay them to my Husband for you; and cause him to give you a sufficient discharge: but first I will count them over my selfe, to see whether the summe be just, or no. And having drawne them over upon the Table, the summe containing truly two hundred Crownes (wherewith she was most highly contented) she lockt them safe uppe in her Cuppeboord, and Gulfardoes Friend being gone (as formerly it was compacted betweene them) shee came to converse more familiarly with him, having provided a banquet for him. What passed between them afterward, both then, and oftentimes beside, before her Husbande returned home, is a matter out of my element, and rather requires my ignorance then knowledge.

When Gasparuolo was come from Geneway, Gulfardo observing a convenient time, when he was sitting at the doore with his Wife; tooke his Friend with him, and comming to Gasparuolo, said. Worthy Sir, the two hundred Crownes which you lent me, before your journy to Geneway, in regard they could not serve my turne, to compasse the businesse for which I borrowed them: within a day or two after, in the presence of this Gentle man my friend, I
made repayment of them to your Wife, and therefore I pray you crosse me out of your booke.

Gasparuolo turning to his Wife, demanded; Whether it was so, or no? She beholding the witnesse standing by, who was also present at her receyving them: durst not make deniall, but thus answered. Indeede Husband, I received two hundred Crownes of the Gentleman, and never remembred, to acquaint you therewith since your comming home: but hereafter I will be made no more your receiver, except I carried a quicker memory.

Then saide Gasparuolo: Signior Gulfardo, I finde you alwaies a most honest Gentleman, and will be readie at any time, to doe you the like, or a farre greater kindnesse; depart at your pleasure, and feare not the crossing of my Booke. So Gulfardo went away merily contented, and Ambrosia was served as she justly merited; she paying the price of her owne leudnesse to her Husband, which she had a more covetous intent to keepe, questionlesse, not caring how many like lustfull matches shee coulde make, to be so liberally rewarded, if this had succeeded to her minde: whereas he shewed himselfe wise and discreete, in paying nothing for his pleasure, and requiting a covetous queane in her kinde.
A lustie youthfull Priest of Varlungeo, fell in love with a pretty woman, named Monna Belcolore. To compasse his amorous desire, hee lefte his Cloake (as a pledge of further payment) with her. By a subtile sleight afterward, he made meanes to borrow a Morter of her, which when hee sent home againe in the presence of her Husband; he demanded to have his Cloake sent him, as having left it in pawne for the Morter. To pacifie her Husband, offended that shee did not lend the Priest the Morter without a pawne: she sent him backe his Cloake againe, albeit greatly against her will.

THE SECOND NOVELL

Approving, that no promise is to be kept with such Women as will make sale of their honesty for coyne. A warning also for men, not to suffer Priests to be over familiar with their wives.

BOTH the Gentlemen and Ladies gave equall commendations, of Gulfardoes queint beguiling the Millaine Gentle-woman Ambrosia, and wishing all other (of her minde) might alwaies be so served. Then the Queene, smiling on Pamphilus, commaunded him to follow next: whereupon, thus he began.

I can tell you (faire Ladies) a short Novell, against such as are continually offensive to us, yet we being no way able to offend him; at least, in the same maner as they do injurie us. And for your better understanding what and who they be, they are our lusty Priests, who advance their Standard, and make their publike predications against our wives, winning such advantage over them, that they can
pardon them both of the sinne and punishment, whensoever they are once subjected unto their persuasions, even as if they brought the Soldane bound and captived, from Alexandria to Avignon. Which imperious power, we (poore soules) cannot exercise on them, considering, we have neither heart nor courage, to do our devoire in just revenge on their Mothers, Sisters, Daughters, and Friends, with the like spirit as they rise in armes against our wives. And therefore, I meane to tell you a tale of a Country mans wife, more to make you laugh at the conclusion thereof: yet this benefite you may gaine thereby, of an apperant proofe, that such Sinamon, amorous and perswading Priests, are not alwayes to be credited on their words or promises.

Let me then tell you, that at Varlungo, which you know to bee not farre distant hence, there dwelt an youthfull Priest, lustie, gallant, and proper of person (especially for Womens service) commonly called by the name of sweet Sir Simon. Now, albeit he was a man of slender reading, yet notwithstanding, he had store of Latine sentences by heart; some true, but twice so many maimed and false, Saint-like shewes, holy speeches, and ghostly admonitions, which hee would preach under an Oake in the fields, when he had congregated his Parishioners together. When women lay in childe-bed, hee was their daily comfortable visitant, and would man them from their houses, when they had any occasion to walke abroad: carrying always a bottle of holy water about him, therewith he would sprinkle them by the way, peeces of halowed Candles, and Chrisome Cakes, which pleased women extraordinarily, and all the Country affoorded not such another frolicke Priest, as this our nimble and active sweet Sir Simon.

Among many other of his feminine Parishioners, all of them being hansome and comely Women: yet there was one more pleasing in his wanton eye, then any of the rest, named Monna Belcolore, and wife to a plaine mecanicke man, called Bentivegna del Mazzo. And, to speake up-rightly, few Countrey Villages yeelded a Woman, more fresh and lovely of complexion, although not admirable for
THE EIGHT DAY

beauty, yet sweete Sir Simon thought her a Saint, and faine would be offering at her shrine. Divers pretie pleasing qualities she had, as sounding the Cymball, playing artificially on the Timbrill, and singing thereto as it had beene a Nightingale, dancing also so dexteriously, as happy was the man that could dance in her company. All which so enflamed sweet Sir Simon, that he lost his wonted sprightly behaviour, walked sullen, sad and melancholly, as if he had melted all his mettall, because hee could hardly have a sight of her. But on the Sunday morning, when hee heard or knew that she was in the Church, hee would tickle it with a Kyrie and a Sanctus, even as if hee contended to shewe his singular skill in singing, when it had beene as good to heare an Asse bray. Whereas on the contrary, when she came not to Church, Masse, and all else were quicklie shaken uppe, as if his devotion waited onely on her presence. Yet he was so cunning in the carriage of his amorous businesse, both for her credite and his owne; as Bentivegna her husband could not perceive it, or any neighbor so much as suspect it.

But, to compasse more familiar acquaintance with Belcolore, hee sent her sundry gifts and presents, day by day, as sometime a bunch of dainty greene Garlicke, whereof he had plenty growing in his Garden, which he manured with his owne hands, and better then all the countrey yeelded; otherwhiles a small basket of Pease or Beanes, and Onyons or Scallions, as the season served. But when he could come in place where she was; then he darted amourous wincks and glances at her, with becks, nods, and blushes, Loves private Ambassadours, which shee (being but countrey-bred) seeming by outward appearance, not to see, retorted disdainfully, and forthwith would absent her selfe, so that sweet Sir Simon labourd still in vaine, and could not compasse what he coveted.

It came to passe within a while after, that on a time, (about high noone) Sir Simon being walking abroad, chanced to meete with Bentivegna, driving an Asse before him, laden with divers commodities, and demanded of him, whither he went, Bentivegna, thus answered. In troth Sir
Simon, I am going to the City, about some especiall business of mine owne, and I carry these things to Signior Bonacorci da Ginestreto, because he should helpe me before the Judge, when I shall be called in question concerning my patrimony. Sir Simon looking merily on him, said. Thou doest well Bentivegna, to make a friend sure before thou need him; goe, take my blessing with thee, and returne againe with good successe. But if thou meet with Laguccio, or Naldino, forget not to tell them, that they must bring me my shooe-tyes before Sunday. Bentivegna said, hee would discharge his errand, and so parted from him, driving his Asse on towards Florence.

Now began Sir Simon to shrug, and scratch his head, thinking this to be a fit convenient time, for him to goe visite Belcolore, and to make triall of his fortune: wherefore, setting aside all other businesse, he stayed no where till he came to the house, whereinto being entred, he saide: All happinesse be to them that dwell heere. Belcolore being then above in the Chamber, when she heard his tongue, replyed. Sweet Sir Simon! you are heartely welcome, whether are you walking, if the question may bee demaunded? Beleeve me dainty Ducke, answered Sir Simon, I am come to sit a while with thee, because I met thy Husband going to the Citie. By this time, Belcolore was descended downe the stayres, and having once againe given welcome to Sir Simon, she sate downe by him, cleansing of Colewort seeds from such other course chaffe, which her Husband had prepared before his departure.

Sir Simon hugging her in his armes, and fetching a vehement sigh, said. My Belcolore, how long shall I pine and languish for thy love? How now Sir Simon? answered she, is this behaviour fitting for an holy man? Holy-men Belcolore, (quoth Sir Simon) are made of the same matter as others be, they have the same affections, and therefore subject to their infirmities. Santa Maria, answered Belcolore, Dare Priests doe such things as you talke of? Yes Belcolore (quoth he) and much better then other men can, because they are made for the very best businesse, in which regard they are restrained from marriage. True (quoth
THE EIGHT DAY

Belcolore but much more from medling with other mens wives. Touch not that Text Belcolore, replied Sir Simon, it is somewhat above your capacity: talke of that I come for, namely thy love, my Ducke, and my Dove, Sir Simon is thine, I pray thee be mine.

Belcolore observing his smirking behaviour, his proper person, pretty talke, and queint insinuating; felt a motion to female frailty, which yet she would withstand so long as she could, and not be over-hasty in her yeelding. Sir Simon promiseth her a new paire of shoes, garters, ribbands, girdles, or what else she would request. Sir Simon (quoth she) all these things which you talke of, are fit for women: but if your love to mee be such as you make choice of, fulfill what I will motion to you, and then (perhaps) I shall tell you more. Sir Simons heate made him hasty to promise whatsoever she would desire; whereupon, thus shee replyed. On Saturday, said she, I must goe to Florence, to carry home such yarne as was sent me to spinne, and to amend my spinning wheele: if you will lend mee ten Florines, wherewith I know you are always furnished, I shall redeeme from the Usurer my best peticote, and my wedding gowne (both well neere lost for lacke of repaiment) without which I cannot be seene at Church, or in any other good place else, and then afterward other matters may be accomplished.

Alas sweete Belcolore answered Sir Simon, I never beare any such sum about me, for men of our profession, doe seldom carry any money at all: but beleeve me on my word, before Saturday come, I will not faile to bring them hither. Oh Sir (quoth Belcolore) you men are quicke promisers, but slow performers. Doe you thinke to use me, as poore Billezza was, who trusted to as faire words, and found her selfe deceived? Now Sir Simon, her example in being made scandal to the world, is a sufficient warning for me: if you be not so provided, goe and make use of your friend, for I am not otherwise to be moved. Nay Belcolore (quoth he) I hope you will not serve me so, but my word shall be of better worth with you. Consider the conveniency of time, wee being so privately here alone: whereas at my returning hither againe, some hinderance may thwart me, and the like
opportunity be never obtained. Sir, Sir, (said she) you have heard my resolution; if you will fetche the Florines, doe; otherwise, walke about your businesse, for I am a woman of my word.

Sir Simon perceiving, that she would not trust him upon bare words, nor any thing was to be done, without Salvum me fac, whereas his meaning was Sine custodia; thus answered. Well Belcolore, seeing you dare not credit my bringing the tenne Florines, according to my promised day: I will leave you a good pawne, my very best Cloake, lyned quite thorough with rich Silke, and made up in the choysest manner.

Belcolore looking on the Cloake, said. How much may this Cloake bee worth? How much? quoth Sir Simon, upon my word Belcolore, it is of a right fine Flanders Serdge, and not above eight dayes since, I bought it thus (ready made) of Lotto the Fripperer, and payed for it sixe and twenty Florines, a pledge then sufficient for your ten. Is it possible, said shee, that it should cost so much? Well, Sir Simon, deliver it me first, I will lay it up safe for you against Saturday, when if you fetch it not; I will redeeme mine owne things with it, and leave you to release it your selfe.

The Cloake is laid up by Belcolore, and Sir Simon so forward in his affection; that (in briefe) he enjoyed what hee came for; and departed afterward in his light tripping Cassocke, but yet thorow by-Lanes, and no much frequented places, smelling on a Nosegay, as if hee had beene at some wedding in the Countrey, and went thus lightly without his Cloake, for his better ease. As commonly after actions of evill, Repentance knocketh at the doore of Conscience, and urgeth a guilty remembrance, with some sence of sorrow: so was it now with sweet Sir Simon, who surveying over all his vailes of offering Candles, the validity of his yearly benefits, and all comming nothing neere the summe of (scarce halfe) sixe and twenty Florines; he began to repent his deed of darkenesse, although it was acted in the day-time, and consdered with himselfe, by what honest (yet unsuspected meanes) hee might recover his Cloake againe, before it went
THE EIGHT DAY

to the Broaker, in redemption of Belcolores pawned apparrell, and yet to send her no Florines neither.

Having a cunning reaching wit, especially in matters for his owne advantage, and pretending to have a dinner at his lodging, for a few of some invited friends: he made use of a neighbours Boy, sending him to the house of Belcolore, with request of lending him her Stone Morter, to make Greensawce in for his guests, because hee had meate required such sawce. Belcolore suspecting no treachery, sent him the Stone Morter with the Pestell, and about dinner time, when he knew Bentivegna to bee at home with his wife, by a spye which was set for the purpose; hee called the Clearke (usually attending on him) and said: Take this Morter and Pestell, beare them home to Belcolore, and tell her: Sir Simon sends them home with thankes, they having sufficiently served his turne, and desire her likewise, to send me my Cloake, which the Boy left as a pledge for better remembrance, and because she would not lend it without a pawne.

The Clearke comming to the house of Belcolore, found her sitting at dinner with her Husband, and delivering her the Pestell and Morter, performed the rest of Sir Simons message. Belcolore hearing the Cloake demaunded, stept up to make answere: But Bentivegna, seeming (by his lookes) to be much offended, roughly replied. Why now wife? Is not Sir Simon our especiall friend, and cannot he be pleased without a pawne? I protest upon my word, I could find in my heart to smite thee for it. Rise quickly thou wert best, and send him backe his Cloake; with this warning hereafter, that whatsoever he will have, be it your poore Asse, or any thing else being ours, let him have it: and tell him (Master Clearke) he may command it. Belcolore rose grumbling from the Table, and fetching the Cloake forth of the Chest, which stood neere at hand in the same roome; shee delivered it to the Clearke, saying. Tell Sir Simon from me, and boldly say you heard me speake it: that I make a vow to my selfe, he shall never make use of my Morter hereafter, to beat any more of his sawcinesse in, let my Husband say whatsoever he will, I speake the word, and will performe it.
Away went the Clearke home with the Cloake, and told Sir Simon what she had said, whereto he replyed. If I must make use of her Morter no more; I will not trust her with the keeping of my Cloake, for feare it goe to gage indeed.

Bentivegna was a little displeased at his wives words, because hee thought she spake but in jest; albeit Belcolore was so angry with Sir Simon, that she would not speake to him till vintage time following. But then Sir Simon, what by sharpe threatenings, of her soule to be in danger of hell fire, continuing so long in hatred of a holy Priest, which words did not a little terrifie her; besides daily presents to her, of sweet new Wines, roasted Chesse-nuts, Figges and Almonds: all unkindnesse became converted to former familiarity; the garments were redeemed: he gave her Sonnets which she would sweetly sing to her Cimbale, and further friendship increased betweene her and sweet Sir Simon.
THE EIGHT DAY

Calandrino, Bruno, and Buffalmaco, all of them being Painters by profession, travelled to the Plaine of Mugnone, to finde the precious Stone called Helitropium. Calandrino perswaded himselfe to have found it; returned home to his house heavily loaden with stones. His Wife rebuking him for his absence, hee growth into anger, and shrewdly beateth her. Afterward, when the case is debated among his other friends Bruno and Buffalmaco, all is found to be meere foolery.

THE THIRD NOVELL

Justly reprehending the simplicity of such men, as are too much addicted to credulitie, and will give credit to every thing they heare.

PAMPHILUS having ended his Novell, whereat the Ladies laughed exceedingly, so that very hardly they could give over. The Queene gave charge to Madame Eliza, that shee should next succeed in order; when, being scarcely able to refraine from smyling, thus she began.

I know not (Gracious Ladies) whether I can move you to as hearty laughter, with a briefe Novell of mine owne, as Pamphilus lately did with his; yet I dare assure you, that it is both true and pleasant, and I will relate it in the best manner I can.

In our owne Citie, which evermore hath contained all sorts of people, not long since there dwelt, a Painter, named Calandrino, a simple man; yet as much adicted to matters of novelty, as any man whatsoever could be. The most part of his time, he spent in the company of two
other Painters, the one called Bruno, and the other Buffalmaco, men of very recreative spirits, and of indifferent good capacity, often resorting to the said Calandrino, because they tooke delight in his honest simplicity, and pleasant order of behaviour. At the same time likewise, there dwelt in Florence, a yong Gentleman of singular disposition, to every generous and witty conceite, as the world did not yeeld a more pleasant companion, he being named Maso del Saggio, who having heard somewhat of Calandrinos sillinesse: determined to jest with him in merry manner, and to suggest his longing humors after Novelties, with some Conceit of extraordinary nature.

He happening (on a day) to meete him in the Church of Saint John, and seeing him seriously busied, in beholding the rare pictures, and the curious carved Tabernacle, which (not long before) was placed on the high Altar in the said Church: considered with himselfe, that he had now fit place and opportunity, to effect what hee had long time desired. And having imparted his minde to a very intimate friend, how he intended to deale with simple Calandrino: they went both very neere him, where he sate all alone, and making shew as if they saw him not; began to consult between themselves, concerning the rare properties of precious stones; whereof Maso discoursed as exactly, as he had bee a most skilfull Lapidarie; to which conference of theirs, Calandrino lent an attentive ear, in regard it was matter of singular rarity.

Soone after, Calandrino started up, and perceiving by their loude speaking, that they talked of nothing which required secret Counsell: he went into their company (the onely thing which Maso desired) and holding on still the former Argument; Calandrino would needs request to know, in what place these precious stones were to be found, which had such excellent vertues in them? Maso made answere, that the most of them were to be had in Berlinzona, neere to the City of Bascha, which was in the Territory of a Countrey, called Bengodi, where the Vines were bound about with Sawcidges, a Goose was sold for a penny, and the Goslings freely given in to boote. There was also an
THE EIGHT DAY

high mountaine; wholly made of Parmezane, grated Cheese, whereon dwelt people, who did nothing else but make Mocharones and Ravivolies, boyling them with broth of Capons, and afterward hurled them all about, to whosoever can or will catch them. Neere to this mountaine runneth a faire River, the whole streame being pure white Bastard, none such was ever sold for any money, and without one drop of water in it.

Now trust me Sir, (said Calandrino) that is an excellent Countrey to dwell in: but I pray you tell me Sir, what doe they with the Capons after they have boyld them? The Baschanes (quoth Maso) eate them all. Have you Sir, said Calandrino, at any time beeene in that Countrey? How? answered Maso, doe you demaund if I have beeene there? Yes man, above a thousand times, at the least. How farre Sir, I pray you (quoth Calandrino) is that worthy Countrey, from this our City? In troth, replied Maso, the miles are hardly to be numbred, for the most part of them, we travell when we are nightly in our beddes, and if a man dreame right; he may be there upon a sudden.

Surely Sir, said Calandrino, it is further hence, then to Abruzzi? Yes questionlesse, replied Maso; but, to a willing minde, no travell seemeth tedious.

Calandrino well noting, that Maso delivered all these speeches, with a stedfast countenance, no signe of smyling, or any gesture to urge the least mislike: he gave such credit to them, as to any matter of apparent and manifest truth, and upon this assured confidence, he said.

Beleeve me Sir, the journey is over-farre for mee to undertake, but if it were neerer; I could affoord to goe in your Company; onely to see how they make these Macherones, and to fill my belly with them.

But now wee are in talke Sir, I pray you pardon mee to aske, whether any such precious stones, as you spake off, are to be found in that Countrey, or no? Yes indeed, replied Maso, there are two kinds of them to be found in those Territories, both being of very great vertue. One kind, are gritty stones, of Settignano, and of Montisca, by vertue of which places, when any Mill-stones or Grind-stones
are to bee made, they knede the sand as they use to doe meale, and so make them of what bignesse they please. In which respect, they have a common saying there: that Nature maketh common stones, but Montisca Mill-stones. Such plenty are there of these Mill-stones, so slenderly here esteemed among us, as Emeralds are with them, whereof they have whole mountaines, farre greater then our Monte-morello, which shine most gloriously at midnight. And how meanly soever we account of their Mill-stones; yet there they drill them, and enchase them in Rings, which afterward they send to the great Soldane, and have whatsoever they will demand for them.

The other kinde is a most precious Stone indeede, which our best Lapidaries call the Helitropium, the vertue whereof is so admirable; as whosoever beareth it about him, so long as he keepeth it, it is impossible for any eye to discerne him, because he walketh meerely invisible. O Lord Sir (quoth Calandrino) those stones are of rare vertue indeede: but where else may a man finde that Helitropium? Where to Maso thus answered: That Countrey onely doth not containe the Helitropium; for they be many times found upon our plaine of Mugnone. Of what bignesse Sir (quoth Calandrino) is the Stone, and what coulour? The Helitropium, answered Maso, is not alwayes of one quality, because some are bigge, and others lesse; but all are of one coulour, namely blacke.

Calandrino committing all these things to respective memory, and pretending to be called thence by some other especiell affaires; departed from Maso, concluding resolutely with himselfe, to finde this precious stone, if possibly hee could: yet intending to doe nothing, untiile hee had acquainted Bruno and Buffalmaco therewith, whom he loved dearly: he went in all hast to seeke them; because, (without any longer trifling the time) they three might bee the first men, that should find out this precious stone, spending almost the whole morning before they were all three met together. For they were painting at the Monastery of the Sisters of Faenza, where they had very serious imployment, and followed their businesse diligently:
THE EIGHT DAY

where having found them, and saluting them in such kinde manner, as continually he used to doe, thus he began.

Loving friends, if you were pleased to follow mine advise, wee three will quickly be the richest men in Florence; because, by information from a Gentleman (well deserving to be credited) on the Plaine of Mugnone: there is a precious stone to be found, which whosoever carrieth it about him, walketh invisible, and is not to be scene by any one. Let us three be the first men to goe and finde it, before any other heare thereof, and goe about it, and assure our selves that we shall finde it, for I know it (by discription) so soone as I see it. And when wee have it, who can hinder us from bearing it about us? Then will we goe to the Tables of our Bankers, or money Changers, which we see daily charged with plenty of gold and silver, where we may take so much as wee list, for they (nor any) are able to descrie us. So, (in short time) shall wee all be wealthy, never needing to drudge any more, or paint muddy walles, as hitherto we have done; and, as many of our poore profession are forced to doe.

Bruno and Buffalmaco hearing this, began to smile, and looking merily each on other, they seemed to wonder thereat, and greatly commended the counsell of Calandrino. Buffalmaco demaunding how the stone was named. Now it fortuned, that Calandrino (who had but a grosse and blockish memory) had quite forgot the name of the stone, and therefore said. What neede have wee of the name, when we know, and are assured of the stones vertue? Let us make no more adoe, but (setting aside all other businesse) goe seeke where it is to be found. Well my friend (answered Bruno) you say wee may finde it, but how, and by what meanes?

There are two sorts of them (quoth Calandrino) some bigge, others smaller, but all carry a blakke colour: therefore (in mine opinion) let us gather all such stones as are blakke, so shall we be sure to finde it among them, without any further losse of time.

Buffalmaco and Bruno, liked and allowed the counsell of Calandrino, which when they had (by severall commenda-
NOVELL  
III  

(tions) given him assurance of, Bruno saide. I doe not thinke it a convenient time now, for us to go about so weighty a businesse: for the Sun is yet in the highest degree, and striketh such a heate on the plaine of Mugnone, as all the stones are extremely dryed, and the very blackest will nowe seeme whitest. But in the morning, after the dew is falne, and before the Sunne shineth forth, every stone retaineth his true colour. Moreover, there be many Labourers now working on the plaine, about such businesse as they are severally assigned, who seeing us in so serious a serch: may imagine what we seeke for, and partake with us in the same inquisition, by which meanes they may chance to speed before us, and so wee may lose both our trot and amble. Wherefore, by my consent, if your opinion jumpe with mine, this is an enterprize onely to be perfourmed in an early morning, when the blacke stones are to be distinguisht from the white, and a Festivall day were the best of all other, for then there will be none to discover us.

Buffalmaco applauded the advice of Bruno, and Calandrino did no lesse, concluding all together; that Sunday morning (next ensuing) should be the time, and then they all three would go seeke the Stone. But Calandrino was verie earnest with them, that they shold not reveale it to any living body, because it was tolde him as an especiall secret: disclosing further to them, what hee had heard concerning the Countrey of Bengodi, maintaining (with solemn oaths and protestations) that every part thereof was true. Uppon this agreement, they parted from Calandrino, who hardly enjoyed anie rest at all, either by night or day, so greedie he was to bee possessed of the stone. On the Sunday morning, hee called up his Companions before breake of day, and going forth at S. Galls Port, they stayed not, till they came to the plaine of Mugnone, where they searched all about to finde this strange stone.

Calandrino went stealing before the other two, and verilie persuadde himselfe, that he was borne to finde the Helitropium, and looking on every side about him, hee rejected all other Stones but the blacke, whereof first he filled his bosome, and afterwards, both his Pockets. Then 20
he tooke off his large painting Apron, which he fastened with his girdle in the manner of a sacke, and that he filled full of stones likewise. Yet not so satisfied, he spred abroad his Cloake, which being also full of stones, hee bound it up carefully, for feare of loosing the very least of them. All which Buffalmaco and Bruno well observing (the day growing on, and hardly they could reach home by dinner time) according as merrily they had concluded, and pretending not to see Calandrino, albeit he was not farre from them: What is become of Calandrino? saide Buffalmaco. Bruno gazing strangely every where about him, as if hee were desirous to finde him, replyed. I saw him not long since, for then he was hard by before us; questionlesse, he hath given us the slippe, is privilie gone home to dinner, and making starke fooles of us, hath lefte us to picke up blacke stones, upon the parching plaines of Mugnone. Well (quoth Buffalmaco) this is but the tricke of an hollow-hearted friend, and not such as he protested himselfe to be, to us. Could any but wee have bin so sottish, to credit his frivolous persuasions, hoping to finde any stones of such vertue, and here on the fruitlesse plains of Mugnone? No, no, none but we would have beleved him.

Calandrino (who was close by them) hearing these wordes, and seeing the whole manner of their wondering behaviour: became constantly perswaded, that hee had not onely found the precious stone; but also had some store of them about him, by reason he was so neere to them, and yet they could not see him, therefore he walked before them. Now was his joy beyond all compasse of expression, and being exceedingly proud of so happy an adventure: did not meane to speake one word to them, but (heavily laden as hee was) to steale home faire and softly before them, which indeede he did, leaving them to follow after, if they would. Bruno perceiving his intent, said to Buffalmaco: What remaineth now for us to doe? Why should not we go home, as well as hee? And reason too, replyed Bruno. It is in vaine to tarry any longer heere: but I solemnly protest, Calandrino shall no more make an Asse of me: and were I now as neere him, as not long since I was, I would
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL III
give him such a remembrance on the heele with this Flint stone, as should sticke by him this moneth, to teach him a lesson for abusing his friends.

Hee threw the stone, and hit him shrewdly on the heele therewith; but all was one to Calandrino, whatsoever they saide, or did, as thus they still followed after him. And although the blow of the stone was painfull to him; yet he mended his pace so wel as he was able, in regard of beeing over-loaden with stones, and gave them not one word all the way, because he tooke himselfe to bee invisible, and utterly unseeene of them. Buffalmaco taking uppe another Flint-stone, which was indifferent heavie and sharp, said to Bruno. Seest thou this Flint? Casting it from him, he smote Calandrino just in the backe therewith, saying. Oh that Calandrino had bin so neere, as I might have hit him on the backe with the stone. And thus all the way on the plaine of Mugnone, they did nothing else but pelt him with stones, even so farre as the Port of S. Gall, where they threwe downe what other stones they had gathered, meaning not to molest him any more, because they had done enough already.

There they stept before him unto the Port, and acquainted the Warders with the whole matter, who laughing heartily at the jest, the better to upholde it; would seeme not to see Calandrino in his passage by them, but suffered him to go on, sore wearied with his burthen, and sweating extreamly. Without resting himselfe in any place, he came home to his house, which was neere to the corner of the Milles, Fortune being so favourable to him in the course of this mockery, that as he passed along the Rivers side, and afterward through part of the City; he was neither met nor seen by any, in regard they were all in their houses at dinner.

Calandrino, every minute ready to sinke under his weightie burthen, entred into his owne house, where (by great ill luck) his wife, being a comely and very honest woman, and named Monna Trista, was standing aloft on the stayres head. She being somewhat angry for his so long absence, and seeing him come in grunting and groan-
ing, frowningly said. I thought that the divell would never let thee come home, all the whole Citie have dined, and yet wee must remaïne without our dinner. When Calandrino heard this, and perceived that he was not invisible to his Wife: full of rage and wroth, hee began to raile, saying. Ah thou wicked woman, where art thou? Thou hast utterly undone me: but (as I live) I will pay thee soundly for it. Up the staires he ascended into a small Parlour, where when he hadde spred all his burthen of stones on the floore: he ran to his wife, catching her by the haire of the head, and throwing her at his feete; giving her so many spurns and cruel blowes, as shee was not able to moove either armes or legges, notwithstanding all her teares, and humble submission.

Now Buffalmaco and Bruno, after they had spent an indifferent while, with the Warders at the Port in laughter; in a faire and gentle pace, they followed Calandrino home to his house, and being come to the doore, they heard the harsh bickering betwenee him and his Wife, and seeming as if they were but newly arrived, they called out alowd to him. Calandrino being in a sweate, stamping and raving still at his Wife: looking forth of the window, entreated them to ascend up to him, which they did, counterfetting greevous displeasure against him. Being come into the roome, which they saw all covered over with stones, his Wife sitting in a corner, all the haire (well-neere) torne off her head, her face broken and bleeding, and all her body cruelly beaten; on the other side, Calandrino standing unbraced and ungirded, strugling and wallowing, like a man quite out of breath: after a little pausing, Bruno thus spake.

Why how now Calandrino? What may the meaning of this matter be? What, art thou preparing for building, that thou hast provided such plenty of stones? How sitteth thy poore wife? How hast thou misused her? Are these the behaviours of a wise or honest man? Calandrino, utterly over-spent with travaile, and carrying such an huge burthen of stones, as also the toylesome beating of his Wife, (but much more impatient and
offended, for that high good Fortune, which he imagined to have lost:) could not collect his spirits together, to answer them one ready word, wherefore hee sate fretting like a mad man. Whereupon, Buffalmaco thus began to him. Calandrino, if thou be angry with any other, yet thou shouldest not have made such a mockery of us, as thou hast done: in leaving us (like a couple of coxcombes) to the plaine of Mugnone, whether thou leddest us with thee, to seeke a precious stone called Helitropium. And couldst thou steale home, never bidding us so much as farewell? How can we but take it in very evill part, that thou shouldest so abuse two honest neighbours? Well, assure thy selfe, this is the last time that ever thou shalt serve us so.

Calandrino (by this time) being somewhat better come to himselfe, with an humble protestation of courtesie, returned them this answer. Alas my good friends, be not you offended, the case is farre otherwise then you immagine. Poore unfortunate man that I am, I found the rare precious stone that you speake of: and marke me well, if I do not tell you the truth of all. When you asked one another (the first time) what was become of me; I was hard by you: at the most, within the distance of two yards length; and perceiving that you saw mee not, (being still so neere, and alwaies before you:) I went on, smiling to my selve, to heare you brabble and rage against me.

So, proceeding on in his discourse, he recounted every accident as it happed, both what they had saide and did unto him, concerning the severall blowes, with the two Flint-stones, the one hurting him greevously in the heele, and the other paining him as extreamly in the backe, with their speeches used then, and his laughter, notwithstanding hee felt the harme of them both, yet beeing proud that he did so invisibly beguile them. Nay more (quoth he) I cannot forbear to tell you, that when I passed thorow the Port, I saw you standing with the Warders; yet, by vertue of that excellent Stone, undiscovered of you all. Beside, going along the streets, I met many of my Gossips, friends, and familiar acquaintance, such as used daylie to converse
with me, and drinking together in every Tavern: yet not one of them spake to me, neyther used any courtesie or salutation; which (indeede) I did the more freely forgive them, because they were not able to see me.

In the end of all, when I was come home into mine owne house, this divellish and accursed woman, being aloft uppon my stayres head, by much misfortune chanced to see me; in regard (as it is not unknowne to you) that women cause all things to lose their vertue. In which respect, I that could have stild my selfe the onely happy man in Florence, am now made most miserable. And therefore did I justly beate her, so long as she was able to stand against mee, and I know no reason to the contrary, why I should not yet teare her in a thousand pieces: for I may well curse the day of our mariage, to hinder and bereave me of such an invisible blessednesse.

Buffalmaco and Bruno hearing this, made shew of verie much mervailing thereat, and many times maintained what Calandrino had said; being well neere ready to burst with laughter; considering, how confidently he stood upon it, that he had found the wonderful stone, and lost it by his wives speaking onely to him. But when they saw him rise in fury once more, with intent to beat her againe: then they stept betwene them; affirming, That the woman had no way offended in this case, but rather he himself: who knowing that women cause all things to lose their vertue, had not therefore expressly commanded her, not to be seene in his presence all that day, untill he had made full prooфе of the stones vertue. And questionles, the consideration of a matter so availeable and important, was quite taken from him, because such an especiall happinesse, should not belong to him only; but (in part) to his friends, whom he had acquainted therewith, drew them to the plaine with him in companie, where they tooke as much paines in serch of the stone, as possibly he did, or could; and yet (dishonestly) he would deceive them, and beare it away covetously, for his owne private benefit.

After many other, as wise and wholesome perswasions, which he constantly credited, because they spake them,
they reconciled him to his wife, and she to him: but not without some difficulty in him; who falling into wonderfull greese and melancholy, for losse of such an admirable precious stone, was in danger to have dyed, within lesse then a month after.

The Provost belonging to the Cathedrall Church of Fiesola, fell in love with a Gentlewoman, being a widdow, and named Piccarda, who hated him as much as he loved her. He imagining, that he lay with her: by the Gentlewomans Bretheren, and the Byshop under whom he served, was taken in bed with her Mayde, an ugly, foule, deformed Slut.

THE FOURTH NOVELL

Wherein is declared, how love oftentimes is so powerfull in aged men, and driveth them to such doating, that it redoundeth to their great disgrace and punishment.

LADIE ELIZA having concluded her Novell, not without infinite commendations of the whole company: the Queen turning her lookes to Madame Æmillia, gave her such an expresse signe, as she must needs follow next after Madame Eliza, whereupon she began in this manner.

Vertuous Ladies, I very well remember (by divers Novels formerly related) that sufficient hath beene sayde, concerning Priests and Religious persons, and all other carrying shaven Crownes, in their luxurious appetites and desires. But because no one can at any time say so much, as thereto no more may be added: beside them alreadie spoken of, I wil tel you another concerning the Provost of a Cathedral
THE EIGHT DAY

Church, who would needes (in despight of all the world) love a Gentlewoman whether she would or no: and therefore, in due chastisement both unto his age and folly, she gave him such entertainment as he justly deserved.

It is not unknowne unto you all, that the Cittie of Fieosola, the mountaine whereof we may very easily hither discerne, hath bene (in times past) a very great and most ancient City: although at this day it is well-neere all ruined: yet nevertheless, it alwaies was, and yet is a Byshops See, albeit not of the wealthiest. In the same Citie, and no long while since, neere unto the Cathedrall Church, there dwelt a Gentlewoman, being a Widdow, and commonlie there stiled by the name of Madame Piccarda, whose house and inheritance was but small, wherewith yet she lived very contentedly (having no wandering eye, or wanton desires) and no company but her two Brethren, Gentlemen of especiall honest and gracious disposition.

This Gentlewoman, being yet in the flourishing condition of her time, did ordinarily resort to the Cathedrall Church, in holie zeale, and religious devotion; where the Provost of the place, became so enamored of her, as nothing (but the sight of her) yeelded him any contentment. Which fond affection of his, was forwarded with such an audacious and bold carriage, as hee dared to acquaint her with his love, requiring her enterchange of affection, and the like opinion of him, as he had of her. True it is, that he was very farre entred into yeares, but yong and lustie in his own proud conceite, presuming strangely beyond his capacity, and thinking as well of his abilitie, as the youthullest gallant in the World could doe. Whereas (in verie deede) his person was utterly displeasing, his behaviour immodest and scandalous, and his usuall Language, savouring of such sensualitie, as, very fewe or none cared for his company. And if any Woman seemed respective of him, it was in regard of his outside and profession, and more for feare, then the least affection, and alwayes as welcome to them, as the head-ake.

His fond and foolish carriage stil continuing to this Gentlewoman; she being wise and vertuously advised, spake
NOVELL IV

thus unto him. Holy Sir, if you love me according as you protest, and manifest by your outward behaviour: I am the more to thanke you for it, being bound in dutie to love you likewise. But if your Love have any harshe or unsavourie taste, which mine is no way able to endure, neyther dare entertaine in anie kinde whatsoever: you must and shall hold mee excused, because I am made of no such temper. You are my ghostly and spirituall Father, an Holy Priest. Moreover, yeares have made you honorably aged; all which severall weighty considerations, ought to confirme you in continency and chastity. Remember withall (good sir) that I am but a child to you in years, and were I bent to any wanton appetites, you shold justly correct me by fatherly counsell, such as most beautifieth your sacred profession. Beside, I am a Widdow, and you are not ignorant, how requisite a thing honestie is in widdowes. Wherefore, pardon mee (Holy Father:) for, in such manner as you make the motion: I desire you not to love mee, because I neither can or will at any time so affect you.

The Provoste gaining no other grace at this time, would not so give over for this first repulse, but pursuing her still with unbeseeing importunity; many private meanes he used to her by Letters, tokens, and insinuating ambassages; yea, whensoever shee came to the Church, he never ceased his wearisome solicitings. Whereat she growing greatly offended, and perceyving no likelyhood of his desisting; became so tyred with his tedious suite, that she considered with her selfe, how she might dispatch him as he deserved, because she saw no other remedy. Yet shee would not attempte anie thing in this case, without acquainting her Bretheren first therwith. And having tolde them, how much shee was importuned by the Provost, and also what course she meant to take (wherin they both counselled and encouraged her:) within a few daies after, shee went to Church as she was wont to do; where so soone as the Provost espied her: forthwith he came to her, and according to his continued course, he fell into his amorous courting. She looking upon him with a smiling counten-
ance, and walking aside with him out of any hearing: after
he had spent many impertinent speeches, shee (venting
foorth manie a vehement sighe) at length returned him this
answer.

Reverend Father, I have often heard it saide: That
there is not any Fort or Castle, how strongly munited
soever it bee; but by continuall assayling, at length (of
necessity) it must and will be surprized. Which com-
parison, I may full well allude to my selfe. For,
you having so long time solicited me, one while with
affable language, then againe with tokens and entisements,
of such
prevailing power: as have broken the verie barricado of
my former deliberation, and yeelded mee uppe as your
prisoner, to be commanded at your pleasure, for now I am
onely devoted yours.

Well may you (Gentle Ladies) imagine, that this answer
was not a little welcome to the Provost; who, shrugging
with conceyte of joy, presently thus replyed. I thanke you
Madame Piccarda, and to tell you true, I held it almost as
a miracle, that you could stand upon such long resistance,
considering, it never so fortuned to mee with anie other.
And I have many times saide to my selfe, that if women
were made of silver, they hardly could be worth a pennie,
because there can scarsely one be found of so good allay, as
to endure the test and essay. But let us breake off this
frivolous conference, and resolve upon a conclusion; How,
when and where we may safely meete together. Worthy
Sir, answered Piccarda, your selfe may appoint the time
whensoever you please, because I have no Husband, to
whom I should render any account of my absence, or
presence: but I am not provided of any place.

A pretty while the Provoste stood musing, and at
last saide. A place Madame? where can be more
privacie, then in your owne house? Alas Sir (quoth she)
you know that I have two Gentlemen my brethren, who
continually are with me, and other of their friends beside:
My house also is not great, wherefore it is impossible to be
there, except you could be like a dumbe man, without
speaking one word, or making the very least noyse; beside,
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL IV
to remaine in darkenesse, as if you were blinde, and who can be able to endure all these? And yet (without these) there is no adventuring, albeit they never come into my Chamber: but their lodging is so close to mine, as there cannot any word be spoken, be it never so low or in whispering manner, but they heare it very easily. Madame said the Provoste, for one or two nights, I can make hard shift. Why Sir (quoth she) the matter onely remaineth in you, for if you be silent and suffering, as already you have heard, there is no feare at all of safty. Let me alone Madame, replyed the Provoste, I will be governed by your directions: but, in any case, let us begin this night. With all my heart, saide shee. So appointing him how, and when hee should come; hee parted from her, and shee returned home to her house.

Heere I am to tell you, that this Gentlewoman had a servant, in the nature of an old maide, not indued with any well featured face, but instead thereof, she had the ugliest and most counterfeit countenance, as hardly could be seeen a worse. She had a wrie mouth, huge great lippes, foule teeth, great and blacke, a monstrous stinking breath, her eyes bledared, and always running, the complexion of her face betweene greene and yellow, as if shee had not spent the Summer season in the Citie, but in the parching Countrye under a hedge; and beside all these excellent parts, shee was crooke backt, poulte footed, and went like a lame Mare in Fetters. Her name was Ciuta, but in regard of her flat nose, lying as low as a Beagles, shee was called Ciutazza. Now, notwithstanding all this deformity in her, yet she had a singuler opinion of her selfe, as commonly all such foule Sluts have: in regard whereof, Madame Piccarda calling her aside, thus began.

Ciutazza, if thou wilt doe for me one nights service, I shall bestow on thee a faire new Smocke. When Ciutazza heard her speake of a new Smocke, instantly she answered. Madame, if you please to bestow a new Smocke on me, were it to runne thorow the fire for you, or any businesse of farre greater danger, you onely have the power to command me, and I will doe it. I will not (said Piccarda) urge thee
THE EIGHT DAY

to any dangerous action, but onely to lodge in my bed this night with a man, and give him courteous entertainement, who shall reward thee liberally for it. But have an especiall care that thou speake not one word, for feare thou shouldst be heard by my Brethren, who (as thou knowest) lodge so neere by; doe this, and then demaund thy Smocke of me. Madame (quoth Ciutazza) if it were to lye with sixe men, rather then one; if you say the word, it shall be done.

When night was come, the Provoste also came according to appointment, even when the two brethren were in their lodging, where they easily heard his entrance, as Piccarda (being present with them) had informed them. In went the Provoste without any candle, or making the least noise to be heard, and being in Piccardaes Chamber, went to bed: Ciutazza tarrying not long from him, but (as her Mistresse had instructed her) she went to bed likewise, not speaking any word at all, and the Provoste, imagining to have her there, whom he so highly affected, fell to imbracing and kissing Ciutazza, who was as forward in the same manner to him, and there for a while I intend to leave them.

When Piccarda had performed this hot piece of businesse, she referred the effecting of the remainder to her Brethren, in such sort as it was compacted betweene them. Faire and softly went the two brethren forth of their Chamber, and going to the Market place, Fortune was more favour-able to them then they could wish, in accomplishing the issue of their intent. For the heat being somwhat tedious, the Lord Bishop was walking abroad very late, with purpose to visit the Brethren at the Widdowes house, because he tooke great delight in their company, as being good Schollers, and endued with other singular parts beside. Meeting with them in the open Market place, he acquainted them with his determination; whereof they were not a little joyfull, it jumping so justly with their intent.

Being come to the Widdowes house, they passed through a smal nether Court, where lights stood ready to welcome him thither; and entering into a goodly Hall, there was store of good wine and banquetting, which the Bishop
accepted in very thankfull manner: and courteous comple-
ment being overpassed, one of the Brethren, thus spake.
My good Lord, seeing it hath pleased you to honour our
poore Widdowed Sisters house with your presence, for
which wee shall thanke you while we live: We would in-
treate one favour more of you, onely but to see a sight
which we will shew you. The Lord Bishop was well
contented with the motion: so the Brethren conducting him
by the hand, brought him into their Sisters Chamber, where
the Provoste was in bed with Ciutazza, both soundly
sleeping, but enfolded in his armes, as wearied (belike) with
their former wantonning, and whereof his age had but
little need.

The Courtaines being close drawne about the bed,
although the season was exceeding hot, they having lighted
Torches in their hands; drew open the Curtaines, and
shewed the Bishop his Provoste, close snuggling betweene
the armes of Ciutazza. Upon a sudden the Provoste
awaked, and seeing so great a light, as also so many people
about him: shame and feare so daunted him, that hee
shrunke downe in the bed, and hid his head. But the
Bishop being displeased at a sight so unseemely, made him
to discover his head againe, to see whom he was in bed
withall. Now the poore Provoste perceiving the Gentle-
womans deceite, and the proper handsome person so sweetly
embracing him: it made him so confounded with shame, as
he had not the power to utter one word: but having put
on his cloathes by the Bishops command, hee sent him (under
sufficient guard) to his Pallace, to suffer due chastisement
for his sinne committed; and afterward he desired to know,
by what means he became so favoured of Ciutazza, the
whole Historie whereof, the two brethren related at large
to him.

When the Bishop had heard all the discourse, highly he
commended the wisedome of the Gentlewoman, and worthy
assistance of her brethren, who contenting to soile their
hands in the blood of a Priest, rather sought to shame him
as hee deserved. The Bishop enjoyned him a pennisance of
repentance for forty dayes after, but love and disdaine made
THE EIGHT DAY

him weepe nine and forty: Moreover, it was a long while after, before he durst be seene abroad. But when he came to walke the streets, the Boyes would point their fingers at him, saying. Behold the Provoste that lay with Ciutazza: Which was such a wearisome life to him, that he became (well neere) distracted in his wits. In this manner the honest Gentlewoman discharged her dutie, and rid her selfe of the Provosts importunity: Ciutazza had a merry night of it, and a new Smocke also for her labour.

Three pleasant Companions, plaide a merry pranke with a Judge (belonging to the Marquesate of Ancona) at Florence, at such time as he sate on the Bench, and hearing criminally causes.

THE FIFT NOVELL

Giving admonition, that for the managing of publique affaires, no other persons are or ought to be appointed, but such as be honest, and meet to sit on the seate of Authority.

No sooner had Madam Æmillia finished her Novell, wherin, the excellent wisedome of Piccarda, for so worthily punishing the luxurious old Provoste, had generall commendations of the whole Assembly: but the Queene, looking on Philostratus, said. I command you next to supply the place: whereto he made answere, that hee was both ready and willing, and then thus began. Honourable Ladies, the merry Gentleman, so lately remembred by Madame Eliza, being named Maso del Saggio; causeth me to passe over an intended Tale, which I had resolved on when it came to my turne: to report another concerning him, and two men more, his friendly Companions. Which although it may appeare to you somewhat unpleasing, in
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL V

regard of a little grosse and unmannerly behaviour: yet it will move merriment without any offence, and that is the maine reason why I relate it.

It is not unknowne to you, partly by intelligence from our reverend predecessours, as also some understanding of your owne, that many time have resorted to our City of Florence, Potestates and Officers, belonging to the Marquesate of Anconia; who commonly were men of lowe spirit, and their lives so wretched and penurious, as they rather deserved to be tearmed Misers, then men. And in regard of this their naturall covetousnesse and misery, the Judges would bring also in their company, such Scribes or Notaries, as being paralelde with their Masters: they all seemed like Swaines come from the Plough, or bred up in some Coblers quality, rather then Schollers, or Students of Law.

At one time (above all the rest) among other Potestates and Judges, there came an especiall man, as pickt out of purpose, who was named Messer Niccolao da San Lepidio, who (at the first beholding) looked rather like a Tinker, then any Officer in authority. This hansome man (among the rest) was deputed to heare criminall causes. And, as often it happeneth, that Citizens, although no businesse inviteth them to Judiciall Courts, yet they still resort thither, sometimes accidentally: So it fortuned, that Maso del Saggio, being one morning in search of an especiall friend, went to the Court-house, and being there, observed in what manner Messer Niccolao was seated; who looking like some strange Fowle, lately come forth of a farre Countrey; he began to survay him the more seriously, even from the head to the foot, as we use to say.

And albeit he saw his Gowne furred with Miniver, as also the hood about his necke, a Penne and Inkehorne hanging at his girdle, and one skirt of his Garment longer then the other, with more misshapen sights about him, farre unfitting for a man of so civill profession: yet he spied one errorour extraordinary, the most notable (in his opinion) that ever he had seene before. Namely, a paultry paire of Breeches, wickedly made, and worse worn, hanging downe
so lowe as halfe his legge, even as he sate upon the Bench, yet cut so sparingly of the Cloath, that they gaped wide open before, as a wheele-barrow might have full entrance allowed it. This strange sight was so pleasing to him; as leaving off further search of his friend, and scorning to have such a spectacle alone by himselfe: hee went upon another Inquisition; Namely, for two other merry Lads like himselfe, the one being called Ribi, and the other Matteuzzo, men of the same mirth-full disposition as he was, and therefore the fitter for his Company.

After he had met with them, these were his salutations: My honest Boyes, if ever you did me any kindnesse, declare it more effectually now, in accompanying me to the Court-house, where you shall behold such a singular spectacle, as (I am sure) you never yet saw the like. Forthwith they went along altogether, and being come to the Court-house, he shewed them the Judges hansome paire of Breeches, hanging down in such base and beastly manner; that (being as yet farre off from the Bench) their hearts did ake with extreamity of laughter. But when they came neere to the seat whereon Messer Niccolao sate, they plainely perceived, that it was very easie to be crept under, and withall, that the board whereon he set his feet, was rotten and broken, so that it was no difficult matter, to reach it, and pull it downe as a man pleased, and let him fall bare Breecht to the ground. Cheare up your spirits (my hearts) quoth Maso, and if your longing be like to mine; we will have yonder Breeches a good deale lower, for I see how it may be easily done.

Laying their heads together, plotting and contriving severall wayes, which might be the likelyest to compass their intent: each of them had his peculiar appointment, to undertake the businesse without fayling, and it was to be performed the next morning. At the houre assigned, they met there againe, and finding the Court well filled with people, the Plaintiffes and Defendants earnestly pleading: Matteuzzo (before any body could descry him) was cunningly crept under the Bench, and lay close by the board whereon the Judge placed his feete. Then stept in
Maso on the right hand of Messer Niccolao, and tooke fast
hold on his Gowne before; the like did Ribi on the left
hand, in all respects answerable to the other. Oh my Lord
Judge (cryed Maso out aloud) I humbly intreat you for
charities sake, before this pilfering knave escape away from
hence; that I may have Justice against him, for stealing my
drawing-over stockeings, which he stoutly denyeth, yet mine
owne eyes beheld the deed, it being now not above fifteene
dayes since, when first I bought them for mine owne use.

Worthy Lord Judge (cryed Ribi, on the other side) doe
not beleive what he saith, for he is a paltry lying fellow,
and because hee knew I came hither to make my complaint
for a Male or Cloakebag which he stole from me: hee
urgeth this occasion for a paire of drawing Stockeings,
which he delivered me with his owne hands. If your Lord-
ship will not credit me, I can produce as witnesses, Trecco
the Shoemaker, with Monna Grassa the Souse-seller, and he
that sweepes the Church of Santa Maria á Verzaia, who saw
him when he came posting hither. Maso haling and tugging
the Judge by the sleeve, would not suffer him to heare
Ribi, but cryed out still for Justice against him, as he did
the like on the contrary side.

During the time of this their clamourous contending, the
Judge being very willy willing to heare either party: Matteuzzo,
upon a signe received from the other, which was a
word in Masoes pleading, laide holde on the broken boord,
as also on the Judges low-hanging Breech, plucking at
them both so strongly, that they fell downe immediately,
the Breeches being onely tyed but with one Poynt before.
He hearing the boards breaking underneath him, and such
maine pulling at his Breeches; strove (as he sate) to make
them fast before, but the Poynt being broken, and Maso
crying in his eare on the one side, as Ribi did the like in
the other; hee was at his wits end to defend himselfe. My
Lord (quoth Maso) you may bee ashamed that you doe me
not Justice, why will you not heare mee, but wholly lend
your eare to mine Adversary? My Lord (said Ribi) never
was Libell preferd into this Court, of such a paltry trifling
matter, and therefore I must, and will have Justice.
THE EIGHT DAY

By this time the Judge was dismounted from the Bench, and stood on the ground, with his slovenly Breeches hanging about his heele: Matteuzzo being cunningly stolne away, and undiscovered by any body. Ribi, thinking he had shamed the Judge sufficiently, went away, protesting, that he would declare his cause in the hearing of a wiser Judge. And Maso forbearing to tugge his Gowne any longer, in his departing, said. Fare you well Sir, you are not worthy to be a Magistrate, if you have no more regard of your honour and honesty, but will put off poore mens suites at your pleasure. So both went severall wayes, and soone were gone out of publike view.

The worshipfull Judge Messer Niccolao stood all this while on the ground; and, in presence of all the beholders, trussed up his Breeches, as if hee were new risen out of his bed: when better bethinking himselfe on the matters in-difference, he called for the two men, who contended for the drawing stockings and the Cloake-bag; but no one could tell what was become of them. Whereupon, he rapt out a kinde of Judges oath, saying: I will know whether it be Law or no heere in Florence, to make a Judge sit bare Breecht on the Bench of Justice, and in the hearing of criminall Causes; whereat the chiefe Potestate, and all the standers by laughed heartily.

Within fewe dayes after, he was informed by some of his especiall Friends, that this had never happened to him, but onely to testifie, how understanding the Florentines are, in their ancient constitutions and customes, to embrace, love and honour, honest, discreet worthy Judges and Magistrates; Whereas on the contrary, they as much condemne miserable knaves, foole, and dolts, who never merit to have any better entertainment. Wherefore, it would be best for him, to make no more enquiry after the parties; lest a worse inconvenience should happen to him.
Bruno and Buffalmaco, did steale a young Brawne from Calandrino, and for his recovery thereof, they used a kinde of pretended conjuration, with Pilles made of Ginger and strong Malmesey. But instead of this application, they gave him two Pilles of a Dogges Dates, or Dowsets, confected in Alloes, which he received each after the other; by meanes whereof they made him beleeeve, that hee had robde himselfe. And for feare they should report this theft to his Wife; they made him to goe buy another Brawne.

THE SIXT NOVELL

Wherein is declared, how easily a plaine and simple man may be made a foole, when he dealeth with crafty companions.

PHILOSTRATUS had no sooner concluded his Novell, and the whole Assembly laughed heartily thereat: but the Queen gave command to Madame Philomena, that shee should follow next in order; whereupon thus shee began. Worthy Ladies, as Philostratus, by calling to memorie the name of Maso del Saggio, hath contented you with another merry Novell concerning him: In the same manner must I intreat you, to remember once againe Calandrino and his subtle Consorts, by a pretty tale which I meane to tell you; how, and in what manner they were revenged on him, for going to seeke the invisible Stone.

Needlesse were any fresh relation to you, what manner of people those three men were, Calandrino, Bruno, and Buffalmaco, because already you have had sufficient understanding of them. And therefore, as an induction to my
THE EIGHT DAY

discourse, I must tell you, that Calandrinio had a small Country-house, in a Village some-what neere to Florence, which came to him by the marriage of his Wife. Among other Cattle and Poultry, which he kept there in store, hee had a young Boare readie fatted for Brawne, whereof yearly he used to kill one for his owne provision; and alwaies in the month of December, he and his wife resorted to their village house, to have a Brawne both killed and salted.

It came to passe at this time concerning my Tale, that the Woman being somewhat crazie and sickly, by her Husbands unkinde usage, whereof you heard so lately; Calandrinio went alone to the killing of his Boare, which comming to the hearing of Bruno and Buffalmaco, and that the Woman could by no meanes be there: to passe away the time a little in merriment, they went to a friendlie Companion of theirs, an honest joviall Priest, dwelling not farre off from Calandrinoes Countrey house.

The same morning as the Boare was kilde, they all three went thither, and Calandrinio seeing them in the Priests companie: bad them all heartily welcome; and to acquaint them with his good Husbandry, hee shewed them his house, and the Boare where it hung. They perceiving it to be faire and fat, knowing also, that Calandrinio intended to salt it for his owne store, Bruno saide unto him: Thou art an Asse Calandrinio, sell thy Brawne, and let us make merrie with the money: then let thy wife know no otherwise, but that it was stolne from thee, by those theeves which continually haunt country houses, especially in such scattering Villages.

Oh mine honest friends, answered Calandrinio, your counsell is not to be followed, neither is my wife so easie to be perswaded: this wer the readiest way to make your house a hell, and she to become the Master-Divell: therefore talke no further, for flatly I will not doe it. Albeit they laboured him very earnestly, yet all proved not to anie purpose: onely he desired them to suppe with him, but in so colde a manner, as they denied him, and parted thence from him. As they walked on the way, Bruno saide to Buffalmaco. Shall we three (this night) rob him of his
THE DECAMERON

Brawne? Yea marry (quoth Buffalmaco) how is it to be done? I have (saide Bruno) alreadie found the meanes to effect it, if he take it not from the place where last we saw it. Let us doe it then (answered Buffalmaco) why should we not do it? Sir Domine heere and we, will make good cheare with it among our selves. The nimble Priest was as forward as the best; and the match being fully agreed on, Bruno thus spake. My delicate Sir Domine, Art and cunning must be our maine helps: for thou knowest Buffalmaco, what a covetous wretch Calandrino is, glad and readie to drink alwaies on other mens expences: let us go take him with us to the Tavern, where the Priest (for his owne honour and reputation) shall offer to make paiment of the whole reckoning, without receiving a farthing of his, whereof he will not be a little joyfull, so shall we bring to passe the rest of the businesse, because there is no body in the house, but onely himselfe: for he is best at ease without company.

As Bruno had propounded, so was it accordingly performed, and when Calandrino perceyved, that the Priest would suffer none to pay, but himselfe, he dranke the more freely; and when there was no neede at all, tooke his Cuppes courageously one after another. Two or three hours of the night were spent, before they parted from the Taverne, Calandrino going directly home to his house, and instantly to bed, without any other supper, imagining that he had made fast his doore, which (indeede) he left wide open: sleeping soundly, without suspition of any harme intended unto him. Buffalmaco and Bruno went and supt with the Priest, and so soone as supper was ended, they tooke certaine Engines, for their better entering into Calandrinoes house, and so went on to effect theyr purpose. Finding the doore standing readie open, they entered in, tooke the Brawne, carried it with them to the Priests house, and afterward went all to bed.

When Calandrino had well slept after his Wine, he arose in the morning, and being descended downe the staires; finding the street doore wide open, he looked for the Brawne, but it was gone. Enquiring of the neighbours
THE EIGHT DAY

dwelling neere about him, hee could heare no tydings of his Brawne, but became the wofullest man in the world, telling every one that his Brawne was stolne. Bruno and Buffalmaco being risen in the morning, they went to visite Calandrino, to heare how he tooke the losse of his Brawne: and hee no sooner had a sight of them, but he called them to him; and with the teares running downe his cheekes, sayde: Ah my deare friendes, I am robde of my Brawne. Bruno stepping closely to him, sayde in his eare: It is wonderfull, that once in thy life time thou canst bee wise. How? answered Calandrino, I speake to you in good earnest. Speake so still in earnest (replied Bruno) and cry it out so loud as thou canst, then let who list beleeve it to be true.

Calandrino stampt and frettted exceedingly, saying: As I am a true man to God, my Prince, and Countrey, I tell thee truly, that my Brawne is stolne. Say so still I bid thee (answered Bruno) and let all the world beleve thee, if they list to do so, for I will not. Wouldst thou (quoth Calandrino) have me damne my selfe to the divell? I see thou dost not credit what I say: but would I were hanged by the necke, if it be not true, that my Brawne is stolne. How can it possible be, replyed Bruno? Did not I see it in thy house yesternight? Wouldst thou have me believe, that it is flowne away? Although it is not flowne away (quoth Calandrino) yet I am certain, that it is stolne away: for which I am weary of my life, because I dare not go home to mine owne house, in regard my wife will never beleve it; and yet if she should credite it, we are sure to have no peace for a twelvemonths space.

Bruno, seeming as if he were more then halfe sorrowfull, yet supporting still his former jesting humor, saide: Now trust mee Calandrino, if it be so; they that did it are much too blame. If it be so? answered Calandrino, Belike thou wouldst have mee blaspheme Heaven, and all the Saints therein: I tell thee once againe Bruno, that this last night my Brawne was stolne. Be patient good Calandrino, replyed Buffalmaco, and if thy Brawne be stolne from thee, there are means enow to get it againe. Meanes enow to
get it again? said Calandrino, I would faine heare one likely one, and let all the rest go by. I am sure Calandrino, answered Buffalmaco, thou art verily perswaded, that no Theefe came from India, to steale thy Brawne from thee: in which respect, it must needes then be some of thy Neighbours: whom if thou couldst lovingly assemble together, I knowe an experiment to be made with Bread and Cheese, whereby the party that hath it, will quickly be discovered.

I have heard (quoth Bruno) of such an experiment, and helde it to be infallible; but it extendeth onely unto persons of Gentilitie, whereof there are but few dwelling heere about, and in the case of stealing a Brawne, it is doubtfull to invite them, neither can there be any certainty of their comming. I confesse what you say, answered Buffalmaco, to be very true: but then in this matter, so nerely concerning us to be done, and for a deare Friend, what is your advice? I would have Pilles made of Ginger, compounded with your best and strongest Malmsey, then let the ordinary sort of people be invited (for such onely are most to be mistrusted) and they will not faile to come, because they are utterly ignorant of our intention. Besides, the Pilles may as well bee hallowed and consecrated, as bread and cheese on the like occasion. Indeede you say true (replied Buffalmaco) but what is the opinion of Calandrino? Is he willing to have this tryall made, or no? Yes, by all meanes, answered Calandrino, for gladly I would know who hath stolne my Brawne; and your good words have (more then halfe) comforted me already in this case.

Well then (quoth Bruno) I will take the paines to go to Florence, to provide all things necessarie for this secret service; but I must bee furnished with money to effect it. Calandrino had some forty shillings then about him, which he delivered to Bruno, who presently went to Florence, to a frend of his an Apothecarie, of whom he bought a pound of white Ginger, which hee caused him to make uppe in small Pilles: and two other beside of a Dogges-dates or Dowsets, confected all over with strong Aloes, yet well moulded in Sugare, as all the rest were: and because they should the
THE EIGHT DAY

more easily bee knowne from the other, they were spotted with Gold, in verie formall and Physicall manner. He bought moreover, a big Flaggon of the best Malmesey, returning backe with all these things to Calandrino, and directing him in this order.

You must put some friend in trust, to invite your Neighbours (especially such as you suspect) to a breakfast in the morning: and because it is done as a feast in kindnesse, they will come to you the more willingly. This night will I and Buffalmaco take such order, that the Pilles shall have the charge imposed on them, and then wee will bring them hither againe in the morning: and I my selfe (for your sake) will deliver them to your guests, and performe whatsoever is to bee sayde or done. On the next morning, a goodly company being assembled, under a faire Elme before the Church; as well young Florentynes (who purposely came to make themselves merry) as neighbouring Husbandmen of the Village: Bruno was to begin the service, with the Pils in a faire Cup, and Buffalmaco followed him with another Cup, to deliver the wine out of the Flaggon, all the company being set round, as in a circle; and Bruno with Buffalmaco being in the midst of them, Bruno thus spake.

Honest friends, it is fit that I should acquaint you with the occasion, why we are thus met together, and in this place: because if anie thing may seeme offensive to you; afterward you shall make no complaint of me. From Calandrino (our loving friend heere present) yesternight there was a new-kild fat Brawne taken, but who hath done the deede, as yet he knoweth not; and because none other, but some one (or more) heere among us, must needs offend in this case: he, desiring to understand who they be, would have each man to receive one of these Pilles, and afterward to drinke of this Wine; assuring you all, that whosoever stole the Brawne hence, cannot be able to swallow the Pill: for it wil be so extreme bitter in his mouth, as it will enforce him to Coughe and spit extraordinarily. In which respect, before such a notorious shame be received, and in so goodly an assembly, as now are heere present: it were
much better for him or them that have the Brawne, to confess it in private to this honest Priest, and I will abstaine from urging anie such publike proofe.

Every one there present answered, that they were well contented both to eate and drinke, and let the shame fall where it deserved; whereupon, Bruno appointing them how they should sit, and placing Calandrino as one among them: he began his counterfeite exorcisme, giving each man a Pill, and Buffalmaco a Cup of Wine after it. But when he came to Calandrino, hee tooke one of them which was made of the Dogges dates or Dowsets, and delivering it into his hand, presently hee put it into his mouth and chewed it. So soone as his tongue tasted the bitter Aloes, he began to coughe and spet extreamly, as being utterly unable, to endure the bitternesse and noysome smell. The other men that had receyved the Pils, beganne to gaze one upon another, to see whose behaviour should discover him; and Bruno having not (as yet) delivered Pils to them all, proceeded on still in his businesse, as seeming not to heare any coughing, till one behinde him, saide. What meaneth Calandrino by this spetting and coughing?

Bruno sodainely turning him about, and seeing Calandrino to cough and spet in such sort, saide to the rest. Be not too rash (honest Friends) in judging of any man, some other matter (then the Pille) may procure this Coughing, wherfore he shall receive another, the better to cleare your beleefe concerning him. He having put the second prepared Pill into his mouth, while Bruno went to serve the rest of the Guests: if the first was exceeding bitter to his taste, this other made it a great deale worse, for teares streamed forth of his eyes as bigge as Cherry-stones, and champing and chewing the Pill, as hoping it would overcome his coughing; he coughed and spette the more violently, and in grosser manner then he did before, nor did they give him any wine to helpe it.

Buffalmaco, Bruno, and the whole company, perceiving how he continued still his coughing and spetting, saide all with one voyce, That Calandrino was the Theefe to him selfe: and gave him manie grosse speeches beside, all departing
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home unto their houses, very much displeased and angry with him. After they were gone, none remained with him but the Priest, Bruno and Buffalmaco, who thus spake to Calandrino. I did ever thinke, that thou wast the theefe thy selfe, yet thou imputedst thy robbery to some other, for feare we should once drinke freely of thy purse, as thou hast done many times of ours. Calandrino, who had not yet ended his coughing and spetting, swere many bitter Oathes, that his Brawne was stolne from him. Talke so long as thou wilt, quoth Buffalmaco, thy knavery is both knowne and seene, and well thou mayst be ashamed of thy selfe. Calandrino hearing this, grew desperately angry; and to incense him more, Bruno thus pursued the matter.

Heare me Calandrino, for I speake to thee in honest earnest, there was a man in the company, who did eate and drinke heere among thy neighbours, and plainly told me, that thou keptst a young Lad heere to do thee service, feeding him with such victuals as thou couldst spare, by him thou didst send away thy Brawne, to one that bought it of thee for foure Crownes, onely to cousen thy poore wife and us. Canst thou not yet learne to leave thy mocking and scorning? Thou hast forgotte, how thou broughtst us to the plaine of Mugnone, to seeke for black invisible stones: which having found, thou concealedst them to thy selfe, stealing home invisibly before us, and making us follow like fooles after thee.

Now likewise, by horrible lying Oathes, and perjured protestations, thou wouldst make us beleive, that the Brawne (which thou hast cunningly sold for ready money) was stolne from thee out of thy house, when thou art onely the Theefe to thy selfe, as by that excellent rule of Art (which never faileth) hath plainly, to thy shame, appeared. Wee being so well acquainted with thy delusions, and knowing them perfectly; now do plainly tell thee, that we mean not to be foold any more. Nor is it unknowne to thee, what paines wee have taken, in making this singular peece of proofe. Wherefore we inflict this punishment on thee, that thou shalt bestow on this honest Priest and us, two couple
NOVELL VI of Capons, and a Flaggon of Wine, or else we will discover this knavery of thine to thy Wife.

Calandrino perceiving, that all his protestations could winne no credit with them, who had now the Law remaining in their owne hands, and purposed to deale with him as they pleased: apparently saw, that sighing and sorrow did nothing availe him. Moreover, to fall into his wives tempestuous stormes of chiding, would bee worse to him then racking or torturing: he gladly therefore gave them money, to buy the two couple of Capons and Wine, being heartily contented likewise, that hee was so well delivered from them. So the merry Priest, Bruno, and Buffalmaco, having taken good order for salting the Brawne; closely carried it with them to Florence, leaving Calandrino to complaine of his losse, and well requited, for mocking them with the invisible stones.
THE EIGHT DAY

A young Gentleman being a Scholler, fell in love with a Ladie, named Helena, she being a Widdow, and addicted in affection to another Gentleman. One whole night in cold Winter, she caused the Scholler to expect her comming, in an extreame frost and snow. In revenge whereof, by his imagined Art and skill, he made her to stand naked on the top of a Tower, the space of a whole day, and in the hot moneth of July, to be Sun-burnt and bitten with Wasps and Flies.

THE SEVENTH NOVELL

Serving as an admonition to all Ladies and Gentlewomen, not to mock or scorne Gentlemen-Schollers, when they make meanes of love to them: Except they intend to seeke their owne shame, by disgracing them.

GREATLY did the Ladies commend Madame Philomenaes Novell, laughing heartily at poore Calandrino, yet grieving withall, that he should be so knavishly cheated, not onely of his Brawne, but two couple of Capons, and a Flaggon of Wine beside. But the whole discourse being ended; the Queene commanded Madame Pampinea, to follow next with her Novell, and presently she thus began. It hapneth oftentimes (bright beauties) that mockery falleth on him, that intended the same unto another: And therefore I am of opinion, that there is very litle wisedom declared on him or her, who taketh delight in mocking any person. I must needs confesse, that we have smiled at many mockeries and deceits, related in those excellent Novels, which we have already heard: without any due revenge returned, but onely in this last of silly Calan-
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL VII

Therefor, it is now my determination, to urge a kind of compassionate apprehension, upon a very just retribution, happening to a Gentlewoman of our Citie, because her scorne fell deservedly upon her selfe, remaining mocked, and to the perill of her life. Let me then assure you, that your diligent attention may redound to your benefit, because if you keepe your selves (henceforward) from being scorned by others: you shall expresse the greater wisedome, and be the better warned by their mishaps.

As yet there are not many yeares over-past, since there dwelt in Florence, a yong Lady, descended of Noble parentage, very beautifull, of sprightly courage, and sufficiently abounding in the goods of Fortune, she being named Madame Helena. Her delight was to live in the estate of Widdow-hood, desiring to match her selfe no more in marriage, because she bare affection to a gallant young Gentleman, whom she had made her private election of, and with whom (having excluded all other amorous cares and cogitations) by meanes of her Waiting-woman, she had divers meetings, and kinde conferences.

It chanced at the verie same time, another young Gentleman of our Citie, called Reniero, having long studied in the Schooles at Paris, returned home to Florence, not to make sale of his Learning and experience, as many doe: but to understand the reason of things, as also the causes and effects of them, which is mervailously fitting for any Gentleman. Being greatly honoured and esteemed of every one, as well for his courteous carriage towards all in generall, as for his knowledge and excellent parts: he lived more like a familiar Citizen, then in the nature of a Courtly Gentleman, albeit he was choisely respected in either estate.

But, as oftentimes it commeth to passe, that such as are endued with the best judgement and understanding in naturall occasions, are soonest caught and intangled in the snares of Love: so fel it out with our Scholler Reniero, who being invited to a solemn Feast, in company of other his especiall Friends; this Lady Helena, attyred in her blacke Garments (as Widowes commonly use to wear) was likewise
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there a Guest. His eye observing her beauty and gracious
demeanour, she seemed in his judgement, to be a Woman so
complete and perfect, as he had never seene her equall
before: and therefore, he accounted the man more then
fortunate, that was worthy to embrace her in his armes.
Continuing this amorous observation of her from time to
time, and knowing withall, that rare and excellent things
are not easily obtained, but by painefull study, labour, and
endeavour: hee resolved with himselfe constantly, to put in
practise all his best parts of industry, onely to honour and
please her, and attaining to her contentation, it would be
the means to winne her love, and compasse thereby his
hearts desire.

The yong Lady, who fixed not her eyes on inferiour sub-
jects (but esteemed her selfe above ordinary reach or capacity)
could moove them artificially, as curious women well know
how to doe, looking on every side about her, yet not in a
gadding or grosse manner: for she was not ignorant in such
darting glaunces, as proceeded from an enflamed affection,
which appearing plainly in Reniero; with a pretty smile,
shee said to her selfe. I am not come hither this day in
vaine; for, if my judgement faile me not, I thinke I have
caught a Woodcocke by the Bill. And lending him a
cunning looke or two, quentity caried with the corner of
her eye; she gave him a kinde of perswading apprehension,
that her heart was the guide to her eye. And in this arti-
ficial Schoole-tricke of hers, shee carried therewith another
consideration, to wit, that the more other eyes fedde
themselves on her perfections, and were (well-neere) lost
in them beyond recovery: so much the greater reason
had he to account his fortune beyond comparison, that
was the sole master of her heart, and had her love at his
command.

Our witty Scholler having set aside his Philosophicall
considerations, strove how he might best understand her
carriage toward him, and beleeving that she beheld him
with pleasing regards; hee learned to know the house where
shee dwelt, passing daily by the doore divers times, under
colour of some more serious occasions: wherein the Lady
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NOVELL VII

very proudly gloried, in regard of the reasons before allledged, and seemed to afford him looks of good liking. Being led thus with a hopeful persuasion, he found the means to gain acquaintance with her waiting-woman, revealing to her his entire affection, desiring her to work for him in such sort with her Lady, that his service might be gracious in her acceptance. The Gentlewoman made him a very willing promise, and immediately did his errand to her Lady; who heard her with no small pride and squemishness, and breaking forth into a scornful laughter, thus she spake.

Ancilla (for so she was named) dost thou not observe, how this Scholler is come to lose all the wit here, which he studied so long for in the University of Paris? Let us make him our onely Table argument, and seeing his folly soareth so high, we will feed him with such a diet as hee deserveth. Yet when thou speakest next with him, tell him, that I affect him more than he can doe me; but it becommeth me to be carefull of mine honour, and to walke with an untainted brow, as other Ladies and Gentlewomen doe: which he is not to mislike, if he be so wise as he maketh shew of, but rather will the more commend me. Alas good Lady lack-wit, little did she understand (faire assembly) how dangerous a case it is [to] deale with Schollers.

At his next meeting with the waiting woman, shee delivered the message, as her Lady had commanded her, whereof poore Reniero was so joyfull: that hee pursued his love-suite the more earnestly, and began to write letters, send gifts, and tokens, all which were still received, yet without any other answere to give hope, but onely in generall, and thus shee dallied with him a long while. In the end, she discovered this matter to her secret chosen friend, who fell suddenly sicke of the head-ake, onely through meere conceit of jealousie: which she perceiving, and grieving to be suspected without any cause, especially by him whom shee esteemed above all other; shee intended to rid him quickly of that Idle disease. And being more and more solicited by the Scholler, shee sent him word by her maide Ancilla, that (as yet) she could find no convenient opportunity, to yeeld
him such assurance, as hee should not any way be distrust- 
full of her love.

But the Feast of Christmas was now neere at hand, which 
afforded leisures much more hopefull, then any other formerly 
passed. And therefore, the next night after the first Feast- 
ing day, if he pleased to walke in the open Court of her 
house: she would soone send for him, into a place much 
better beseeming, and where they might freely converse 
together.

Now was our Scholler the onely jocond man of the world, 
and failed not the time assigned him, but went unto the 
Ladies house, where Ancilla was ready to give him enter-
tainment, conducting him into the base Court, where she 
lockt him up fast, untill her Lady should send for him. 
This night shee had privately sent for her friend also, and 
sitting merrily at supper with him, told him, what welcome 
she had given the Scholler, and how she further meant to 
use him, saying. Now Sir, consider with your selfe, what 
hot affection I beare to him, of whom you became so fondly 
jealous. The which words were very welcome to him, and 
made him extraordinarily joyful; desiring to see them as 
effectually performed, as they appeared to him by her 
protestations.

Heere you are to understand (Gracious Ladies) that 
according to the season of the yeare, a great snow had falne 
the day before, so as the whole Court was covered therewith, 
and being an extreame frost upon it, our Scholler could not 
boast of any warme walking, when the teeth quivered in his 
head with cold, as a Dog could not be more discourteously 
used: yet hope of enjoying Loves recompence at length, 
made him to support all this injury with admirable 
patience.

Within a while after, Madame Helena said to her friend. 
Walke with me (deare heart) into my Chamber, and there at 
a secret little window, I shall shew thee what he doth, that 
drove thee to such a suspition of me, and we shall heare 
beside, what answere he will give my maide Ancilla, whom I 
will send to comfort him in his coldnesse.

When she had so said, they went to the appointed chamber
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NOVELL VII window, where they could easily see him, but he not them: and then they heard Ancilla also, calling to him forth of another windowe, saying. Signior Reniero, my Lady is the wofullest woman in the world, because (as yet) she cannot come to you, in regard that one of her brethren came this evening to visite her, and held her with much longer discourse then she expected: whereby she was constrained to invite him to sup with her, and yet he is not gone; but shortly I hope hee will, and then expect her comming presently; till when, she entreateth your gentle sufferance.

Poore Reniero, our over-credulous Scholler, whose vehement affection to Madame Helena, so hood-winkt the sight of his understanding, as he could not be distrustfull of any guilt; returned this answere to Ancilla. Say to your Lady that I am bound in duty, to attend the good houre of her leisure, without so much as the very least prejudice conceite in me: Nevertheless, entreat her, to let it bee so soone as she possibly may, because here is miserable walking, and it beginmeth againe to snow extreamely. Ancilla making fast the Casement, went presently to bed; when Helena spake thus to her amorous friend. What saist thou now? Doest thou thinke that I loved him, as thou wast afraid of? If I did, he should never walke thus in the frost and snow. So, away went they likewise from their close gazing window, and spent wanton dalliances together, laughing, and deriding (with many bitter taunts and jests) the lamentable condition of poore Reniero.

About the Court walked hee numberlesse times, finding such exercises as he could best devise, to compasse warmth in any manner: no seate or shelter had he any where, either to ease himselfe by sitting downe a while, or keepe him from the snow, falling continually on him, which made him bestow many curses on the Ladies Brother, for his so long tarrying with her, as beleewing him verily to be in the house, or else she would (long before) have admitted his entrance, but therein his hope was meerely deceived. It grew now to be about the houre of midnight, and Helena had delighted her selfe with her friend extraordinarily, til at last, thus she spake to him. What is thine opinion of my amourous
Scholler? Which dost thou imagine to be the greatest, either his sense and judgement, or the affection I beare to him? Is not this cold sufferance of his, able to quench the violent heat of his loves extremitie, and having so much snow broth to helpe it? Beleeve me (sweet Lady) quoth her friend, as hee is a man, and a learned Scholler, I pitty that he should bee thus ungently dealt withall: but as he is my rivall and loves enemy, I cannot allow him the least compassion, resting the more confidently assured of your love to me, which I will alwayes esteeme most precious.

When they had spent a long while in this or the like conference, with infinite sweet kisses and embraces intermixed; then she began againe in this manner. Deare love (quoth she) cast thy Cloake about thee, as I intend to doe with my night mantle, and let us step to the little window once more, to see whether the flaming fire, which burned in the Schollers brest (as daily avouched to me in his love letters) be as yet extinct or no. So going to the window againe, and looking downe into the Court; there they saw the Scholler dancing in the snow, to the cold tune of his teeths quivering and chattering, and clapping his armes about his body, which was no pleasing melody to him. How thinkest thou now sweet heart (saide shee) cannot I make a man daunce without the sound of a Taber, or of a Bagpipe? yes beleeve me Lady (quoth he) I plaine perceive you can, and would be very lothe, that you should exercise your cunning on me. Nay, said shee, we will yet delight our selves a little more; let us softly descend downe the stayres, even so farre as to the Court doore: thou shalt not speake a word, but I will talke to him, and heare some part of his quivering language, which cannot choose but bee passing pleasing for us to heare.

Out of the Chamber went they, and descended downe the stayres to the Court doore; where, without opening it, she laide her mouth to a small cranny, and in a low soft kinde of voyce, called him by his name: which the Scholler hearing, was exceeding joyful, as beleeveing verily, that the houre of his deliverance was come, and entrance now should be admitted him. Upon the hearing of her voyce, hee stept
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NOVELL VII

close to the doore, saying. For charities sake, good Lady, let me come in, because I am almost dead with cold; whereto thus she answered in mocking manner. I make no doubt (my deare friend Reniero) but the night is indifferent colde, and yet somewhat the warmer by the Snowes falling: and I have heard that such weather as this, is tenne-times more extreame at Paris, then heere in our warmer Countrey. And trust me, I am exceeding sorrowfull, that I may not (as yet) open the doore, because mine unhappy brother, who came (unexpected) yester-night to suppe with me, is not yet gone, as within a short while (I hope) he will, and then shall I gladly set open the doore to you, for I made an excuse to steale a little from him, onely to cheare you with this small kind of comfort, that his so long tarrying might be the lesse offensive to you.

Alas sweet Madame, answered quaking and quivering Reniero, bee then so favourable to me, as to free me from forth this open Court, where there is no shelter or helpe for me, the snow falling still so exceedingly, as a man might easily be more then halfe buried in it: let me be but within your doore, and there I will wait your own good leisure. Alas deare Reniero (answered Helena) I dare not doe it, because the doore maketh such a noyse in the opening, as it will be too easily heard by my Brother: but I will goe and use such meanes, as shortly hee shall get him gone, and then I dare boldly give you entrance. Doe so good Madame, replyed Reniero, and let there be a faire fire made ready, that when I am within, I may the sooner warme my selfe; for I am so strangely benummed with colde, as well-neere I am past all sence of feeling.

Can it be possible (quoth Helena) that you should be so benummed with colde? Then I plainly perceive, that men can lye in their love letters, which I can shew under your own hand, how you fryed in flames, and all for my love, and so have you written to me in every letter. Poore credulous women are often thus deluded, in beleeving what men write and speake out of passion: but I will returne backe to my Brother, and make no doubt of dispatch, because I would gladly have your Company.

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The amourous Friend to Helena, who stood by all this while, laughing at the Schollers hard usage, returned up againe with her to her Chamber, where they could not take a jote of rest, for flouting and scorning the betrayed Scholler. As for him poore man, hee was become like the Swanne, coldly chattering his teeth together, in a strange new kinde of harmony to him. And perceiving himselfe to be meerely mocked, he attempted to get open the doore, or how he might passe forth at any other place: but being no way able to compasse it, he walked up and downe like an angry Lyon, cursing the hard quality of the time, the discourtesie of the Lady, the over-tedious length of the night; but (most of all) his owne folly and simplicity, in being so basely abused and guide. Now began the heat of his former affection to Helena, altered into as violent a detestation of her; Yea, extremity of hatred in the highest degree; beating his braines, and ransacking every corner of invention, by what meanes he might best be revenged on her, which now he more earnestly desired to effect, then to enjoy the benefit of her love, or to be embraced betweene her armes.

After that the sad and uncomfortable night had spent it selfe, and the break of day was beginning to appeare; Ancilla the waiting-woman, according as she was instructed by her Lady, went downe and opened the Court doore, and seeming exceedingly to compassionate the Schollers unfortunate night of sufferance, saide unto him.

Alas courteous Gentleman, in an unblessed houre came my Ladys brother hither yester-night, inflicting too much trouble upon us, and a grievous time of affliction to you. But I am not ignorant, that you being vertuous, and a judicious Scholler, have an invincible spirit of pacience, and sufficient understanding withall; that what this night could not affoord, another may make a sound amends for. This I can and dare sufficiently assure you, that nothing could be more displeasing to my Lady, neither can she well be quieted in her mind: untill she have made a double and treble requitall, for such a strange unexpected inconvenience, whereof she had not the very least suspition.

Reniero swelling with discontentment, yet wisely clouding
it from open apprehension, and knowing well enough, that such golden speeches and promises, did alwaies savour of what intemperate spleene would more lavishly have vented foorth, and therefore in a modest dissembling manner; without the least shew of any anger, thus he answered.

In good sadnesse Ancilla, I have endured the most miserablest night of cold, frost and snow, that ever any poore Gentleman suffered; but I know well enough, your Lady was not in any fault thereof, neither meriteth to be blamed, for in her owne person (as being truely compassionate of my distresse) she came so farre as the doore of this Court, to excuse her selfe, and comfort mee. But as you saide, and very well too, what hath failed this night, another hereafter may more fortunately performe: in hope whereof, commend my love and duteous service to her, and (what else remaineth mine) to your gentle selfe.

So our halfe frozen Scholler, scarcely able to walke upon his legges, returned home, (so well as hee could) to his owne lodging; where, his spirits being grievously out of order, and his eyes staring gastly through lacke of sleepe: he lay downe on his bed, and after a little rest, he found himselfe in much worse condition then before, as meerely taken lame in his armes and his legges. Whereupon he was inforced to send for Phisitions, to be advised by their councell, in such an extremity of cold received. Immediately, they made provision for his healthes remedie (albeit his nerves and sinewes could very hardly extend themselves) yet in regard he was yong, and Summer swiftly drawing on; they had the better hope of affecting his safty, out of so great and dangerous a cold.

But after he was become almost well and lusty againe, hee used to be seldomse seene abroad for an indifferent while; concealing his intended revenge secret to himselfe, yet appearing more affectionate to Madame Helena, then formerly he had beene.

Now, it came to passe (within no long while after) that Fortune being favourable to our injured Scholler, prepared a new accident, wherby he might fully effect his harts desire. For the lusty yong Gallant, who was Madame
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Helenaes deare darling and delight, and (for whose sake) she dealt so inhumanely with poore Reniero: became weary of her amorous service, and was falne in liking of another Lady, scorning and disdaining his former Mistresse; whereat shee grew exceedingly displeased, and began to languish in sighes and teares.

But Ancilla her waiting-woman, compassionating the perilous condition of her Lady, and knowing no likely means whereby to conquer this oppressing melancholly, which shee suffered for the losse of her hearts chosen friend: at length she began to consider, that the Scholler still walked daily by the doore, as formerly hee was wont to doe, and (by him) there might some good be done.

A fond and foolish opinion overswayed her, that the Scholler was extraordinarily skilfull in the Art of Negromancy, and could thereby so over-rule the heart of her lost friend, as hee should bee compelled to love her againe, in as effectuall manner as before; herewith immediately she acquainted her Lady, who being as rashly credulous, as her maide was opinionative (never considering, that if the Scholler had any experience in Negromancy, hee would thereby have procured his owne successe) gave releefe to her surmise, in very Joviall and comfortable manner, and entreated her in all kindnes, to know of him, whether he could worke such a businesse, or no, and (upon his undertaking to effect it) shee would give absolute assurance, that (in recompence thereof) he should unfainedly obtaine his hearts desire. Ancilla was quicke and expeditious, in delivering this message to discontented Reniero, whose soule being ready to mount out of his body, only by conceit of joy; chearefully thus he said within himselfe. Gracious Fortune! how highly am I obliged to thee for this so great a favour? Now thou hast blest me with a happy time, to be justly revenged on so wicked a woman, who sought the utter ruine of my life, in recompence of the unsaigned affecti

Returne to thy Lady (quoth he) and saluting her first on my behalfe, bid her to abandon all care in this businesse; for, if her amorous Friend were in India, I would make him come (in meere despight of his
heart) and crave mercy of her for his base transgression. But concerning the means how, and in what manner it is to bee done, especially on her owne behalfe: I will impart it to her so soone as she pleaseth: faile not to tell her so constantly from me, with all my utmost paines at her service.

Ancilla came jocondly home with her answer, and a conclusion was set downe for their meeting together at Santa Lucia del prato, which accordingly was performed, in very solemn conference between them. Her fond affection had such power over her, that she had forgot, into what peril she brought his life, by such an unnatural night-walke: but disclosed all her other intention to him, how loth she was to lose so deare a friend, and desiring him to exercise his utmost height of skil, with large promises of her manifold favours to him, whereto our Scholler thus replied.

Very true it is Madam, that among other studies at Paris, I learned the Art of Negromancy, the depth whereof I am as skilfull in, as anie other Scholler whatsoever. But, because it is greatly displeasing unto God, I made a vow never to use it, either for my selfe, or anie other. Nevertheless, the love I beare you is of such power, as I know not well how to denie, whatsoever you please to command me: in which respect, if in doing you my very best service, I were sure to bee seized on by all the divels: I will not faile to accomplish your desire, you onely having the power to command me. But let me tell you Madame, it is a matter not so easie to be performed, as you perhaps may rashly imagine, especially, when a Woman would repeale a man to love her, or a man a woman: because, it is not to be done, but by the person whom it properly concerneth. And therefore it behoveth, that such as would have this business effected, must be of a constant minde, without the least scruple of feare: because it is to be accomplished in the darke night season, in which difficulties I doe not know, how you are able to warrant your selfe, or whether you have such courage of spirit, as (with boldnes) to adventure.

Madame Helena, more hot in pursuite of her amorous
contentment, then any way governed by temperate discretion, presently thus answered. Sir, Love hath set such a keene edge on my unconquerable affection, as there is not any daunger so difficult, but I dare resolutely undertake it, for the recovery of him, who hath so shamefullie refused my kindnesse: wherefore (if you please) shew mee, wherein I must be so constant and dreadlesse. The Scholler, who had (more then halfe) caught a right Ninny-hammer by the beake, thus replyed. Madame, of necessity I must make an image of Tin, in the name of him whom you desire to recall. Which when I have sent you, the Moone being then in her full, and your selfe stript starke naked: immediately after your first sleepe, seaven times you must bathe your selfe with it in a swift running River. Afterward, naked as you are, you must clime up upon some tree, or else upon an uninhabited house top, where standing dreadlesse of any perill, and turning your face to the North, with the Image in your hand, seaven times you must speake such wordes, as I will deliver to you in writing.

After you have so often spoken them, two goodly Ladies (the very fairest that ever you beheld) wil appeare unto you, very graciously saluting you, and demanding what you would have them to performe for you. Safely you may speake unto them, and orderly tel them what you desire: but be very careful, that you name not one man insted of another. When you have uttered your mind, they wil depart from you, and then you may descend againe, to the place where you did leave your garments, which having putte on, then returne to your house. And undoubtedly, before the midst of the next night following, your friend wil come in teares to you, and humbly crave your pardon on his knees; beeing never able afterward to be false to you, or leave your Love for any other whatsoever.

The Lady hearing these words, gave very setled beleefe to them, imagining unfainedly, that shee had (more then halfe) recovered her friend already, and held him embraced betweene her armes: in which joond perswasion, the cheerful blood mounted up into hir cheekes, and thus she replyed. Never make you any doubt, Sir, but that I can sufficiently
performe whatsoever you have said, and am provided of the onely place in the world, where such a weighty businesse is to be effected. For I have a Farme or dairy house, neere adjoyning to the vale of Arno, and closely bordering upon the same River. It beeing now the moneth of July, the most convenientest time of all the yeare to bathe in; I can bee the easier induced thereunto.

Moreover, there is hard by the Rivers side a smal Tower or Turret uninhabited; whereinto few people do sildome enter, but onely Heardsmen or Flocke-keepers, who ascend uppe (by the helpe of a wodden Ladder) to a Tarrasse on the top of the saide Tower, to looke all about for their beasts, when they are wandred astray: it standing in a solitary place, and out of the common way or resort. There dare I boldly adventure to mount up, and with the invincible courage of a wronged Lady (not fearing to looke death himself in the face) do al that you have prescribed, yea, and much more, to recover my deare lost Lover againe, whom I value equal with my owne Life.

Reniero, who perfectly knew both the Dairy Farme, and the old smal Turret, not a little joyful, to heare how forward shee was to shame her selfe, answered in this manner. Madame, I was never in those parts of the Country, albeit they are so neere to our City, and therfore I must needs be ignorant, not onely of your Farme, but the Turret also. But if they stand in such convenient manner as you have described, all the world could not yeele the like elsewhere, so apt and sutable to your purpose: wherefore, with such expedition as possibly I can use, I will make the Image, and send it you, as also the charme, verie fairely written. But let me entreate you, that when you have obtainyd your hearts desire, and are able to judge truely of my love and service; not to be unmindfull of me, but (at your best leysure) to performe what you have with such protestations promised; which shee gave him her hand and faith to do, without any impeach or hinderance: and so parting, she returned home to her house.

Our over-joyed Scholler, applauding his happy Starres, for furthering him with so faire a way to his revenge;
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immagining that it was already halfe executed, made the Image in due forme, and wrote an old Fable, insted of a Charme; both which he sent to the Lady, so soone as he thought the time to be fitting: and this admonition withall, that the Moone being entering into the full, without any longer delay, she might venter on the businesse the next night following, and remaine assured to repossesse her friend. Afterward for the better pleasing of himselfe, he went secretly attended, onely by his servant, to the house of a trusty frend of his, who dwelt somwhat neere to the Turret, there to expect the issue of this Lady-like enterprize. And Madam Helena accompanied with none but Ancilla, walked on to her dairy Farme, where the night ensuing, pretending to take her rest sooner then formerly she used to doe, she commanded Ancilla to go to bed, referring her selfe to her best liking.

After she had slept her first sleepe (according to the Schollers direction) departing softly out of her chamber, she went on towards the ancient Tower, standing hard by the river of Arno, looking every way heedfully about hir, least she should be spied by any person. But perceiving hir selfe to be so secure as she could desire; putting off all her garments, she hid them in a small brake of bushes: afterward, holding the Image in hir hand, seven times she bathd hir body in the river, and then returned with it to the Tower. The Scholler, who at the nights closing up of day, had hid himselfe among the willowes and other trees, which grew very thick about the Tower, saw both hir going and returning from the River, and as she passed thus naked by him, he plainly perceyved, that the nights obscurity could not cloud the delicate whitenes of hir body, but made the Starres themselves to gaze amorously on her, even as if they were proud to behold her bathing, and (like so many twinkling Tapers) shewed hir in emulation of another Diana. Now, what conflicts this sight caused in the mind of our Scholler, one while, quenching his hatefull spleen towards hir, al coveting to imbrace a piece of such perfection: another while, thinking it a purchase fit for one of Cupids soldiers, to seize and surprize hir uppon so faire an advan-
late, none being neere to yeild her rescue: in the fiery triall of such temptations, I am not able to judge, or to say, what resistance flesh and blood could make, being opposed with such a sweet enemy.

But he well considering what she was, the greatnes of his injury, as also how, and for whom: he forgot all wanton allurements of Love, scorning to entertaine a thought of compassion, continuing constant in his resolution, to let her suffer, as he himselfe had done. So, Helena being mounted up on the Turret, and turning her face towards the North; she repeated those idle frivolous words (composed in the nature of a charme) which shee had received from the Scholler. Afterward, by soft and stealing steps, hee went into the old Tower, and tooke away the Ladder, whereby she ascended to the Tarras, staying and listening, how shee proceeded in her amorous exorcisme.

Seven times she rehearsed the charme to the Image, looking still when the two Ladies would appeare in their likenesse, and so long she held on her imprecations (feeling greater cold, then willinglie she would have done) that breake of day began to shew it selfe, and halfe despairing of the Ladies comming, according as the Scholler had promised, she said to her selfe: I much misdoubt, that Reniero hath quitted me with such another peece of night-service, as it was my lucke to bestow on him: but if he have done it in that respect, hee was but ill advised in his revenge, because the night wants now three parts of the length, as then it had: and the cold which he suffered, was far superior in quality to mine, albeit it is more sharp now in the morning, then all the time of night it hath bin.

And, because day-light should not discover her on the Tarrasse, she went to make her descent downe againe: but finding the Ladder to be taken away, and thinking how her publike shame was now inevitable, her heart dismayed, and shee fell downe in a swoune on the Tarras: yet recovering her senses afterward, her greefe and sorrow exceeded all capacity of utterance. For, now she became fully perswaded, that this proceeded from the Schollers malice, repenting for her unkinde usage towards him, but much more condemning
her selfe, for reposing any trust in him, who stood bound (by good reason) to be her enemy.

Continuing long in this extreame affliction, and sur-weighing all likely meanes about her, whereby she might descend from the Tarras, whereof she was wholly disappointed: she began to sigh and weep exceedingly, and in this heavy perplexity of spirit, thus shee complained to her selfe. Miserable and unfortunate Helena, what will be saide by thy Bretheren, Kindred, Neighbours, and generallie throughout all Florence, when they shall know, that thou wast founde heere on this Turret, starke naked? Thine honourable carriage, and honesty of life, heeretofore free from a thought of suspition, shall now be branded with detestation; and if thou wouldst cloud this mishappe of thine, by such lies and excuses, as are not rare amongst women: yet Reniero that wicked Scholler, who knoweth all thy privy compacting, will stand as a thousand witnesses against thee, and shame thee before the whole City, so both thine honor and loved friend are lost for ever.

Having thus consulted with her selfe, many desperate motions entred her minde, to throw her selfe headlong from off the Tarras; till better thoughts wone possession of her soule. And the Sunne being risen, shee went to every corner of the Tarras, to espye any Lad come abroad with his beasts, by whom she might send for her waiting-woman. About this instant, the Scholler who lay sleeping (all this while) under a bush, suddenly awaking; saw her looke over the wall, and she likewise espied him; whereupon hee said unto her. Good morrow Madame Helena, What? are the Ladies come yet or no? Helena hearing his scorning question, and grieving that hee should so delude her: in tears and lamentations, she intreated him to come neere the Tower, because she desired to speake with him. Which courtesie he did not deny her, and she lying groveling upon her brest on the Tarras, to hide her body that no part thereof might be seen, but her head; weeping, she spake thus to him.

Reniero, upon my credit, if I gave thee an ill nights rest, thou hast well revenged that wrong on me; for, although
wee are now in the moneth of July, I have beene plagued with extremity of colde (in regard of my nakednesse) even almost frozen to death: beside my continuall teares and lamenting, that folly perswaded me to beleve thy protestations, wherein I account it well-neere miraculous, that mine eyes should be capable of any sight. And therefore I pray thee, not in respect of any love which thou canst pretend to beare me; but for regard of thine owne selfe, being a Gentleman and a Scholler, that this punishment which thou hast already inflicted upon me, may suffice for my former injuries towards thee, and to hold thy selfe revenged fully, as also permit my garments to be brought me, that I may descend from hence, without taking that from me, which afterward (although thou wouldst) thou canst never restore me, I meane mine honour. And consider with thy selfe, that albeit thou didst not injoy my company that un-happy night, yet thou hast power to command me at any time whencesover, with making many diversities of amends, for one nights offence only committed. Content thy selfe then good Reniero, and as thou art an honest gentleman, say thou art sufficiently revenged on me, in making me dearely confesse mine owne errour. Never exercise thy malice upon a poore weake woman, for the Eagle disdaineth to pray on the yeelding Dove: and therefore in meere pitty, and for manhoods sake, be my release from open shame and reproch.

The Scholler, whose envious spleene was swolne very great, in remembring such a malicious cruelty exercised on him, beholding her to weepe and make such lamentations; found a fierce conflict in his thoughts, betweene content and pitty. It did not a little joy and content him, that the revenge which he so earnestly desired to compasse, was now by him so effectually inflicted. And yet (in meere humanity) pitty provoked him, to comisserate the Ladies distressed condition: but clemency being over-weake to withstand his rigor, thus he replied. Madam Helena, if mine entreaties (which, to speake truly, I never knew how to steepe in tears, nor wrap up my words in sugar Candie, so cunningly as you women know how to do) could have prevailed, that
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miserable night, when I was well-neere frozen to death with cold, and miserly buried with snow in your Court, not having anie place of rescue or shelter; your complaints would now the more easily over-rule me. But if your honor in estimation, bee now more precious to you then heretofore, and it seemeth so offensive to stand there naked: convert your persuasions and prayers to him, in whose armes you were that night imbraced, both of your triumphing in my misery, when poor I, trotted about your Court, with the teeth quivering in my head, and beating mine armes about my body, finding no compassion in him, or you. Let him bring thee thy Garments, let him come helpe thee down with the Ladder, and let him have the care of thine honour, on whom thou hast bene so prodigall heretofore in bestow-ing it, and now hast unwomanly throwne thy selfe in perill, onely for the maintenance of thine immodest desires.

Why dost thou not call on him to come helpe thee? To whom doeth it more belong, then to him? For thou art his, and he thine. Why then shold any other but he help thee in this distresse? Call him (foole as thou art) and try, if the love he beareth thee, and thy best understanding joyned with his, can deliver thee out of my sottish detaining thee. I have not forgot, that when you both made a pastime of my misery, thou didst demand of him, which seemed greatest in his opinion, either my sottish simplicity, or the love thou barest him. I am not now so liberall or courteous, to desire that of thee, which thou wouldst not grant, if I did request it: No, no, reserve those night favours for thy amorous friend, if thou dost escape hence alive to see him againe. As for my selfe, I leave thee freely to his use and service: because I have sufficiently payde for a womans falshood, and wisemen take such warn-ing, that they scorne to bee twice deceived, and by one woman. Proceed on stil in thy flattering persuasions, term-ing me to be a Gentleman and a Scholler, thereby to win such favor from me, that I should think thy villany toward me, to be already sufficiently punished. No, treacherous Helena, thy blandishments cannot now hoodwink the eies of my understanding, as when thou didst out-reach me with 4:1
thy disloyall promises and protestations. And let me now
tell thee plainely, that all the while I continued in the
Universitie of Paris, I never attained unto so perfect an
understanding of my selfe, as in that one miserable night
thou diddest enstruct mee. But admit, that I were enclined
unto a mercifull and compassionate minde, yet thou art
none of them, on whome milde and gracious mercy should
any way declare her effects. For, the end of pennaunce
among savage beasts, such as thou art, and likewise of due
vengeance, ought to be death: whereas among men, it
should suffice according to thine owne saying. Wherefore,
in regard that I am neither an Eagle, nor thou a Dove,
but rather a most venomous Serpent: I purpose with my
utmost hatred, and as an ancient enemy to all such as thou
art, to make my revenge famous on thee.

I am not ignorant, that whatsoever I have already done
unto thee, cannot properly be termed revenge, but rather
chastisement; because revenge ought alwayes to exceede
the offence, which (as yet) I am farre enough from. For,
if I did intend to revenge my wrongs, and remembred thy
monstrous cruelty to me: thy life, if I tooke it from thee,
and an hundred more such as thy selfe, were farre insufficient,
because in killing thee, I should kill but a vile inhumane
beast, yea, one that deserved not the name of a Woman.
And, to speake truely, Art thou any more, or better (setting
aside thy borrowed haire, and painted beauty, which in
few yeares will leave thee wrinkled and deformed) then the
basest beggarly Chamber-stuffe that can bee? Yet thou
soughtest the death of a Gentleman and Scholler as (in
scorne) not long since, thou didst terme me: whose life
may hereafter be more beneficiall unto the world, then
millions of such as thou art, to live in the like multiplicity
of ages. Therefore, if this anguish be sensible to thee,
learne what it is to mocke men of apprehension, and
(amongst them especially) such as are Schollers: to prevent
thy falling hereafter into the like extremity, if it be thy
good lucke to escape out of this.

It appeareth to me, that thou art verie desirous to come
downe hither on the ground; the best counsell that I can
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give thee, is to leape downe headlong, that by breaking thy necke (if thy fortune be so faire) thy life and lothsome qualities ending together, I may sit and smile at thy deserved destruction. I have no other comfort to give thee, but only to boast my happinesse, in teaching thee the way to ascend that Tower, and in thy descending downe (even by what means thy wit can best devise) make a mockery of me, and say thou hast learned more, then all my Schollership could instruct thee.

All the while as Reniero uttered these speeches, the miserable Lady sighed and wept very grievously, the time running on, and the Sunne ascending higher and higher; but when she heard him silent, thus she answered. Unkinde and cruell man, if that wretched night was so greevous to thee, and mine offence appeared so great, as neither my youth, beautie, teares, and humble intercessions, are able to derive any mercy from thee; yet let the last consideration moove thee to some remorse: namely, that I reposed new confidence in thee (when I had little or no reason at all to trust thee) and discovered the integritie of my soule unto thee, whereby thou didst compasse the meanes, to punish me thus deservedly for my sinne. For, if I had not reposed confidence in thee, thou couldst not (in this maner) have wrought revenge on me, which although thou didst earnestly covet, yet my rash credulitie was thy onely helpe. Asswage then thine anger, and graciously pardon me, wherein if thou wilt be so mercifull to me, and free me from this fatall Tower: I do heere faithfully promise thee, to forsake my most false and disloyall friend, electing thee as my Lord and constant Love for ever.

Moreover, although thou condemnest my beauty greatly, esteeming it as a trifle, momentary, and of slender continuance; yet, such as it is (being comparable with any other womans whatsoever) I am not so ignorant, that were there no other reason to induce liking thereof: yet men in the vigour of their youth (as I am sure you think your selfe not aged) do hold it for an especiall delight, ordained by nature for them to admire and honour. And notwithstanding all thy cruelty extended to mee, yet I cannot be

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perswaded, that thou art so flinty or Iron-hearted, as to desire my miserable death, by casting my selfe headlong downe (like a desperate madde woman) before thy face, so to destroy that beuty, which (if thy Letters lyed not) was once so highly pleasing in thine eyes. Take pitty then on mee for charities sake, because the Sunne beginneth to heate extremely: and as over-much colde (that unhappy night) was mine offence, so let not over-violent warmth be now my utter ruine and death.

The Scholler, who (onely to delight himselfe) maintained this long discoursing with her, returned her this answere. Madame, you did not repose such confidence in me, for any good will or affection in you towards me, but in hope of recovering him whom you had lost; wherein you merit not a jot of favour, but rather the more sharpe and severe infliction. And whereas you inferre, that your over-rash credulity, gave the onely meanes to my revenge: Alas! therein you deceive your selfe; for I have a thousand crochets working continually in my brain, wherby to entrap a wiser creature then a woman, yet veiled all under the cunning cloake of love, but sauced with the bitter Wormewood of hate. So that, had not this hapned as now it doth, of necessity you must have falne into another: but, as it hath pleased my happy stars to favour mee therein, none could proove more to your eternall scandal and disgrace, then this of your owne devising; which I made choise of, not in regard of any ease to you, but onely to content my selfe.

But if all other devises els had failed, my pen was and is my prevayling Champion, where-with I would have written such and so many strange matters, concerning you in your very dearest reputation; that you should have curst the houre of your conception, and wisht your birth had bin abortive. The powers of the pen are too many and mighty, wherof such weake wits as have made no experience, are the lesse able to use any relation. I sweare to you Lady, by my best hopes, that this revenge which (perhappes) you esteeme great and dishonourable, is no way comparable to the wounding Lines of a Penne, which can carracter downe
so infinite infamies (yet none but guilty and true taxations) as will make your owne hands immediate instruments, to teare the eyes from forth your head, and so bequeath your after dayes unto perpetuall darkenesse.

Now, concerning your lost lover, for whose sake you suffer this unexpected penance; although your choice hath proved but bad, yet still continue your affection to him: in regard that I have another Ladie and Mistresse, of higher and greater desert then you, and to whome I will continue for ever constant. And whereas you thinke, the warme beames of the Sunne, will be too hot and scorching for your nice bodie to endure: remember the extreame cold which you caused mee to feele, and if you can intermixe some part of that cold with the present heat, I dare assure you, the Sun (in his highest heate) will be far more temperate for your feeling.

The disconsolate Lady perceiving, that the Schollers wordes savoured of no mercy, but rather as coveting her desperate ending; with the teares streaming downe her cheeckes, thus she replied. Wel Sir, seeing there is no matter of worth in me, whereby to derive any compassion from you: yet for that Ladys sake, whom you have elected worthy to enjoy your love, and so farre excelleth mee in Wisedome; vouchsafe to pardon mee, and suffer my garments to be brought me, wherewith to cover my nakednesse, and so to descend downe from this Tower, if it may stand with your gentle Nature to admit it.

Now beganne Reniero to laughe very heartily, and perceiving how swiftly the day ran on in his course, he saide unto her. Beleeve me Madame Helena, you have so conjured me by mine endeered Ladie and Mistresse, that I am no longer able to deny you; wherefore, tell me where your garments are, and I will bring them to you, that you may come downe from the Turret. She beleeving his promise, tolde him where she had hid them, and Reniero departing from the Tower, commanded his servant, not to stirre thence: but to abide still so neere it, as none might get entrance there till his returning. Which charge was no sooner given to his man, but hee went to the house of a
neere neighboring friend, where he dined well, and afterward laid him downe to sleepe.

In the meane while, Madame Helena remaining still on the Tower, began to comfort her selue with a little vaine hope, yet sighing and weeping incessantly, seeting her selue so well as shee could, where any small shelter might yeelde the least shade, in expectation of the Schollers returning: one while weeping, then againe hoping, but most of all despairing, by his so long tarrying away with her Garments; so that beeing over-wearied with anguish and long watch-ing, she fell into a little slumbering. But the Sunne was so extremly hot, the houre of noone being already past, that it meerly parched her delicate body, and burnt her bare head so violently: as not onely it seared all the flesh it touched; but also cleft and chinkt it strangely, beside blisters and other painfull scorchings in the flesh which hindred her sleeping, to help her selfe (by all possible means) waking. And the Turret being covered with Lead, gave the greater addition to her torment; for, as she removed from one place to another, it yeelded no mitigation to the burning heate, but parched and wrinkled the flesh extraordinarily, even as when a piece of parchment is throwne into the fire, and recovered out againe, can never be extended to his former forme.

Moreover, she was so grievously payned with the head-ake, as it seemed to split in a thousand pieces, whereat there needed no great marvaile, the Lead of the Turret being so exceedingely hot, that it affoorded not the least defence against it, or any repose to qualifie the torment: but drove her still from one place to another, in hope of ease, but none was there to be found.

Nor was there any winde at all stirring, whereby to asswage the Sunnes violent scalding, or keepe away huge swarmes of Waspes, Hornets, and terrible byting Flyes, which vexed her extremely, feeding on those parts of her body, that were rifte and chinkt, like crannies in a mortered wall, and pained her like so many points of pricking Needles, labouring still with her hands to beate them away, but yet they fastned on one place or other, and afflicted her
in grievous manner, causing her to curse her owne life, hir amorous friend, but (most of all) the Scholler, that promised to bring her Garments, and as yet returned not. Now began she to gaze upon every side about her, to espy some labouring Husbandmen in the fields, to whom she might call or cry out for helpe, not fearing to discover her desperate condition: but Fortune therein also was adverse to her, because the heats extreamity, had driven all the village out of the fields, causing them to feede their Cattle about theyr owne houses, or in remote and shadie Valleyes: so that shee could see no other creatures to comfort her, but Swannes swimming in the River of Arno, and wishing her selfe there a thousand times with them, for to coole the extreamity of her thirst, which so much the more encreased, onely by the sight thereof, and utterly disabled of having any.

She saw beside in many places about her, goodly Woods, fayre coole shades, and Country houses here and there dispersed; which added the greater violence to hir affliction, that her desires (in all these) could no way be accomplished. What shall I say more concerning this disastrous Lady? The parching beames of the Sunne above her, the scalding heat of the Lead beneath her, the Hornets and Flyes everie way stinging her, had made such an alteration of her beautifull bodie: that, as it checkt and controlled the precedent nights darkenesse, it was now so metamorphosed with rednesse, yea, and blood issuing forth in infinite places, as she seemed (almost) loathsome to looke on, continuing still in this agonie of torment, quite voyde of all hope, and rather expecting death, then any other comfort.

Reniero, when some three houres of the afternoone were overpast, awaked from sleeping: and rememboring Madame Helena, he went to see in what estate she was; as also to send his servant unto dinner, because he had fasted all that day. She perceyving his arrivall, being altogether weake, faint, and wonderously over-wearied, she crept on her knees to a corner of the Turret, and calling to him, spake in this manner. Reniero, thy revenge exceedeth al manhoode and respect: For, if thou wast almost frozen in my Court, thou
hast roasted me all day long on this Tower, yea, meerly broyled my poore naked bodie, beside starving mee thorough want of Food and drinke. Be now then so mercifull (for manhoods sake) as to come uppe hither, and inflict that on me, which mine owne hands are not strong enough to do, I meane the ending of my loathed and wearisome life, for I desire it beyond all comfort else, and I shall honour thee in the performance of it. If thou deny me this gracious favour; at least send me uppe a glasse of Water, onely to moisten my mouth, which my teares (being all meerly dried up) are not able to doe, so extreame is the violence of the Sunnes burning heate.

Well perceived the Scholler, by the weaknesse of her voyce, and scorching of her body by the Suns parching beames, that shee was brought now to great extremity: which sight, as also her humble intercession, began to touch him with some compassion, nevertheles, thus he replied. Wicked woman, my hands shal be no means of thy death, but make use of thine owne, if thou be so desirous to have it: and as much water shalt thou get of me to asswage thy thirst, as thou gavest me fire to comfort my freezing, when thou wast in the luxurious heat of thy immodest desires, and I wel-neere frozen to death with extremity of cold. Pray that the Evening may raine downe Rose-water on thee, because that in the River of Arno is not good enough for thee: for as little pitty doe I take on thee now, as thou didst extend compassion to me then.

Miserable Woman that I am, answered Helena; Why did the heavens bestow beautie on mee, which others have admired and honoured, and yet (by thee) is utterly despised? More cruell art thou then any savage Beast; thus to vexe and torment mee in such mercilesse manner. What greater extreamity couldst thou inflict on me, if I had bin the destruction of all thy Kindred, and lefte no one man living of thy race? I am verily perswaded, that more cruelty cannot be used against a Traitor, who was the subversion of an whole Cittie, then this tyranny of thine, roasting me thus in the beames of the Sun, and suffering my body to be devoured with Flies, without so small a mercie, as to give
mee a little coole water, which murtherers are permitted to have, being condemned by Justice, and led to execution: yea Wine also, if they request it.

But, seeing thou art so constant in thy pernicious resolve, as neither thine owne good Nature, nor this lamentable sufferance in me, are able to alter thee: I will prepare my self for death patiently, to the end, that Heaven may be mercifull to my soul, and reward thee justly, according to thy cruelty. Which words being ended, she withdrew her selfe towards the middest of the Tarras, despairing of escaping (with life) from the heates violence; and not once onely, but infinite times beside (among her other grievous extreamities) she was ready to dye with drought, bemoaning incessantly her dolorous condition.

By this time the day was well neere spent, and night beganne to hasten on apace: when the Scholler (immagining that he afflicted her sufficiently) tooke her Garments, and wrapping them up in his mans Cloake, went thence to the Ladies house, where he found Ancilla the Waiting-woman sitting at the doore, sad and disconsolate for her Ladies long absence, to whom thus he spake. How now Ancilla? Where is thy Lady and Mistris? Alas Sir (quoth she) I know not. I thought this morning to have found her in her bed, as usually I was wont to do, and where I left her yesternight at our parting: but there she was not, nor in any place else of my knowledge, neyther can I imagine what is become of her, which is to me no meane discomfort.

But can you (Sir) say any thing of her? Ancilla, said he, I would thou hadst bin in her company, and at the same place where now she is, that some punishment for thy fault might have falne uppon thee, as already it hath done on her. But beleive it assuredly, that thou shalt not freely escape from my fingers, till I have justly paide thee for thy paines, to teach thee to abuse any Gentleman, as thou didst me.

Having thus spoken, hee called to his servant, saying. Give her the Garments, and bid her go looke her Lady, if she will. The Servingman fulfilled his Masters command, and Ancilla having receyved her Ladies cloaths, knowing
them perfectly, and remembring (withall) what had bin said: she waxed very doubtfull, least they had slaine her, hardly refraining from exclaiming on them, but that greefe and heavie weeping overcame her; so that upon the Schollers departing, she ranne in all hast with the garments towards the Tower.

Upon this fatall and unfortunate day to Madame Helena, it chanced, that a Clowne or Countrey Peazant belonging to her Farne or Dairy house, having two of his young Heyfers wandred astray, and he labouring in diligent search to finde them: within a while after the Schollers departure, came to seeke them in Woods about the Tower, and, notwithstanding all his crying and calling for his beasts, yet he heard the Ladies greevous moanes and lamentations. Wherefore, he cryed out so lowd as he could, saying: Who is it that mourneth so aloft on the Tower? Full well she knew the voyce of her peazant, and therefore called unto him, and sayd in this maner.

Go (quoth she) I pray thee for my Waiting-woman Ancilla, and bid her make some meanes to come up hither to me. The Clowne knowing his Lady, sayde. How now Madame? Who hath carried you up there so high? Your Woman Ancilla hath sought for you all this day, yet no one could ever have immagined you to bee there. So looking about him, he espyed the two sides of the Ladder, which the Scholler had pulled in sunder; as also the steppes, which he had scattered thereabout; placing them in due order againe as they should bee, and binding them fast with Withies and Willowes.

By this time Ancilla was come thither, who so soone as shee was entred into the Tower, could not refrain from teares and complaints, beating her hands each against other, and crying out. Madam, Madam, my deare Lady and Mistresse! Alas, Where are you? So soone as she heard the tongue of Ancilla, she replyed (so well as she could) saying: Ah my sweet Woman, I am heere aloft uppon the Tarras; weepe not, neyther make any noyse, but quickly bring me some of my Garments. When shee heard her answer in such comfortable maner, she mounted up the
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Ladder, which the peazant had made very firme and strong, holding it fast for her safer ascending; by which means she went up on the Tarras. Beholding her Ladie in so strange a condition, resembling no humane body, but rather the trunke of a Tree halfe burned, lying flat on her face, naked, scorched and strangely deformed: shee beganne to teare the lockes of her owne hayre, raving and raging in as pittifull manner, as if her Ladie had beene quite dead. Which storming tempest, Madame Helena soone pacified, entreating her to use silence, and helpe to put on her garments.

Having understood by her, that no one knew of her being there, but such as brought her cloathes, and the poore peazant, attending there still to do her any service: shee became the better comforted, entreating them by all meanes, that it might bee concealed from any further discovery, which was on eyther side, most faithfullie protested.

The poore Clowne holpe to beare downe his Lady uppon his backe, because the Ladder stood not conveniently enough for her descending, neither were her limbes plyable for her owne use, by reason of their rifts and smarting. Ancilla following after, and being more respective of her Lady, then her owne security in descending, missing the step in the midst of the Ladder, fell downe to the ground, and quite brake her legge in the fall, the paine whereof was so greevous to her, that she cried and roared extraordinarily, even like a Lyon in the desert.

When the Clowne had set his Lady safe on a faire green banke, he returned to see what the waiting woman ayled, and finding her leg to be quite broken: he caried her also to the same banke, and there seated her by her Lady: who perceiving what a mischance had hapned, and she (from whom she expected her onely best helpe) to bee now in far greater necessity her selfe: she lamented exceedingely, complaining on Fortunes cruel malice toward her, in thus heaping one misery upon another, and never ceasing to torment her, especially now in the conclusion of all, and when shee thought all future perils to be past.

Now was the Sun upon his setting, when the poore
honest country-man, because darke night should not overtake them, conducted the Lady home to his owne house: and gaining the assistance of his two brethren and wife, setting the waiting-woman in a Chaire, thither they brought her in like manner. And questionles, there wanted no diligence and comfortable language, to pacifie the Ladyes continuall lamentations. The good wife, led the Lady into hir own poore lodging, where (such cates as they had to feede on) lovingly she set before her: conveying her afterward into her owne bed, and taking such good order, that Ancilla was carried in the night time to Florence, to prevent all further ensuing danger, by reason of her legs breaking.

Madame Helena, to colour this misfortune of her owne: as also the great mishap of her woman: forged an artificiall and cunning tale, to give some formall apperance of hir being in the Tower, perswading the poore simple Country people, that in a straunge accident of thunder and lightning, and by the illusions of wicked spirits, all this adventure hapned to her. Then Physitians were sent for; who, not without much anguish and affliction to the Ladie (by reason of her fleshes flaying off, with the Medicines and Emplaysters applyed to the body) was glad to suffer whatsoever they did, beside falling into a very dangerous Feaver; out of which she was not recovered in a long while after, but continued in daily dispayre of her life; beside other accidents hapning in her time of Physicke, utterly unavoydable in such extreamities: and hardly had Ancilla her legge cured.

By this unexpected penance imposed on Madame Helena, she utterly forgot her amorous friend; and (from thence forward) carefully kept her selfe from fond loves allurements, and such scornfull behaviour, wherein she was most disorderly faulty. And Reniero the Scholler, understanding that Ancilla had broken her leg, which he reputed as a punishment sufficient for her, held himselfe satisfied, because neither the Mistresse nor her Maide, could now make any great boast, of his nights hard entertainment, and so concealed all matters else.
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Thus a wanton-headed Lady, could finde no other subject to worke her mocking folly on, but a learned Scholler, of whom shee made no more respect, then any other ordinary man. Never remembring, that such men are expert (I cannot say all, but the greater part of them) to helpe the frenzie of foolish Ladies, that must injoy their loose desires, by Negromancy, and the Divelles meanes. Let it therefore (faire Ladies) be my loving admonition to you, to detest all unwomanly mocking and scorning, but more especiallie to Schollers.

Two neere dwelling Neighbours, the one beeing named Spineloccio Tavena, and the other Zeppa di Mino, frequenting each others company daily together; SpinelloCCio Cuckolded his Friend and Neighbour. Which happening to the knowledge of Zeppa, he prevailed so well with the Wife of SpinelloCCio, that he being lockt up in a Chest, he revenged his wrong at that instant, so that neyther of them complained of his misfortune.

THE EIGHT NOVELL

Wherein is approved, that he which offereth shame and disgrace to his Neighbour; may receive the like injury (if not in worse manner) by the same man.

GREEVOUS, and full of compassion, appeared the hard Fortunes of Madame Helena to be, having much discontented, and (well-neere) wearied all the Ladies in hearing them recounted. But because they were very justly inflicted upon her, and according as (in
equity) shee had deserved, they were the more moderate in their commiseration: howbeit, they reputed the Scholler not onely over-obstinate, but also too strict, rigorous and severe. Wherefore, when Madame Pampinea had finished hir Novell, the Queene gave command to Madame Fiammetta, that she should follow next with her discourse; whereto shee shewing obedience, thus beganne.

Because it appeareth in my judgement (faire Ladyes) that the Schollers cruelty hath much displeased you, making you more melancholly then this time requireth: I holde it therefore very convenient, that your contristed spirits should be cheerfully revived, with matter more pleasing and delightfull. And therefore, I mean to report a Novell of a certaine man, who tooke an injury done him, in much milder manner, and revenged his wrong more moderately, then the furious incensed Scholler did. Whereby you may comprehend, that it is sufficient for any man, and so he ought to esteeme it, to serve another with the same sawce, which the offending party caused him first to taste of: without coveting any stricter revenge, then agreeeth with the quality of the injury received.

Know then (Gracious assembly) that, as I have heretofore heard, there lived not long since in Sienna, two young men, of honest parentage and equall condition, neither of the best, nor yet the meanest calling in the City: the one being named Spinelloccio Tavena, and the other teamed Zeppa di Mino, their houses Neighbouring together in the streeete Camollia. Seldome the one walked abroade without the others Company, and their houses allowed equall welcome to them both; so that by outward demonstrations, and inward mutuall affection, as far as humane capacity had power to extend, they lived and loved like two Brethren, they both beeing wealthy, and married unto two beautifull women.

It came to passe, that Spinelloccio, by often resorting to the house of Zeppa, as well in his absence, as when he abode at home; beganne to glance amorous looks on Zeppaes wife, and pursued his unneighbourly purpose in
such sort: that hee being the stronger perswader, and she (belike) too credulous in beleeving, or else over-feeble in resisting; from private imparlance, they fell to action; and continued their close fight a long while together, unseene and without suspition, no doubt to their equall joy and contentment.

But, whether as a just punishment, for breaking so loving a league of friendship and neighbour-hood, or rather a fatall infliction, evermore attending on the closest Cuckoldry, their felicity still continuing in this kinde: it fortuned on a day, Zeppa abiding within doors, contrary to the knowledge of his wife, Spinelloccio came to enquire for him, and she answering (as she verily supposed) that he was gon abroad: uppe they went both together into the Hall, and no bodie being there to hinder what they intended, they fell to their wonted recreation without any feare, kissing and embracing as Lovers use to do.

Zeppa seeing all this, spake not one word, neither made any noise at all; but kept himselfe closely hidden, to observe the yssue of this amorous conflict. To be briefe, he saw Spinelloccio goe with his wife into the Chamber, and make the doore fast after them, wherat he could have beene angry, which he held to be no part of true wisedome. For he knew well enough, that to make an out crie in this case, or otherwise to reveale this kinde of injury, it could no way make it lesse, but rather give a greater addition of shame and scandal: he thought this no course for him to take; wiser considerations entred his braine, to have this wrong fully revenged, yet with such a discreet and orderly carriage, as no neighbours knowledge should by any meanes apprehend it, or the least signe of discontent in himselfe blabbe it, because they were two dangerous evils.

Many notable courses wheeled about his conceit, every one promising fairely, and ministring meanes of formall apperance, yet one (above the rest) wonne his absolute allowance, which he intended to prosecute as best he might. In which resolution, he kept still very close, so long as Spinelloccio was with his Wife; but hee being gone, he went into the Chamber, where he found his wife, amending
the forme of her head attyre, which Spinelloccio had put into a disordred fashion. Wife (quoth he) what art thou doing? Why? Do you not see Husband? answered she. Yes that I do wife, replied Zeppa, and something else happened to my sight, which I could wish that I had not scene. Rougher Language growing betweene them, of his avouching, and her as stout denying, with defending her cause over-weakely, against the manifest proofes both of eye and eare: at last she fell on her knees before him, weeping incessantly, and no excuses now availing, she confess her long acquaintance with Spinelloccio, and most humbly entreated him to forgive her. Uppon the which penitent confession and submission, Zeppa thus answered.

Wife, if inward contrition be answerable to thy outward seeming sorrow, then I make no doubt, but faithfully thou dost acknowledge thine owne evill dooing: for which, if thou expectest pardon of me; determine then to fulfill effectually, such a busines as I must enjoune, and thou performe. I command thee to tell Spinelloccio, that to morrow morning, about nine of the clocke, we being both abroad walking, he must finde some apt occasion to leave my company, and then come hither to visit thee. When he is here, sodainly will I returne home, and upon thy hearing of my entraunce: to save his owne credite, and thee from detection, thou shalt require him to enter this Chest, untill such time as I am gone forth againe; which he doing, for both your safeties, so soon as he is in the chest, take the key and locke him up fast. When thou hast effected this, then shall I acquaint thee with the rest remaining, which also must be done by thee, without dread of the least harme to him or thee, because there is no malicious meaning in me, but such as (I am perswaded) thou canst not justly mislike. The wife, to make some satisfaction for her offence committed, promised that she would performe it, and so she did.

On the morrow morning, the houre of nine being come, when Zeppa and Spinelloccio were walking abroad together, Spinelloccio remembering his promise unto his Mistresse,
and the clocke telling him the appointed houre, hee saide to Zeppa. I am to dine this day with an especiall friend of mine, who I would be loath should tarry for my comming; and therefore holde my departure excused. How now? answered Zeppa, the time for dinner is yet farre enough off, wherefore then should we part so soone? Yea but Zeppa, replied Spinelloccio, wee have weighty matters to confer on before dinner, which will require three houres space at the least, and therefore it behoveth me to respect due time.

Spinelloccio being departed from Zeppa (who followed faire and softly after him) being come to the house, and kindly welcommed by the wife: they were no sooner gone up the staires, and entering in at the Chamber doore; but the Woman heard her Husband cough, and also his comming up the staires. Alas deare Spinelloccio (quoth she) what shall we do? My Husband is comming uppe, and we shall be both taken tardie, step into this Chest, lye downe there and stirre not, till I have sent him forth againe, which shall be within a very short while. Spinelloccio was not a little joyfull for her good advice; downe in the Chest lay he, and she lockt him in: by which time Zeppa was entred the Chamber. Where are you Wife? said he, (speaking so loud, as hee in the Chest might heare him) What, is it time to go to dinner? It will be anon Sir, answered she, as yet it is overearly; but seeing you are come, the more hast shall be made, and every thing will be ready quickly.

Zeppa, sitting downe upon the Chest, wherein Spinelloccio lay not a little affrighted, speaking stil aloud, as formerly he did: Come hither Wife (quoth he) how shall we do for some good companie to dine with us? Mine honest kinde neighbour Spinelloccio is not at home, because he dineth forth to day with a deare friend of his, by which meanes, his wife is left at home alone: give her a call out at our Window, and desire her to come dine with us: for we two can make no merry Musicke, except some more come to make up the consort.

His Wife being very timorous, yet diligent to doe
whatsoever he commanded, so prevailed with the Wife of Spinelloccio: that she came to them quickly, and so much the rather, because her Husband dined abroad. She being come up into the Chamber, Zeppa gave her most kinde entertainment, taking her gently by the hand, and winking on his Wife, that she should betake herself to the kitchen, to see dinner speedily prepared, while he sat conversing with his neighbour in the Chamber.

His wife being gone, he shut the doore after her; which the new-come Neighbour perceiving, she sayde. Our blessed Lady defend me. Zeppa, What is your meaning in this? Have you caused me to come hither to this intent? Is this the love you beare to Spinelloccio, and your professed loyalty in friendship? Zeppa, seating her downe on the Chest, wherein her Husband was inclosed, entreating her patience, thus began. Kinde and loving Neighbor, before you adventure too farre in anger, vouchsafe to heare what I shall tell you.

I have loved, and still doe love, Spinelloccio as my brother, but yesterday (albeit he knoweth it not) I found, the honest trust I reposed in him, deserved no other, or better recompence, but even to be bold with my wife, in the selfesame manner as I am, and as hee ought to do with none but you. Now, in regard of the love which I beare him, I intend to be no otherwise revenged on him, but in the same kinde as the offence was committed. He hath bin more then familiar with my wife. I must borrow the selfe-same courtesie of you, which in equity you cannot deny mee, weighing the wrong you have sustained by my wife. Our injuries are alike, in your Husband to me, and in my wife to you: let then their punishment and ours be alike also; as they, so we; for in this case there can be no juster revenge.

The Woman hearing this, and perceiving the manifolde confirmations thereof, protested (on solemne oath) by Zeppa; hir belief grew settled, and thus she answered. My loving neighbor Zeppa, seeing this kinde of revenge is (in meere justice) imposed on mee, and ordained as a due scourge, as well to the breach of friendship and neighbour-
hood, as abuse of his true and loyall wife: I am the more willing to consent: alwaies provided, that it be no imbarrement of love betweene your wife and mee, albeit I haue good reason to allege, that she began the quarrell first: and what I do is but to right my wrong, as any other woman of spirit would do: Afterwards, we may the more easily pardon one another. For breach of peace (answered Zeppa) between my wife and you, take my honest word for your warrant. Moreover, in requitall of this favour to mee, I will bestowe a deare and precious Jewell on you, excelling all the rest which you have beside.

In delivering these words, he sweetly kissed and embraced her, as she did on the Chest wherein her husband lay: now, what they did else beside, in recompence of the wrong received, I leave to your imagination, as rather deserving silence, then immodest blabbing. Spinelloccio, being all this while in the Chest, hearing easily all the words which Zeppa had uttered, the answer of his wife, as also what Musicke they made over his head: you may guesse in what a case he was, his heart being ready to split with rage, and, but that hee stood in feare of Zeppa, he would have railde and exclaimed on his wife, as thus hee lay shut up in the Chest. But entering into better consideration, that so great an injury was first begun by himselfe, and Zeppa did no more, then in reason and equity he might well do (having evermore carried himselfe like a kinde neighbour and frend towards him, without the least offer of distaste) he faithfully resolved, to be a firmer friend to Zeppa then formerly hee had bin, if it might be embraced and accepted on the other side.

Delights and pleasures, be they never so long in contenting and continuance, yet they come to a period and conclusion at last: So Zeppa, having ended his amorous combate, and over the head of his persidious friend, thought himselfe sufficiently revenged. But now, in consideration of a further promise made on the bargain; Spinelloccioes wife challengeth the Jewel, then which kind of recompence, nothing can be more welcom to women. Heereupon, Zeppa calling for his owne wife, commanded her to open
the Chest; which shee did, and he merrily smiling, saide.

Well wife, you have given mee a Cake insted of bread, and you shal lose nothing for your labour. So Spinelloccio comming forth of the Chest, it requireth a better witte then mine, to tell you, which of them stood most confounded with shame, either Spinelloccio seeing Zeppa, and knowing well enough what he had done: or the woman beholding her husband, who easily heard all their familiar conference, and the action thereupon so deservedly performed.

See neighbour, is not this your dearest Jewell? Having kept it awhile in my wives custody; according to my promise, here I deliver it you. Spinelloccio being glad of his deliverance out of the Chest, albeit not a little ashamed of himselfe; without using many impertinent words, saide. Zeppa, our wrongs are equally requited on each other, and therefore I allow thy former speeches to my Wife, that thou wast my friend, as I am the like to thee, and so I pray thee let us still continue. For nothing else is now to bee divided betweene us, seeing we have shared alike in our wives, which none knowing but our selves, let it be as closely kept to our selves. Zeppa was wel pleased with the motion, and so all foure dined lovingly together, without any variance or discontentment. And thence forward, each of the Women had two Husbands, as either Husband enjoyed two Wives, without further contention or debate.
THE EIGHT DAY

Maestro Simone, an ydle-headed Doctor of Physicke, was throwne by Bruno and Buffal-maco, into a common Leystall of Filth: The Physitian fondly beleeving, that (in the night time) he should bee made one of a new created Company, who usually went to see wonders at Corsica; and there in the Leystall they left him.

THE NINTH NOVELL

Wherein is approved, that Titles of Honour, Learning, and Dignity, are not alwayes bestowe on the wisest men.

AFTER that the Ladies had a while considered, on the communication betweene the two Wives of Sienna, and the falshood in friendship of their Husbands: the Queene, who was the last to recount her Novell, without offering injurie to Dioneus, began to speake thus.

The reward for a precedent wrong committed, which Zeppa retorted upon Spinelloccio, was answerable to his desert, and no more then equity required, in which respect, I am of opinion, that such men ought not to be over-sharply reproved, as do injurie to him, who seeketh for it, and justly should have it, although Madam Pampinea (not long since) avouched the contrary. Now, it evidently appeareth, that Spinelloccio well deserved what was done to him, and I purpose to speake of another, who needs would seeke after his owne disgrace. The rather to confirme my former speeches, that they which beguile such wilfull foolish men; are not to bee blamed, but rather commended. And he unto whom the shame was done, was a Physitian, which came from Bologna to Florence; and returned thither againe like unto a Beast, notoriously baffulled and disgraced.
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL IX

It is a matter well knowne to us, and (almost) observed day by day, that divers of our Citizens, when they returne from their studying at Bologna: one becommeth an Advocate, another a Physitian, and a third a Notarie, with long and large gowns, some of Scarlet, and hoods furred with Minever, beside divers other great apparances, succeeding effectually daily in their severall kinds. Among whom, there returned (not long since) thence, one Master Simon da Villa, more rich in possessions left him by his parents, then anie knowledge thereto obtained: yet cloathed in Scarlet, with his Miniver hood, and styled a Doctor of Physicke, which title hee onely bestowed on himselfe, and tooke a goodly house for his dwelling, in the street which wee commonly call La via del Cocomero. This Master Doctor Simon, being thus newly come thither, among other notable qualities in him, had one more especial then any of the rest, namely, to know the names and conditions of such persons, as daily passed by his doore, and what professions they were of, wherby any likelyhood might be gathered of needing his helpe, and being his patients, observing them all with very vigilant care.

But, among all the rest by him thus warily noted, he most observed two Painters, of whom we have heeretofore twice discoursed, Bruno and Buffalmaco, who walked continually together, and were his neere dwelling neighbors. The matter which most of al he noted in them, was; that they lived merrily, and with much lesse care, then any else in the Cittie beside, and verily they did so in deede. Wherefore, he demanded of divers persons, who had good understanding of them both, of what estate and condition they were. And hearing by every one, that they were but poore men and Painters: he greatly mervailed, how it could be possible for them, that they should live so joondly, and in such poverty. It was related to him further beside, that they were men of a quicke and ingenious apprehension, whereby hee politikely imagined, that theyr poore condition could not so well maintaine them; without some courses else, albeit not publiquely knowne unto men, yet redounding to their great commoditie and profite. In
THE EIGHT DAY

which regard, he grew exceeding desirous, by what means he might become acquainted, and grow into familiarity with them both, or any of them, at the least: wherein (at the length) he prevailed, and Bruno proved to be the man.

Now Bruno plainly perceiving (within a short while of this new begun acquaintance) that the Physitian was a Loggerhead, and merelie no better then a Gregorian Animall: he beganne to have much good pastime with him, by telling him strange and incredible Tales, such as none but a Coxcombe would give credit too; yet they delighted Doctor Dunce extraordinarily, and Brunoes familiarity was so highly pleasing to him, that he was a daily guest at dinner and supper with him, and hee was not meanly proud of enjoying his company. One day, as they sate in familiar conference together, he told Bruno that he wondred not a little at him and Buffalmaco, they being both so poore people, yet lived far more jovially then Lords, and therefore desired to understand, by what secret means they compassed such mirthful maintenance. Bruno, hearing the Doctors demand, and perceiving that it savoured more of the foole, then any the very least taste of wisedome: smiled unto himselfe, and determined to returne him such an answere, as might be fitting for his folly, whereupon, thus he replied.

Believe me Master Doctor, I would not impart to many people, what private helps we have for our maintenance: but yet I dare boldly acquaint you therewith, in regard you are one of our most intimate friends, and of such secrecie, as (I know) you will not reveale it to any. True it is, that mine honest neighbor and my selfe, do leade our lives in such merry manner as you see, and better then all the world is aware of, for I cannot imagine you to bee so ignorant, but are certainly persuaded: that if we had no better means, then our poore manuall trade and profession; we might sit at home with bread and water, and be nothing so lively spirited as wee are. Yet Sir, I would not have you to conceive, that wee do eyther rob or steale, or use any other unlawfull courses: onely we travayle to Corsica, from whence we bring (without the least prejudice to
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL IX

anie other) all things we stand in need of, or whatsoever wee can desire. Thus do we maintaine our selves well and honestly, and live in this mirthfull disposition.

Master Doctor hearing this Discourse, and beleeving it constantly, without any further instruction or intelligence: became possessed with verie much admiration, and had the most earnest desire in the world, to know what this Travail- ing to Corsica might meane: entreating Bruno with very great instances, to tell him what it was, and made many protestations never to disclose it to anie one. How now Master Doctor? answered Bruno, What a strange motion do you make to mee? It is too great a secret, which you desire to know, yea, a matter of mine owne ruine, and an utter expulsion out of this Worlde, with condemnation into the mouth of Lucifer da San Gallo, if any man whatsoever should know it from me, wherefore I pray you to urge it no more. O my deer and honest neighbour Bruno (quoth the Doctor) assure thy selfe upon my soul, that whatsoever thou revealest to me, shall be under seale from all, but onely our selves. Fie, fie Master Doctor, answered Bruno, you are too pressing and importunate. So sitting smiling to himselfe, shaking his head, and beating his breast, as if hee were in some straunge distraction of minde, stamping with his feete, and beating his Fiste oftentimes on the Table, at last he started uppe, and spake in this manner.

Ah Master Doctor, the love I beare to your capricious and rarely circumcised experience, and likewise the confidence I repose in your scrutinous taciturnitie, are both of such mighty and prevailing power; as I cannot conceale any thing from you, which you covet to know. And therefore, if you wil sweare unto me by the crosse of Monteson, that never (as you have already faithfully promised) you will disclose a secret so admirable; I will relate it unto you, and not otherwise. The Doctor sware, and sware againe, and then Bruno thus began.

Know then my learned and judicious Doctor, that it is not long time since, when there lived in this Citie of ours, a man very excellent in the Art of Nigromancie, who named himselfe Michale Scoto, because he was a Scottish-
man borne, of many worthy Gentlemen (very few of them being now living) hee was much honoured and respected. When he grew desirous to depart from hence, upon their earnest motion and entreaty; he left here two of his Schollers behinde him, men of absolute skill and experience: giving them especial charge and command, to do all possible services they could devise, for those Gentlemen who had so highly honoured him. The two famous Schollers, were very helpefull to those Gentlemen, in divers of their amorous occasions, and verie many other matters besides.

Not long after, they finding the Citie, and behaviour of the people sufficiently pleasing to them; they resolved on their continuance heere, entering into a league of love and friendshipe with divers, never regarding, whether they were Gentlemen, or no, or distinguishing the poore from the rich: but only in being conforme to their complexions, sociable and fit for friendship.

They created a kinde Society, consisting of about five and twenty men, who should meete together twice in a moneth, and in a place reputed convenient for them: where being so assembled, every man uttered his minde to those two Schollers, in such cases as they most desired, to have wherewith they were all satisfied the self-same night. It came so to passe, that Buffalmaco and I, grew into acquaintance with those two worthy Schollers, and our private familiarity together proved so prosperous, that we were admitted into the same Society, and so have ever since continued. Now Sir, I am to tell you matter deserving admiration, and which (in very good judgements) would seeme to exceed all beleefe.

For, at every time when we were assembled together: you are not able to imagine, what sumptuous hangings of Tapistrie, did adorne the Hall where we sate at meate, the Tables covered in such Royall manner, waited on by numberless Noble and goodly attendants, both Women and Men, serving readily, at each mans command of the company. The Basins, Ewers, Pots, Flaggons, and all the vessels else which stood before, and for the service of our diet, being composed onely of Gold and Silver, and out of
no worse did we both eate and drinke: the viands being very rare and dainty, abounding in plenty and variety, according to the appetite of everie person, as nothing could be wished for, but it was instantly obtained.

In good sadnesse Sir, I am not able to remember and tell you (within the compasse of a thousand yeares) what, and how manie severall kindes of Musicall Instruments, were continually played on before us; what multiplicity of Waxe lights burned in all partes of the roomes; neither the excessive store of rich Drugs, Marchpans, Comfites, and rare Banquetting stuffe, consumed there at one Feasting, where-in there wanted no bounty of the best and purest wines. Nor do I (Master Doctor) repute you so weakly witted, as to think, that in the time of our being thus assembled there, any of us al were cloathed in such simple and meane Garments, as ordinarily are wore in the streets on mens bodies, or any so silly as the verie best you have: No Sir, not any one man among us, but appeared by his apparrell, equall to the greatest Emperour on the earth, his robe most sumptuously imbroidered with precious stones, Pearles, and Carbuncles, as all the world affoordeth not the like. But above all the rest, the delights and pleasures there, are beyond my capacity to expresse, or (indeede) any comparison: as namely, store of goodly and beautifull women, brought thither from all parts of the world; alwayes provided, if men bee desirous of their company: but for your easier comprehension, I will make some briefe relation of them to you, according as I heard them there named.

There is the great Lady of Barbanicchia; the Queene of Baschia; the Wife to the great Soldane, the Empresse of Osbeccho; the Ciancianfera of Norniera; the Semistante of Berlinzona; and the Scalpedra of Narsia. But why do I breake my braine, in numbering up so many to you? All the Queens of the world are there, even so farre as to the Schinchimurra of Prester John, that hath a horne in the midst of her posteriores, albeit not visible to every eye.

Now I am further to tell you, that after we have tasted a Cup of precious Wine, fed on a few delicate Comfits, and danced a dance or two to the rare Musicke: every one
taketh a Lady by the hand, of whom he pleaseth to make his election, and she conducteth him to her Chamber, in very grave and gracious manner. Concerning the Chambers there, each of them resembleth a Paradise to looke on, they are so faire and goodly; and no lesse odoriferous in smell, then the sweetest perfumes in your Apothecaries shoppes, or the rare compounds of Spices, when they are beaten in an open Morter. And as for the Beds, they are infinitely richer, then the verie costliest belonging to the Duke of Venice: yet (in such) each man is appointed to take his rest, the Musicke of rare Cymbals lasting all night long, much better to be by you considered, then in my rude eloquence expressed.

But of all those rich and sumptuous Beds (if pride of mine owne opinion do not deceive me) them two provided for Buffalmaico and me, had hardly any equall: he having the Queene of France as his Lady and Mistresse, and I, the renowned Queene of England, the onely two choise beauties of the whole World, and wee appeared so pleasing in their eyes, as they would have refused the greatest Monarkes on the earth, rather then to bee rejected by us. Now therefore, you may easily consider with your selfe, what great reason we have to live more merrily, then any other men can doe: in regard we enjoy the gracious favour of two such Royall Queenes, receyving also from them (whenever we please to command them) a thousand or two thousand Florines at the least, which are both truly and duly sent us. Enjoying thus the benefit of this high happinesse, we that are companions of this Society, do tearme it in our vulgar Language, The Pyrats voyage to Corsica. Because, as Rovers or Pyrats robbe and take away the goodes of such as they meete withall, even so do we: only there remaineth this difference betweene us, that they never restore what they have taken: which we do immediately afterward, whether it be required or no. And thus Master Doctor, as to my most endeereed friend, I have now revealed the meaning of sayling to Corsica, after the manner of our private Pyracie, and how important the close retention of the voyadge is, you are best able your selfe to judge: In which
regarde, remember your Oathes and faithfull promises, or else I am undone for ever.

Our worthy wise Doctor, whose best skill scarcely extended so farre, as to cure the itch in Children; gave such sound beleefe to the relation of Bruno, as any man could doe, to the most certaine truth of life or death: having his desire immeasurably enflamed, to bee made a member of this straunge Societie, which hee more coveted, then any thing in the world beside, accounting it a felicity farre beyond all other.

Whereupon he answered Bruno, that it was no great matter of mervaile, if he lived so merily as he did, having such a singular supply, to avoide all necessities whatsoever: and very hardly could he refraine from immediate request, to be accepted into the company. But yet he thought fit to deferre it further, untill he had made Bruno more beholding to him, by friendly entertainments and other courtesies, when he might (with better hope) be bold to move the motion.

Well may you conceive, that nothing more hammerd in the Doctors head, then this rare voyage to Corsica, and Bruno was his daily guest at dinner and supper, with such extraordinary apparances of kindnesse and courtesie, as if the Physitian could not live, except he had the company of Bruno. Who seeing himselfe to bee so lovingly respected, and hating ingratitude, for favours so abundantly heaped on him: hee painted the whole story of Lent about his Hall, and an Agnus Dei fairely gilt, on the portall of his Chamber, as also a goodly Urinall on his street doore, to the end, that such as had neede of his counsell, might know where so judicious a Doctour dwelt. In a Gallery likewise by his Garden, he painted the furious Battaile betweene the Rats and Cats, which did (not a little) delight Master Doctor.

Moreover, at such times as Bruno had not supt with our Physitian, he would bee sure to tell him on the morrow, that the night passed, he had bin with the Company which he did wot of. And there (quoth he) the Queene of Eng-
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land having somewhat offended mee, I commanded, that the Gomedra, belonging to the Grand Cham of Tartaria, should be brought me, and instantly shee was. What may be the meaning of Gomedrabe? said the Doctor, I understand not those difficult names. I beleev you Sir, answered Bruno, nor do I need to marvel thereat: and yet I have heard Porcograsso speake, and also Vannacenna, and both un-experienced in our Language. You would say (replied the Doctor) Hippocrates and Avicenna, who were two admirable Physitians. It may be so (said Bruno) and as hardly do I understand your names, as you mine: but Gomedra, in the Grand Chams language, signifies Empresse in ours. But had you once seene her Sir, she would make you forget all Physicall observations, your arguments, receits, and medicines, onely to be in her heavenly presence, which words he used (perceiving his forward longing) to enflame him the more. Not long after, as the doctor was holding the candle to Bruno, at the perfecting the bloody Battayle of the Cattes and Rattes, because he could never bee wearied in his Companie, and therefore was the more willing, to undergoe the office of the Candle-holder: he resolved to acquaint him with his minde, and being all alone by themselves, thus he began.

Bruno, as heaven knoweth, there is not this day any creature living, for whom I would gladly do more, then for thee, and the very least word of thy mouth, hath power to comamand mee to goe bare-footed, even from hence so farre as to Peretola, and account my labour well employed for thy sake: wherefore, never wonder at my continuall kindness towards thee, using thee as my Domestiche companion, and embracing thee as my bosome friend, and therefore I am the bolder in moving one request unto thee. As thou well knowest, it is no long while since, when thou diddest acquaint me with the behaviour of the Corsicane Roving Company, to be one in so rare and excellent a Society, such hath bin my earnest longing ever since, as day nor night have I enjoyed anie rest, but should thinke my felicity beyond all compare, if I could be entertained in fellowship among you.
Nor is this desire of mine but upon great occasion, as thou thy selfe shalt perceive, if I prove accepted into your Societie, and let me then be made a mocking stocke for ever, if I cause not to come thither, one of the most delicate young women, that ever anie eye beheld, and which I my selfe saw (not above a yeare since) at Cacavinciglia, on whom I bestowed my intirest affection, and (by the best Urinall that ever I gazed on) would have given her tenne faire Bologninaes, to yeeld the matter I moved to her, which yet I could not (by any meanes) compasse. Therefore, with all the flowing faculties of my soule I entreate thee, and all the very uttermost of my all indeede; to instruct me in those wayes and meanes, whereby I may hope to be a member of you. Which if thou doonest accomplish for me, and I may finde it effectually performed: I shall not onely be thy true and loyall friend for ever, but will honour thee beside, beyond all men living.

I know thee to bee a man of judgement, deeply informed in all well-grounded experience: thou seest what a propper, portly, and comely man I am, how fitly my legges are answerable to my body, my lookes amiable, lovely, and of Rosie colour: beside I am a Doctor of Physicke, of which profession (being only most expedient) I thinke you have not one in your Society. I have many commendable qualities in me, as, playing on divers instruments, exquisite in singing, and composing rare ditties, whereof I will instantly sing thee one. And so he began to sing.

Bruno was swolne so bigge with desire of laughter, that hee had scarceley any power to refraine from it: nevertheless, he made the best meanes he could devise: and the Song being ended, the Physition saide. How now Bruno? What is thine opinion of my singing? Beleeve me Sir, replyed Bruno, the Vialles of Sagginali, will loose their very best times, in contending against you, so miriiffi dally are the sweet accents of your voice heard. I tell thee truly Bruno (answered Master Doctor) thou couldst not by any possibility have beleived it, if thou hadst not heard it. In good sadnes Sir (said Bruno) you speake most truly. I could (quoth the Doctor) sing thee infinite more beside, but at
this time I must forbeare them. Let mee then further informe thee Bruno, that beside the compleat perfections thou seest in me, my father was a Gentleman, although he dwelt in a poore Country village, and by my mothers side, I am derived from them of Vallecchio. Moreover, as I have formerly shewn thee, I have a goodly Library of Bookes, yea, and so faire and costly garments, as few Physitians in Florence have the like. I protest to thee upon my faith, I have one gowne, which cost me (in readie money) almost an hundred poundes in Bagattinoes, and it is not yet above ten yeares old. Wherefore let me prevaille with thee, good Bruno, to worke so with the rest of thy friends, that I may bee one of your singular Society; and, by the honest trust thou reposest in mee, bee boldly sick whenever thou wilt, my paines and Physicke shall be freely thine, without the payment of one single peny. Bruno hearing his importunate words, and knowing him (as all men else did beside) to be a man of more words then wit, saide. Master Doctor, snuffe the candle I pray you, and lend me a little more light with it hitherward, until I have finished the tailes of these Rats, and then I wil answer you.

When the Rats tailes were fully finished, Bruno declaring by outward behaviour, that he greatly distasted the matter mooved, thus answered. Worthy Master Doctor, the courtesies you have already extended towards me, and the bountifull favours promised beside, I know to be exceeding great, and farre beyond the compass of any merit in me. But concerning your request, albeit in respect of your admired braine and Wisedome, it is of little or no moment at all; yet it appeareth over-mighty to mee, and there is not any man now living in the world, that hath the like Authoritie over me, and can more commaund me, then you (with one poore syllable) easily may doe: as well in regarde of my Love and Dutie, as also your singular and sententious speeches, able not onelie to make me breake a sound and setled resolution, but (almost) to move Mountaines out of their places, and the more I am in your Learned company, so much the faster am I lincked unto
you, in immooveable affection, so farre am I in love with your admirable qualities. And had I no other reason, to affect you in such endeared manner, as I doe; yet because you are enamoured of so rare a beauty, as you have already related to me, it onely were a motive sufficient to compell me. But indeed I must need tell you, that I have not so much power in this case, as you (perhaps) do imagine, which barreth me from such forward readines, as otherwise needed not to be urged. Nevertheless, having so solemnly ingaged your faith to me, and no way misdoubting your faithfull secrecy, I shall instruct you in some meanes to be observed; and it appeareth plainly to me, that being furnished with such plenty of Bookes, as you are, and other rich endowments, as you have before rehearsed, you cannot but attaine to the full period of your longing desire.

Speake boldly thy minde Bruno, answered the Doctour: for, I perceive thou hast no perfect knowledge of me as yet, neither what an especiall gift I have of secrecy. Messer Gasparino da Salicete, when he was Judge and Potestat over the people of Forlini, made choise of mee (among infinite of his dearest friends) to acquaint with a secret of no meane moment. And such a faithfull Secretary he found me, as I was the onely man, that knew his mariage with Bergamino; why then should any distrust be made of me? If it be so as you say Sir (answered Bruno) your credit is the sounder, and I dare the better adventure on your fidelity: the meanes then which you are to worke by, I shall now direct you in.

We have alwayes in this noble Society of ours, a Captaine, and two Counsellors, which are changed at every six months end. And now at Christmas next (so neere drawing on) Buffalmaco shal be elected Captaine, and my selfe one of the Counsellors, for so it is already agreed on, and orderly set downe. Now, he that is Captain, may doe much more then any other can, and appoint matters as himselfe pleaseth. Wherefore I thinke it very expedient, that so soone as possibly you may, you procure acquaintance with Buffalmaco, entreating him with all respective courtesie. Hee is a man, who when he percyveth you to be so wonderfully Wise and discreete, he will be immediatly in love with you: so, when
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you have your best senses about you, and your richest
wearing Garments on (alwayes remembred, that your
acquaintance first be fully confirmed) then never feare to
urge your request, for he can have no power at all to denie
you; because I have already spoken of you to him, and find
him to stand affected unto you verie intirely: thus when
you have begunne the businesse, leave me to deale with him
in the rest.

Now trust me. kinde friend Bruno, replyed the Physitian,
I like your advice exceding well. For, if hee be a man,
that taketh delight to converse with men of skill and judg-
ment, and you have made the way for his knowing me: he
wil him thirst, and long to follow after mee, to understand
the incredible eloquence flowing from me, and the rare com-
position of my Musieall Ditties, out of which he may learne
no meane wisedome. When the matter was thus agreed on
betweene them, Bruno departed thence, and acquainted
Buffalmaco with everie circumstance: which made him
thinke everie day a yeare, untill he might joyne in the
fooling of Mayster Doctour, according to his owne fancie.
Who beeing also as desirous on the other side, to make one
in the Corsicane Voyage; could take no manner of rest
either by day or night, till he was linked in friendship with
Buffalmaco, which very quickely after hee compassed.

For now there wanted no costly dinners and suppers, with
al delicates could be devised, for the entertainement of
Buffalmaco and Bruno; who, like Guests very easie to be
invited, where rich wines and good cheare are never want-
ing, needed little sending for, because his house was as
familiar to them, as their owne. In the end, when the
Physitian espyed an opportunitie apt for the purpose, he
made the same request to Buffalmaco, as formerly hee had
done to Bruno. Whereat Buffalmaco, sodainly starting, and
looking frowningly on Bruno, as if he were extraordinarily
incensed against him: clapping his hand furiously on the
Table, he sayde. I swear by the great God of Pasignano,
that I can hardly refrayne from giving thee such a blow on
the face, as should make thy Nose to fall at thy heele:
vile Traitor as thou art: for none beside thy selfe, could

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discover so rare and excellent a secret unto this famous Physitian. The Doctour, with very plausible and pleasing tearmes, excused the matter verie artificially; protesting, that another had revealed it unto him: and after many wise circumstantiall Allegations, at length hee prevailed so farre, that Buffalmaco was pacified; who afterwardes turn-ing in kinde manner, thus hee beganne.

Master Doctour, you have lived both at Bologna, and heere in these partes with us, having (no doubt) sufficiently understoode, what it is to carry a close mouth, I meane the true Charracter of taciturnitie. Questionlesse, you never learned the A. B. C. as now foolish Ideots do, blabbing their lessons all about the towne, which is much better apprehended by rumination; and surely (if I be not much deceyved) your Nativity happened on a Sunday morning, Sol being at that time, Lord of the ascendent, joyned with Mercurie in a fierie Triplicitie. By such conference as I have had with Bruno, I coneyved (as he himselfe also did) that you were verie singular in Physicke onely: but it seemeth, your Studies reached a higher straine, for you have learned, and know verie skilfullie, how to steale mens hearts from them, yea, to bereave them of their verie soules, which I perceyve that you can farre better doe, then any man else living to my knowledge, only by your wise, witty, judicious, and more then meere Mercurian eloquence, such as I never heard before.

The Physitian interrupting him bashfully, turned him-selfe unto Bruno, saying. Did not I tell thee this before? Observe what a notable thing it is, to speake well, and to frequent the company of the Wise. A thousand other, meerely blockes and dullardes by Nature, could never so soone comprehend all the particularities of my knowledge, as this honest and apprehensive man hath done. Thou didst not search into it halfe so soone, nor (indeed) did I expresse a quarter of my ingenuity to thee, as (since his comming) hath prodigally flowne from me.

Well do I remember thy words, that Buffalmaco delighted to be among men of Wisedome: and have I not now fitted him unto his owne desire? How thinkest thou Bruno?
THE EIGHT DAY

The best (quoth Bruno) that any man living in the World could do. Ah worthy Buffalmaco, answered the Physitian: What wouldst thou then have sayde, if thou hadst seene me at Bologna, where there was neyther great nor small, Doctor nor Scholler, but thought themselves happy by being in my company? If I ought any debts, I discharged them with my very wittie words: and whenssoever I spake, I could set them al on a hearty laughter, so much pleasure they tooke in hearing mee. And when I departed thence, no men in the world could bee more sorrowfull then they, as desiring nothing more then my remayning among them; which they expressed so apparantly, that they made humble suite and intercession to me, to bee cheefe Reader of the Physicke-Lecture, to all the Schollers studying our profession. But I could not be so perswaded, because my minde was wholly addicted hither, to enjoy those Goods, Landes, and Inheritances, belonging lineally to them of our house, and accordingly I did performe it.

How now Buffalmaco (quoth Bruno) what is thine opinion now? Thou wouldst not beleeve me when I told thee, that there is not a Doctor in all these parts, more skilfull in distinguishing the Urine of an Asse, from any other, then this most expert and singular man: and I dare boldly maintaine it, that his fellow is not to bee found, from hence to the very gates of Paris. Go then, and doe the uttermost endeavoure that thou canst, to grant the request which he hath made.

Beleeve me Buffalmaco, saide the Doctor, Bruno hath spoken nothing but truth, for I am scarsely knowne heere in this City, where (for the most part) they are all grosse-witted people, rather then any jot judicious: but I would thou hadst seene me among the Doctors, in manner as I was wont to be. In troth Sir, replyed Buffalmaco, you are much more Learned then ever I imagined, in which respect, speaking unto you as it becommeth me, to a man so excellent in wit and understanding: I dare assure you, that (without any faile) I wil procure you to be one of our Company.

After this promise thus made, the good cheare, favors
and kindnesses done by the Doctor to them, was beyond the compass of all relation: whereof they made no more then a meere mockery, flouting him to his face, and yet his Wisedome could not discerne it. Moreover, they promised, that they would give him to Wife, the faire Countesse di Civillari, who was the onely goodliest creature to be found in the whole Culattario of humane generation. The Doctor demanded, what Countesse that was? Oh Sir, answered Buffalmaco, she is a great Lady, one worthy to have issue by; and few houses are there in the world, where she hath not some jurisdiction and command: so that not meane people onely, but even the greatest Lords, at the sound of her Trumpets, do very gladlie pay her tribute. And I dare boldly affirm, that whencesoever shee walketh to any place, she yeeldeth a hot and sensible savour, albeit she keepeth most of all close. Yet once every night, shee duely observeth it (as a Custome) to passe from her owne house, to bathe her feete in the River of Arno, and take a little of the sweeter Ayre: albeit her continuall residencie, is within the Kingdome of Laterino.

She seldom walketh abroad, but goeth with her attending Officers about her, who (for more demonstration of her greatnesse) do carry the Rod and plummet of Lead. Store of her Lords and Barons are every where to be seene; as the Tamagnino della porta, Don Meta di Sirropa; Manico di Scopa; Signior Squacchera, and others beside, who are (as I suppose) oftentimes your daily visitants, when of necessity they must be remembred. All our care and courtesie shall extend so farre (if we doe not faile in our enterprize) to leave you in the armes of so Majestick a Ladie, quite forgetting hir of Cacavinciglia.

The Physitian, who was borne and brought up at Bologna, and therefore understoode not these Florentine tearmes: became fully contented to enjoy the Ladie; and, within some few dayes following, the Painters brought him tydings, that they had prepared the way for his entertainment into the Societie of Rovers. The day being come, when the supposed assembly was to be made the night following: the Physitian invited them both to dinner; when he demand-
ing, what provision he shold make for his entrance into their company, Buffalmaco returned him this answer, wheroeto hee gave very heedfull attention.

Master Doctor, you must be first of all, strongly armed with resolution and confidence: for, if you be not, you may not only receyve hindrance, but also do us great harme beside: and now you shall heare, in what manner, and how you are to be bold and constant. You must procure the meanes, this instant night, when all the people are in their soundest sleepe, to stand upon one of those high exalted Tombs or Monuments, which are in the churchyard of Santa Maria Novella, with the very fairest gowne you have about you, because you may appeare in the more honorable condition, before the assembly seated together, and likewise to make good our speeches already delivered of you, concerning your qualitie and profession: that the Countesse, perceiving you to bee a woorthie Gentleman, may have you first honoured with the Bathe, and afterward Knighted at her owne cost and charge. But you must continue stil upon the Tombe (dreadlesse of nightly apparitions and visions) untill such time as we send for you.

And for your better information in every particulare; a Beaste, blacke and horned, but of no great stature, will come to fetch you: perhaps he will use some gasly noises, straunge leapes, and loftie trickes, onely to terrifie and affright you: but when he perceiveth that he cannot daunt you, hee will gently come neere you, which when he hath done, you may descend from off the Tombe; and, without naming or thinking on God, or any of his Saintes, mount boldly on his backe, for he will stand ready to receive you. Being so seated, crosse your armes over your brest, without presuming to touch or handle the Beast, for he will carry you thence softly, and so bring you along to the company. But if in all this time of your travaile, you call on heaven, any Saint, or bee possessed with the least thought of feare: I must plainly tell you, that either hee will cast you dangerously, or throw you into some noysom place. And therefore, if you know your selfe, not to be of a constant courage, and sprightly bold, to undertake such an adven-
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Ture as this: never presume any further, because you may doe us a great deale of injurie, without any gaine or benefite to your selfe, but rather such wrong, as we would be very sorry should happen unto so deere a Friend.

Alas honest Buffalmaco, answered the Physitian, thou art not halfe acquainted with me as yet: because I walke with gloves upon my hands, and in a long Gowne, thou perhaps doest imagine mee a faint-hearted fellow. If thou didst know, what I have heeretofore done at Bologna in the night time, when I and my Consorts went to visite pretty wenches, thou wouldst wonder at my couragious attempts. As I am a Gentleman, one night, we met with a young Bona Roba, a paltry greene-sicknesse baggage, scarcely above a Cubite in height, and because she refused to go with us willingly, I gave her a kicke on the bum, and spurnde her more then a Crosse-bowe shoote in distance from me, and made her walke with us whether she would, or no. Another time I remember, when having no other company but my boy, I went thorow the Churchyard of the Fryars Minors, after the sounding of Ave Maria: a woman hadde beene buried there the very same day, and yet I was not a jotte affraid.

Wherefore, never be distrustfull of mee, but resolvedly builde upon my courage. And in regard of my more honourable entertainment, I will then weare my Scarlet Gowne and Hood, wherein I receyved my graduation; and then do both of you observe, what a rejoyncing will be among the whole company, at the entertaining of such a man as I am, enough to create me Captaine immeditly. You shall perceive also how the case will go, after I have beene there but a while, in regard that the Countesse (having as yet never seen me) is so deeply enamored of mee: she cannot choose but bestow the Bathe and Knight-hood on me, which shee shall have the more honour of, in regard I am well able to maintaine it, therefore referre all the rest to mee, and never misdoubt your injurie or mine.

Spoken like a Gallant, replied Buffalmaco, and I feare not now, but we shall winne credite by your company. But be carefull I pray you, that you make not a mockery of us,
THE EIGHT DAY

and come not at all, or fayle to be there, when the Beast shall be sent for you; I speake it the rather, because it is cold weather, and you Gentlemen Physitians can hardly endure it. You are carefull of mee (quoth the Doctor) and I thanke you for it, but I applaud my faire Starres, I am none of your nice or easie-frozen fellowes, because cold weather is very familiar to me. I dare assure you, when I arise in the night time for that naturall office whereto all men are subject, I weare no warmer defence, then my thin wastcoat over my shirt, and finde it sufficient for the coldest weather at any time.

When Bruno and Buffalmaco had taken their leave, the Physitian, so soone as night drew neere, used many apt excuses to his wife, stealing forth his Scarlet Gowne and Hood unseene of any, wherewith being clothed: at the time appointed, he got upon one of the Marble Tombes, staying there (quaking with cold) awaiting when the Beast should come. Buffalmaco, being a lusty tall man of person, had got an ugly masking suite, such as are made use of in Tragedies and Playes, the out-side being of black shagged haire, wherwith being cloathed, he seemed like a strange deformed Beare, and a Divels vizard over his face, with two gastly horrible hornes, and thus disguised, Bruno following him, they went to behold the issue of the businesse, so farre as the new Market place, closely adjoining to Santa Maria Novella.

Having espyed Master Doctor uppon the Tombe, Buffalmaco in his mishapen habite, began to bound, leape, and carriere, snuffling and blowing in mad and raging manner: which when the Physitian saw, his haire stood on end, he quaked and trembled, as being more fearfull then a Woman, wishing himselfe at home againe in his house, rather then to behold a sight so dreadfull. But because he was come forth, and had such an earnest desire, to see the wonders related to him; he made himselfe so coragious as possibly he could, and bare all out in formall manner. After that Buffalmaco had (an indifferent while) plaide his horse-trickes, ramping and stamping somewhat strangely: seeming as become of much milder temper, he went neere to the Tomb
THE DECAMERON

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whereon the Physitian stood, and there appeared to stay contentedly.

Master Doctor, trembling and quaking still extremely, was so farre dismayed, as he knew not what was best to be done, either to mount on the beasts backe, or not to mount at all. In the end, thinking no harme could happen to him, if he were once mounted, with the second feare, hee expelled the former, and descending downe softly from the Tombe, mounted on the beast, saying out alowde: God, Saint Dominicke, and my good Angell helpe to defend mee. Seating himselfe so well as he could, but trembling still exceedingly; he crossed his armes over his stomacke, according to the Lesson given him.

Then did Buffalmaco shape his course in milde manner, toward Santa Maria della Scala, and groping to finde his way in the darke, went on so farre as the Sisters of Ripole, commonly called the Virgin Sanctuary. Not farre off from thence, were divers trenches and ditches, wherein such men as are employed in necessary night-services, used to empty the Countesse di Cimillari, and afterward employed it for manuring Husbandmens grounds. Buffalmaco, being come neere one of them, he stayed to breath himselfe awhile, and then catching fast hold on one of the Doctours feete, raysed him somewhat higher on his back, for the easier discharging of his burthen, and so pitched him (with his head forwardes) into the Laystall.

Then began he to make a dreadful kinde of noise, stamping and trampling with his feete, passing backe againe to Santa Maria della Scala, and to Prato d'Ognissanti, where hee met with Bruno, who was constrained to forsake him, because he could not refraine from lowde Laughter, then both together went backe once more, to see how the Physitian would behave himselfe, being so sweetely embred.

Master Doctor, seeing himselfe to bee in such an abominable stinking place, laboured with all his utmost endeavour, to get himselfe released thence: but the more he contended and strove for getting forth, he plunged himselfe the further in, being most pitifully myred from head to foot, sighing and sorrowing extraordinarily, because much of the foule
water entred in at his mouth. In the end, being forced to leave his hood behind him, scrambling both with his hands and feet, he got landing out of his stinking Labyrinth, and having no other means, home he returned to his own house, where knocking at the doore, he was at length admitted entrance. The doore being scarce made fast againe after his letting in, Buffalmaco and Bruno were there arrived, listning how M. Doctor should bee welcomd home by his angry wife: who scolding and railing at him with wonderfull impatience, gave him most hard and bitter speeches, terming him the vilest man living.

Where have you bin Sir? quoth she. Are you becom a night-walker after other Women? And could no worse garments serve your turne, but your Doctors gown of Scarlet? Am I to suffer this behaviour? Or am not I sufficient to content you, but you must be longing after change? I would thou hadst bin stifled in that foule filth, where thy fouler life did justly cast thee. Behold goodly Master Doctor of the Leystall, who being maried to an honest woman must yet go abroad in the night time, insatiatly lusting after whores and harlots. With these and the like intemperate speeches, she ceased not to afflict and torment him, till the night was almost spent, and the Doctor brought into a sweeter savour.

The next morning, Bruno and Buffalmaco, having coloured their bodyes with a strange kinde of painting, resembling blisters, swellings, and bruises, as if they had bin extremly beaten; came to the Physitians house, finding him to be newly up, al the house yet smelling of his foule savour (although it had bin very well perfumed) and being admitted to him in the Garden, hee welcommed them with the mornings salutations. But Bruno and Buffalmaco (being otherwise provided for him) delivering stearne and angry lookes, stamping and chafing, Bruno thus replyed.

Never speake so faire and flattering to us, for we are moved beyond all compasse of patience. All misfortunes in the worlde fall upon you, and an evill death may you dye, like the most false and persidious Traitor living on the earth. We must beate our braines, and move all our most
endeared friends, onely for your honor and advancement: while wee were well neere starved to death in the cold like Dogs, and, by your breach of promise, have bin this night so extreamly beaten, as if (like Asses) we should have beene driven to Rome.

But that which is most greevous of all, is danger of excluding out of the Society, where wee tooke good order for your admittance, and for your most honourable entertainment. If you wil not credit us, behold our bodies, and let your owne eyes be witnesses, in what cruell manner we have bin beaten. So taking him aside under the Gallery, where they might not be discovered by overmuch light, they opened their bosomes, shewed him their painted bodies, and sodainly closed them up againe.

The Physitian laboured to excuse himselfe, declaring his misfortunes at large, and into what a filthy place he was throwne. It maketh no matter (answered Buffalmaco) I would you had bin thrown from off the Bridge into Arno, where you might have beene recommended to the Divell, and all his Saints. Did not I tell you so much before. In good sadnesse (quoth the Doctor) I neyther commended my selfe to God, nor any of his Saints. How? sayde Buffalmaco, I am sure you will not maintaine an untruth, you used a kind of recommendation: for our messenger told us, that you talked of God, S. Dominicke, and your good Angell, whom you desired to assist you, being so affrighted with feare, that you trembled like a leafe upon a tree, not knowing indeede where you were. Thus have you unfaithfully dealt with us, as never any man shall doe the like againe, in seeking honour, and losing it through your own negligence.

Master Doctor humbly entreated pardon, and that they would not revile him any more, labouring to appease them by the best words he could use, as fearing least they should publish this great disgrace of him. And whereas (before) he gave them gracious welcomes; now he redoubled them with farre greater courtesies, feasting them daily at his own table, and evermore delighting in their company. Thus (as you have heard) two poore Painters of Florence, taught Master Doctor better Wit, then all the Learned at Bologna.
THE EIGHT DAY

A Cicilian Courtezane, named Madame Biancafiore, by her craftie wit and policie, deceived a young Merchant, called Salabetto, of all the money he had taken for his Wares at Palermo. Afterward, he making shew of comming hither againe, with farre richer Merchandises then hee brought before: made the meanes to borrow a great summe of Money of her, leaving her so base a pawne, as well requited her for her former cozenage.

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Whereby appeareth, that such as meet with cunning Harlots, and suffer themselves to be deceived by them: must sharpen their Wits, to make them requitall in the selfesame kinde.

NEEDLESSE it were to question, whether the Novell related by the Queene, in divers passages thereof, mooved the Ladies to hearty laughter, and likewise to compassionate sighes and teares; as pittyng Madame Helena in her hard misfortune, and yet applauding the Scholler for his just revenge. But the discourse being ended, Dioneus, who knew it was his Office to be the last speaker every day, after silence was commanded, he began in this manner.

Worthy Ladies, it is a matter very manifest, that deceits do appeare so much the more pleasing, when (by the selfe-same meanes) the subtle deceyver is artificially deceived. In which respect, though you all have reported very singular deceits: yet I meane to tel you one, that may prove as pleasing to you, as any of your owne. And so much the rather, because the woman deceived, was a great and cunning Mistris in beguiling others; equalling (if not excelling) any of your former beguilers.
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL X

It hath bene observed heretofore, and (happily) at this very day, it is as frequent, that in all Cities and Townes upon the Sea-coasts, having Ports for the benefit and venting Merchandises; Merchants use to bring their wealthy laden Vessels thither. And when they unlade any Ship of great fraught, there are prepared Store-houses, which in many places are called Magazines or Doganaes, at the charge of the Communalty, or Lord of the Towne or City, for the use whereof, they receive yearly gain and benefit. Into those warehouses, they deliver (under writing, and to the owners of them in especiall charge) all their goods and merchandises, of what price or valew soever they are.

Such as be the Owners of these Magazines, when the Wares are thus stored uppe in them, doe safely locke them up there with their keyes, having first registred downe truly all the goods, in the Register belonging to the Custome-house, that the Merchant may have a just account rendred him, and the rights payed to the Custome-house, according to the Register, and as they are either in part, or in all made sale of.

Brokers are continually there attending, being informed in the quality of the Merchandises stored, and likewise to what Merchants they appertaine: by meanes of these men, and according as the goods come to their hands, they devise to have them exchaunged, trucked, vented, and such other kinds of dispatches, answerable to the mens minds, and worth of the Commodities. As in many other Kingdomes and Countries, so was this custome observed at Palermo in Sicily, where likewise then were, and (no doubt) now adayes are, store of Women, faire and comely of person, but yet vowed enemies to honesty.

Neverthelesse, by such as know them not, they are held and reputed to be blamelesse Women, and by yeilding their bodyes unto generall use, are the occasion of infinite misfortunes to men. For so soone as they espy a Merchant-stranger there arrived, they win information from the Booke belonging to the Magazin, what wares are therein stored, of what valew they bee, and who is the Owner of them. Afterwards, by amorous actions, and affable speeches, they
allure yong Merchants to take knowledge of them, to bee
familiar in their company, till from some they get most
part of their wealth, from others all. Nay, divers have
gone so farre, as to make Port-sale of Ship, Goods, and
Person, so cunningly they have bene shaven by these
Barbers, and yet without any Razor.

It came to passe, and no long time since, that a young
Florentine of ours, named Niccolo de Cignano, but more
usually called Salabetto, imployed as Factor for his Maister,
arrived at Palermo; his Ship stored with many Woollen
Cloathes, a remainder of such as had bin sold at the Mart
of Salerno; amounting in valew to above five hundred
Florines of Gold. When he had given in his packet to the
Custome-house, and made them up safe in his Warehouse;
without making shew of desiring any speedy dispatch, he
delighted to view all parts of the City, as mens minds are
continuallie addicted to Novelties. He being a very faire
and affable yong man, easie to kindle affection in a very
modest eie: it fortuned, that a Courtezane, one of our
before remembred shavers, who termed hir selfe Madame
Biancafiore, having heard somewhat concerning his affairs,
beginne to dart amorous glances at him. Which the in-
discreete youth perceyving, and thinking her to be some
great Lady: began also to grow halfe perswaded, that his
comely person was pleasing to her and therefore he would
carrie this good fortune of his somewhat cautelously.

Without imparting his mind unto any one, he would
daily passe too and fro before her doore; which she observ-
ing, and having indifferently wounded him with her wanton
piercing lookes: she began to use the first tricke of her
Trade, by pretending her enflamed affection towards him,
which made her pine and consume away in care, except he
might be moved to pitty her. Whereupon, she sent one of
her Pandoraes unto him, perfectly instructed in the Art of
a Maquerella, who (after many cunning counterfetted sighes,
and teares, which she had alwayes ready at command, told
him; that his comely person and compleat perfections, had
so wounded the very soule of her Mistresse, as she could
enjoy no rest in any place, either by day or night. In
regard whereof, she desired (above all things else) to meete with him privately in a Bathe: with which Wordes, she straightway tooke a Ring forth of her pursse, and in most humble manner, delivered it unto him, as a token from her Mistresse.

Salabetto having heard this Message, was the onely joyfull man that could be: and having receyved the Ring, looking on it advisedly; first kissed it, and then put it upon his finger. Then in answer to the Messenger, he sayd: That if her Mistresse Biancafiore affected him, she sustained no losse thereby, in regard he loved her as fervently, and was ready to be commanded by her, at any time whensoever she pleased.

She having delivered this message to her Mistresse, was presently returned backe againe to him, to let him understand, in which of the Bathes she meant to meet him, on the next morrow in the evening. This being counsell for himselfe onely to keepe, he imparted it not to any friend whatsoever; but when the houre for their meeting was come, he went unto the place where he was appointed, a Bathe (belike) best agreeing with such businesse.

Not long had he taried there, but two Women slaves came laden to him, the one bearing a Mattresse of fine Fustian on hir head, and the other a great Basket filled with many things. Having spred the Mattresse in a faire Chamber on a Couch-bed, they covered it with delicate white Linnen sheets, all about embroirdred with faire Fringes of gold, then laid they on costly quilts of rich Silkes, artificially wrought with gold and silver knots, having pearles and precious stones interwoven among them, and two such rich pillowes, as sildome before had the like bin seen. Salabetto putting off his garments, entred the Bath prepared for him, where the two Slaves washed his body very neatly. Soone after came Biancafiore hirselfe, attended on by two other women slaves, and seeing Salabetto in the Bathe; making him a lowly reverence, breathing forth infinite dissembled sighes, and teares trickling downe her cheekes, kissing and embracing him, thus she spake.

I know not what man else in the worlde, beside thy selfe,
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could have the power to bring me hither: the fire flew from thy faire eies (O thou incomparable lovely Tuscane) that melted my soule, and makes me onely live at thy command. Then hurling off her light wearing garment (because she came prepared for the purpose) shee stept into the bathe to him, and, not permitting the Slaves a-while to come neere, none but her selfe must now lave his body, with Muske compounded Sope and Gilly-floures. Afterward, the slaves washed both him and her, bringing two goodly sheetes, softe and white, yeelding such a delicate smell of Roses, even as if they had bene made of Rose-leaves. In the one, they folded Salabetto, and her in the other, and so conveyed them on their shoulders unto the prepared Bed-Couch, where because they should not sweate any longer, they tooke the sheets from about them, and laid them gently in the bed.

Then they opened the Basket, wherein were divers goodly Silver bottles, some filled with Rosewaters, others with flowers of Orenge, and Waters distilled of Gelsomine, Muske, and Amber-Greece, wherewith (againe) the slaves bathed their bodyes in the bed, and afterward presented them with variety of Comfits, as also very precious Wines, serving them in stead of a little Collation. Salabetto supposed himself to be in Paradise: for this appeared to be no earthly joy, bestowing a thousand gladsome gazes on her, who (questionallesse) was a most beautifull creature, and the tarrying of the Slaves, seemed millions of yeares to him, that hee might more freely embrace his Biancafiore. Leaving a Waxe Taper lighted in the Chamber, the slaves departed, and then shee sweetly embracing Salabetto, bestowed those further favours on him, which hee came for, and she was not squeamish in the affoording; wherof he was exceedingly joyfull, because he imagined, that they proceeded from the integrity of her affection towards him.

When she thought it convenient time to depart thence, the slaves returned; they cloathed themselves, and had a Banquet standing ready prepared for them; where-with they cheared their wearyed spirits, after they had first washed in odorifferous waters. At parting: Salabetto

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(quoth she) whenever thy leysures shall best serve thee, I will repute it as my cheefest happinesse, that thou wilt accept a Supper and Lodging in my house, which let it be this instant night, if thou canst. He being absolutely caught, both by her beauty and flattering behaviour: behelved faithfully, that he was as intirely beloved of her, as the heart is of the body: whereupon hee thus answered. Madame, whatsoever pleaseth you, must needs be much more acceptable unto mee: and therefore, not onely may command my service this night, but likewise the whole employment of my life, to be onely yours in my very best studies and endeavours.

No sooner did shee heare this answer, but she returned home to her owne house, which shee decked in most sumptuous maner, and also made ready a costly Supper, expecting the arrivall of Salabetto: who when the darke night was indifferently well entred, went thither, and was welcommed with wonderfull kindness, wanting no costly Wines and Delicates all the Supper while. Being afterward conducted into a goodly Chamber, he smelt there admirable sweete senting savours, such as might well beseeme a Princes Pallace. He beheld a most costly Bed, and very rich furniture round about the roome: which when he had duly considered to himself, he was constantly perswaded, that she was a Lady of infinit wealth. And although he had heard divers flying reports concerning her life, yet hee would not credite any thing amisse of her, for albeit she might (perhappes) beguile some other; yet shee affected him (he thought) in better manner, and no such misfortune could happen to him.

Having spent all the night with her in wanton dalliances, and being risen in the morning; to enflame his affection more and more towards her, and to prevent any ill opinion he might conceyve of her, she bestowed a rich and costly Girdle on him, as also a pursse most curiously wrought, saying to him. My sweet Salabetto, with these testimonies of my true affection to thee, I give thee faithfully to understand, that as my person is onely subjected thine; so this house and all the riches in it, remaineth absolutely
THE EIGHT DAY

at thy disposition, or whatsoever hereafter shall happen within the compasse of my power.

He being not a little proud of this her bountifull offer (having never bestowed any gift on her, because by no meanes shee would admit it) after many sweet kisses and embraces; departed thence, to the place where the Merchants usually frequented: resorting to her (from time to time) as occasion served, and paying not one single peny for all his wanton pleasure, by which cunning baytes (at length) she caught him.

It came to passe, that having made sale of all his Clothes, whereby hee had great gaines, and the moneys justly payed him at the times appointed: Biancafiore got intelligence thereof; yet not by him, but from one of the Brokers. Salabetto comming one night to sup with her, she embraced and kissed him as she was wont to doe, and seemed so wonderfully addicted in love to him, even as if shee would have dyed with delight in his armes. Instantly, shee would needs bestow two goodly gilt standing Cuppes on him, which Salabetto by no meanes would receive, because she had formerly bin very bountifull to him, to above the value of an hundred Crowns, and yet she would not take of him so much as a mite. At length, pressing still more tokens of her love and bounty on him, which he as courteously denied, as she kindly offered: one of her Women-slaves (as shee had before cunningly appointed) sodainely calling her, forthwith she departed out of her Chamber. And when she had continued a pretty while absent, she returned againe weeping, and throwing her selfe downe upon her Pallet, breathing forth such sighes and wofull lamentations, as no Woman could possibly doe the like.

Salabetto amazedly wondering thereat, tooke her in his Armes, and weeping also with her, said. Alas my deare Love, what sodain accident hath befalne you, to urge this lamentable alteration? If you love me, hide it not from me. After he had often entreated her in this manner, casting her armes about his necke, and sighing as if her heart would breake, thus she replied.

Ah Salabetto, the onely Jewell of my joy on earth, I
knowe not what to do, or say, for (even now) I received Letters from Messina, wherein my Brother writes to me, that although it cost the sale of all my goods, or whatsoever else I have beside, I must (within eight dayes space) not faile to send him a thousand Florins of gold, or else he must have his head smitten off, and I know not by what meanes to procure them so soone. For, if the limitation of fiftene dayes might serve the turne, I could borrow them in a place, where I can command a farre greater summe, or else I would sel some part of our Lands. But beeing no way able to furnish him so soone, I would I had died before I heard these dismall tydings. And in the uttering of these words, she graced them with such cunning dissembled sorrow, as if she had meant truly indeed.

Salabetto, in whom the fury of his amorous flames, had consumed a great part of his necessary understanding, believing these counterfetted tears and complaints of hers, to proceed from an honest meaning soule; rashly and foolishly thus replied. Deare Biancafiore, I cannot furnish you with a thousand golden Florines, but am able to lend you five hundred, if I were sure of their repayment at fiftene dayes, wherein you are highly beholding to Fortune, that I have made sale of all my Cloathes; which if they had lyen still on my hand, my power could not stretch to lend you five Florines. Alas deare heart (quoth she) would you be in such want of money, and hide it from her that loves you so loyally? Why did you not make your need knowne to me? Although I am not furnished of a thousand Florines; yet I have alwaies ready three or foure hundred by me, to do any kinde office for my friend. In thus wronging me, you have robd me of all boldnes, to presume upon your offer made me. Salabetto, far faster inveigled by these words then before, said. Let not my folly (bright Biancafiore) cause you to refuse my friendly offer, in such a case of extreme necessity: I have them ready prepared for you, and am heartily sory, that my power cannot furnish you with the whole summe.

Then catching him fast in her armes, thus she answered. Now I plainly perceive, my dearest Salabetto, that the love
THE EIGHT DAY

thou bearest me is true and perfect; when, without expectation of being requested, thou art readie to succour me in such an urgent neede, and with so faire a summe of Florines. Sufficiently was I thine owne before, but now am much more ingaged by so high deserving; with this particular acknowledgment for ever, that my Brothers head was redeemed by thy goodnesse onely. Heaven beareth me record, how unwilling I am to be beholding in this kind, considering that you are a Merchant, and Merchants furnish al their affairs with ready monis: but seeing necessity constraineth me, and I make no doubt of repaiment at the time appointed: I shall the more boldly accept your kindnes, with this abso- lute promise beside, that I wil rather sell all the houses I have; then breake my honest word with you.

Counterfeit teares still drayning downe her cheeks, and Salabetto kindly comforting her; he continued there with hir all that night, to expresse him selfe her most liberall servant. And, without expecting any more requesting, the next morning he brought her the five hundred Florines, which she received with a laughing heart, but outward dissembled weeping eies; Salabetto never demanding any other security, but onely her single promise.

Biancafiore, having thus received the five hundred Florines, the indiction of the Almanacke began to alter: and whereas (before) Salabetto could come see her whencesoever he pleased, many occasions now happened, whereby he came seven times for once, and yet his entrance was scarsely admitted, neither was his entertainment so affable, or his cheare so bountifull, as in his former accesses thither. Moreover, when the time for repaiment was come, yea a moneth or two over-past, and he demanded to have his money; hee could have nothing but words for paiment. Now he began to consider on the craft and cunning of this wicked Woman, as also his owne shallow understanding, knowing he could make no prooфе of his debt, but what her selffe listed to say, having neither witnes, specialty, bill or bond to shew: which made his folly so shamefull to him, that he durst not complaine to any person, because he had received some advertisements before, whereto he wold by no means listen, and now should
have no other amends, but publike infamie, scorne and disgrace, which made him almost weary of his life, and much to bemoane his owne unhapinesse. He received also divers Letters from his Master, to make returne of the 500 Florines over by way of banke, according as he had used to do: but nowe could performe no such matter.

Hereupon, because his error should not be discovered, he departed in a small vessell thence, not making for Pisa, as he should have done, but directly for Naples hee shaped his course. At that instant lodged there, Don Pietro della Canigiano, Treasurer of the Empresse of Constantinople, a man of great wisedome and understanding, as also very ingenious and politike, he being an especiall Favourer of Salabetto and all his friendes, which made him presume the more boldly (being urged thereto by meere necessity, the best corrector of wandering wits) to acquaint him with his lamentable misfortune, in every particular as it had hapned, requesting his aid and advice, how he might best weare out the rest of his dayes, because hee never meant to visit Florence any more.

Canigiano being much displeased at the repetition of his Follie, sharply reprove him, saying. Thou hast done leudly, in carying thy selfe so loosely, and spending thy Masters goods so carelesly, which though I cannot truly tearme spent, but rather art meerely cousened and cheated of them, yet thou seest at what a deere rate thou hast purchased pleasure, which yet is not utterly helplesse, but may by one meanes or other be recovered. And being a man of woonderfull apprehension, advised him instantly what was to bee done, furnishing him also with a summe of money, wherewith to adventure a second losse, in hope of recovering the first againe: he caused divers Packes to be well bound up, with the Merchants markes orderly made on them, and bought about twenty Buttes or Barrelles, all filled (as it were) with Oyle, and these pretended commodities being shipt, Salabetto returned with them to Palermo. Where having given in his packets to the Custome-house, and entred them all under his owne name, as being both owner and factor: all his Wares were lockt up in his Magazine,
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with open publication, that he would not vent any of them, before other merchandises (which he daily expected) were there also arrived.

Biancafiore having heard thereof, and understanding withall, that he had brought Merchandises now with him, amounting to above two thousand Florins, staying also in expectation of other commodities, valewing better then three thousand more, she beganne to consider with her selfe, that she had not yet gotten money enough from him, and therefore would cast a figure for a farre bigger booty. Which that she might the more fairely effect, without so much as an imagination of the least mistrust: she would repay him backe his five hundred Florines, to winne from him a larger portion of two or three thousand at the least, and having thus setled her determination, she sent to have him come speake with her. Salabetto, having bene soundly bitten before, and therefore the better warranted from the like ranckling teeth, willingly went to her, not shewing any signe of former discontent: and she, seeming as if she knew nothing of the wealth he brought with him, graceing him in as loving manner as ever she had done, thus she spake.

I am sure Salabetto, you are angry with mee, because I restored not your Florines at my promised day. Salabetto smiling, presently answered. Beleeve me Lady (quoth he) it did a little distast me, even as I could have bin offended with him, that should plucke out my heart to bestow it on you, if it would yeelde you any contentment. But to let you know unfainedly, how much I am incensed with anger against you: such and so great is the affection I beare you, that I have solde the better part of my whole estate, converting the same into Wealthy Merchandises, which I have alreadie brought hither with mee, and valewing above two thousand Florines, all which are stored up in my Magazine. There must they remaine, till another Ship come forth of the Westerne parts, wherein I have a much greater adventure, amounting unto more then three thousand Florines. And my purpose is, to make my aboade heere in this City, which hath won the sole possession of my heart, onely in regard of
my Biancafiore, to whom I am so intirely devoted, as both my selfe, and whatsoever else is mine (now or hereafter) is dedicated onely to her service; whereto thus she replied.

Now trust me Salabetto, whatsoever redoundeth to thy good and benefite, is the cheefest comfort of my soule, in regard I prize thy love dearer then mine owne life, and am most joyfull of thy returne hither againe; but much more of thy still abiding heere, because I intend to live onely with thee, so soone as I have taken order for some businesse of import. In the meane while, let me entreat thee to hold me excused, because before thy departure hence, thou earnest sometimes to see me, without thy entrance admitted; and other-whiles againe, found not such entertainement, as formerly had bene affoorded. But indeede, and above all the rest, in not re-paying thy money according to my promise. But consider good Salabetto, in what great trouble and affliction of minde I then was, both in regard of my Brothers danger, and other important occurrences beside, which mollestations do much distract the senses, and hinder kinde courtesies, which otherwise would bee extended liberally.

Last of all consider also, how difficult a thing it is for a woman, so sodainly to raise the summe of a thousand golden Florines, when one friend promiseth, and performeth not; another protesteth, yet hath no such meaning; a third sweareth, and yet proveth a false Lyar: so that by being thus ungently used, a breach is made betwene the best frends living. From hence it proceeded, and no other defect else, that I made not due returne of your five hundred Florins. No sooner were you departed hence, but I had them readie, and as many more, and could I have knowne whither to send them, they had bene with you long time since, which because I could not (by any meanes) compasse, I kept them still for you in continuall readinesse, as hoping of your comming hither againe. So causing a purse to be brought, wherein the same Florines were, which hee had delivered her; she gave it into his hand, and prayed him to count them over, whether there were so many, or no.

Never was Salabettoes heart halfe so joyfull before; and having counted them, found them to be his owne five hun-
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dred Florines: then, putting them up into his pocket, he saide. Comfort of my life, Full well I know that whatsoever you have saide, is most certaine; but let us talke no more of falshood in friendship, or casuall accidents happening unexpected: you have dealt with mee like a most loyall Mistresse, and heere I protest unfainedly to you, that as well in respect of this kinde courtesie, as also the constancy of mine affection to you, you cannot request hereafter a far greater summe of me, to supply any necessarie occasion of yours; but (if my power can performe it) you shall assuredly finde it certaine: make proofe thereof whensoever you please, after my other goods are Landed, and I have established my estate here in your City.

Having in this manner renewed his wonted amity with her, and with words farre enough off from all further meaning: Salabetto began againe to frequent her company, she expressing all former familiarity, shewing her selfe as lavishly bountifull to him, in all respects as before she had done, nay, many times in more magnificent manner.

But he intending to punish her notorious trechery towards him, when she left him as an open scorne to the World, wounded with disgrace, and quite out of credit with all his friends: she having (on a day) solemnly invited him, to suppe and lodge in her house all night; he went, both with sad and melancholly lookes, seeming as overcome with extremity of sorrow. Biancafiore mervayling at this strange alteration in him, sweetly kissing and embracing him: would needs know the reason of his passionate affliction, and he permitting her to urge the question oftentimes together, without returning any direct answere; to quit her in her kind, and with coine of her owne stampe, after a few dissembled sighes, he began in this manner.

Ah my dearest Love, I am utterly undone, because the Shippe containing the rest of mine expected Merchandises, is taken by the Pyrates of Monago, and put to the ransome of tenne thousand Florines of Gold, and my part particularly, is to pay one thousand. At this instant I am utterly destitute of money, because the five hundred Florines which I received of you, I sent hence the next daie following to
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL X

Naples, to buy more cloathes, which likewise are to be sent hither. And if I should now make sale of the Merchandizes in my Magazine (the time of generall utterance being not yet come) I shall not make a pennyworth for a penny. And my misfortune is the greater, because I am not so well knowne heere in your City, as to find some succour in such an important distresse; wherfore I know not what to do or say. Moreover, if the money be not speedily sent, our goods will be carried into Monago, and then they are past all redemption utterly.

Biancafiore appearing greatly discontented, as one verily persuwaded, that this pretended losse was rather hers, then his, because she aymed at the mainest part of all his wealth: began to consider with her selfe, which was the likeliest course to bee taken, for saving the goods from carriage to Monago: wherupon thus she replied. Heaven knoweth (my dearest Salabetto) how thy love maketh me sorrowfull for this misfortune, and it greeveth me to see thee any way distressed: for if I had mony lying by mee (as many times I have) thou shouldst finde succour from my selfe onely, but indeede I am not able to helpe thee. True it is, there is a friend of mine, who did lend me five hundred Florines in my need, to make uppe the other summe which I borrowed of thee: but he demandeth extreme interest, because he will not abate any thing of thirty in the hundred, and if you should bee forced to use him, you must give him some good security. Now for my part, the most of my goods here I will pawne for thee: but what pledge can you deliver in to make up the rest? Wel did Salabetto conceive the occasion why she urged this motion, and was so diligent in doing him such a pleasure: for it appeared evidently to him, that her selfe was to lend the mony, wherof he was not a little joyful, seeming very thankful to hir. Then he told her, that being driven to such extremity, how unreasonable soever the usury was, yet he would gladly pay for it. And for her Friends further security, hee would pawne him all the goods in his Magazine, entering them downe in the name of the party, who lent the money. Onely he desired to keepe the Keyes of the Ware-house, as well to shew his Merchandises,
THE EIGHT DAY

when any Merchant should bee so desirous: as also to preserve them from ill using, transporting or changing, before his redemption of them.

She found no fault with his honest offer, but sayde, hee shewed himselfe a well-meaning man, and the next morning shee sent for a Broker, in whom she reposed especiall trust; and after they had privately consulted together, she delivered him a thousand Golden Florines, which were caried by him presently to Salabetto, and the Bond made in the Brokers name, of all the goods remaining in Salabettoes ware-house, with composition and absolute agreement, for the prefixed time of the monies repaiment. No sooner was this tricke fully accomplished, but Salabetto seeming as if he went to redeeme his taken goods: set saile for Naples towards Pietro della Canigiano, with fifteene hundred Florines of Gold: from whence also he sent contentment to his Master at Florence (who imployd him as his Factor at Palermo) beside his owne packes of Cloathes. He made repayment likewise to Canigiano, for the monies which furnished him in this last voyage, and any other to whom hee was indebted. So there he stayed awhile with Canigiano, whose counsel thus holpe him to out-reach the Sicillian Courtezane: and meaning to deale in Merchandise no more, afterward he returned to Florence and there lived in good reputation.

Now as concerning Biancafiore, when she saw that Salabetto returned not againe to Palermo, she beganne to grow somewhat abashed, as halfe suspecting that which followed. After she had tarried for him above two moneths space, and perceived hee came not, nor any tydings heard of him: shee caused the Broker to breake open the Magazine, casting forth the Buttes or Barrels, which shee beleeved to bee full of good Oyles. But they were all filled with Sea-water, each of them having a small quantity of Oyle floating on the topppe, onely to serve when a tryall should bee made. And then unbinding the Packes, made up in formall and Merchantable manner: there was nothing else in them, but Logges and stumpes of Trees, wrapt handsomely in hurdles of Hempe and Tow; onely two had Cloathes in them. So
NOVELL X

that (to bee briefe) the whole did not value two hundred Crownes: which when she saw, and observed how cunningly she was deceived: a long while after shee sorrowed, for re-paying backe the five hundred Florines, and folly in lending a thousand more, using it as a Proverbe alwaies after to hir selfe: That whosoever dealt with a Tuscane, had neede to have sound sight and judgement. So remaining contented (whither she would or no) with her losse: she plainly perceyved, that although she lived by cheating others, yet now at the length she had mette with her match.

So soone as Dioneus had ended his Novell, Madame Lau-retta also knew, that the conclusion of her Regiment was come; whereupon, when the counsell of Canigiano had past with generall commendation, and the wit of Salabetto no lesse applauded, for fitting it with such an effectuall prosecution; shee tooke the Crowne of Laurell from her owne head, and set it upon Madame Æmiliiæ, speaking graciously in this manner. Madam, I am not able to say, how pleasant a Queene we shall have of you, but sure I am, that we shall enjoy a faire one: let matters therefore be so honourably carried; that your government may be answerable to your beautifull perfections; which words were no sooner delivered, but she sate downe in her mounted seate.

Madame Æmiliiæ being somewhat bashfull, not so much of hir being created Queene, as to heare her selfe thus pub-likely praysed, with that which Women do most of all desire: her face then appearing, like the opening of the Damaske Rose, in the goodlyest morning. But after she had a while dejected her lookes, and the Vermillion blush was vanished away: having taken order with the Master of the household, for all needfull occasions befitting the assembly, thus she began.

Gracious Ladies, wee behold it daily, that those Oxen which have laboured in the yoake most part of the day, for their more convenient feeding, are let forth at liberty, and permitted to wander abroad in the Woods. We see more-
THE EIGHT DAY

over, that Gardens and Orchards, being planted with variety of the fairest fruit Trees, are equalled in beauty by Woods and Forrests, in the plentifull enjoying of as goodly spreading branches. In consideration whereof, remembrance how many dayes wee have already spent (under the severitie of Lawes imposed) shaping all our discourses to a forme of observation: I am of opinion, that it will not onely well become us, but also prove beneficall for us, to live no longer under such restraint, and like enthralled people, desirous of liberty, wee should no more be subjected to the yoke, but recover our former strength in walking freely.

Wherefore, concerning our pastime purposed for to morrow, I am not minded to use any restriction, or tye you unto any particular ordination: but rather do liberally graunt, that every one shall devise and speake of arguments agreeing with your owne dispositions.

Besides, I am verily perswaded, that variety of matter uttered so freely, will be much more delightfull, then restraint to one kinde of purpose onely. Which being thus granted by me, whosoever shal succeede me in the government, may (as being of more power and preheminence) restraine all backe againe to the accustomed lawes. And having thus spoken, she dispensed with their any longer attendance, untill it should be Supper time.

Every one commended the Queenes appointment, allowing it to rellish of good wit and judgement: and being all risen, fell to such exercises as they pleased. The Ladies made Nosegaies and Chaplets of Flowers, the men played on their Instruments, singing divers sweete Ditties to them, and thus were busied untill Supper time. Which beeing come, and they supping about the beautifull Fountaine: after Supper, they fell to singing and dauncing. In the end, the Queene, to imitate the order of her predecessors, commanded Pamphilus, that notwithstanding all the excellent songs formerly sung: he should now sing one, whereunto dutifuly obeying, thus he began.
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL

X

THE SONG

THE CHORUS SUNG BY ALL

Love, I found such felicitie,
And joy, in thy captivitie:
As I before did never prove,
And thought me happy, being in Love.

Comfort abounding in my hart,
    Joy and Delight
    In soule and spright
I did possesse in every part;
O Soveraigne Love by thee.
    Thy Sacred fires,
    Fed my desires,
    And still aspires,
Thy happy thrall to bee.
    Love, I found such felicity, etc.

My Song wants power to relate,
    The sweets of minde
    Which I did finde
In that most blissefull state,
O Soveraigne Love by thee.
    No sad despaire,
    Or killing care
    Could me prepare;
Still thou didst comfort me.
    Love, I found such felicity, etc.

I hate all such as do complaine,
    Blaspheming thee
    With Cruelty,
And sleights of coy disdaine.
O Soveraigne Love, to mee
    Thou hast bene kinde:
    If others finde
    Thee worse inclinde,
Yet I will honour thee.

    Love, I found such felicitie,
    And joy in thy Captivitie:
    As I before did never prove,
    But thought me happie, being in Love.

Thus the Song of Pamphilus ended, whereto all the rest

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(as a Chorus) answered with their Voyces, yet every one particularly (according as they felt their Love-sicke passions) made a curious construction thereof, perhaps more then they needed, yet not Divining what Pamphilus intended. And although they were transported with variety of imaginations; yet none of them could arrive at his true meaning indeed. Wherefore the Queene, perceiving the Song to be fully ended, and the Ladies, as also the young Gentlemen, willing to go take their rest: she commaunded them severally to their Chambers.

THE END OF THE EIGHT DAY
The Decameron

The Ninth Day

Whereon, under the Government of Madame Æmilia, the Argument of each severall Discourse, is not limited to any one peculiar subject: but every one remaineth at liberty, to speak of whatsoever themselves best pleaseth.

The Induction

AIRE Aurora, from whose bright and chearefull lookees, the duskie darke night flyeth as an utter enemy, had already reached so high as the eight Heaven, converting it all into an Azure colour, and the pretty Flowrets beganne to spred open their Leaves: when Madame Æmilia, beeing risen, caused all her female attendants, and the yong Gentlemen likewise, to be summoned for their personall appearance. Who being all come, the Queen leading the way, and they following her Majesticke pace, walked into a little Wood, not farre off distant from the Palace.

No sooner were they there arrived, but they beheld store of Wilde Beasts, as Hindes, Hares, Goats, and such like; so safely secured from the pursuit of Huntsmen (by reason of the violent Pestilence then reigning) that they stood gazing boldly at them, as dreadlesse of any danger, or as if they were become tame and Domestick.

Approaching neerer them, first to one, then unto another,
THE NINTH DAY

as if they purposed to play gently with them, they then
beganne to skippe and runne, making them such pastime
with their pretty tripping, that they conceyved great delight
in beholding of them.

But when they beheld the Sunne to exalt it selfe, it was
thought convenient to return back again, shrouding them-
selves under the Trees spreading armes, their hands full of
sweete Flowers and Odoriferous Hearbes, which they had
gathered in their Walking. So that such as chanced to
meetee them, could say nothing else: but that death knew
not by what means to conquer them, or els they had set
down an absolute determination, to kill him with their
Joviall disposition.

In this manner, singing, dancing, or prettily pratling,
at length they arrived at the Palace, where they found all
things readily prepared, and their Servants duly attending
for them. After they hadde reposed themselves awhile,
they would not (as yet) sit downe at the Table, untill they
had sung halfe a dozen of Canzonets, some more pleasant
then another, both the women and men together.

Then they fell to washing hands, and the Maister of the
Houshold caused them to sit downe, according as the
Queene had appointed, and Dinner was most sumptuously
served in before them. Afterward, when the Tables were
with-drawne, they all tooke handes to dance a Roundelay;
which being done, they plaied on their Instruments a while;
and then, such as so pleased, tooke their rest. But when
the accustomed houre was come, they all repaired to the
place of discoursing, where the Queen, looking on Madam
Philomena, gave her the honor of beginning the first
Novell for that day: whereto shee dutifully condiscending,
began as followeth.
Madam Francesca, a Widdow of Pistoya, being affected by two Florentine Gentlemen, the one named Rinuccio Palermini, and the other Alessandro Chiarmontesi, and she bearing no good will to eyther of them; ingeniously freed her selfe from both their importunate suites. One of them she caused to lye as dead in a grave, and the other to fetch him from thence: so neither of them accomplishing what they were enjoyned, fayled of obtaining his hoped expectation.

Approving, that chaste and honest Women, ought rather to deny importunate suiters, by subtile and ingenious meanes, then fall into the danger of scandall and slander.

MADAME, it can no way discontent mee (seeing it is your most gracious pleasure) that I should have the honour, to breake the first staffe of freedome in this faire company (according to the injunction of your Majesty) for liberty of our own best liking arguments: wherein I dismay not (if I can speake well enough) but to please you all as well, as any other that is to follow me. Nor am I so oblivious (worthy Ladies) but full well I remember, that many times hath bene related in our passed demonstrations, how mighty and variable the powers of love are: and yet I cannot be persuad, that they have all bene so sufficiently spoken of, but something may bee further added, and the bottome of them never dived into, although we should sit arguing a whole yeare together. And because it hath beene alreadie approved, that Lovers
THE NINTH DAY

have bene led into divers accidents, not only inevitable
dangers of death, but also have entred into the verie houses
of the dead, thence to convey their amorous friends: I pur-
pose to acquaint you with a Novell, beside them which have
bene discoursed; whereby you may not only comprehend
the power of Love, but also the wisedome used by an honest
Gentlewoman, to rid her selfe of two importunate suiters,
who loved her against her owne liking, yet neither of them
knowing the others affection.

In the City of Pistoya, there dwelt sometime a beautifull
Gentlewoman, being a Widdow, whom two of our Floren-
tines (the one named Rinuccio Palermini, and the other
Alessandro Chiarmontesi, having withdrawne themselves to
Pistoya) desperately affected, the one ignorant of the others
intention, but each carrying his case closely, as hoping to
be possessed of her. This Gentlewoman, named Madame
Francesca de Lazzari, being often solicited by their messages,
and troublesomely pestered with their importunities: at
last (lesse advisedly then she intended) shee granted admis-
tance to heare either of them speake. Which she repent-
ing, and coveting to be rid of them both, a matter not
easie to be done: she wittily devised the onely meanes,
namely, to move such a motion to them, as neither would
willingly undertake, yet within the compasse of possi-
bility; but they failing in the performance, shee might
have the more honest occasion, to bee free from all further
mollestation by them, and her politike intention was thus
projected.

On the same day, when she devised this pecece of service,
a man was buried in Pistoya, and in the Church-yard be-
longing unto the gray Friars, who being descended of good
and worthie parentage: yet himselfe was very infamous,
and reputed to be the vilest man living, not onely there in
Pistoya, but throughout the whole World beside. More-
over, while he lived, he had such a strange mishapen body,
and his face so ugly deformed, that such as knew him not,
would stand gastly affrighted at the first sight of him. In
regarde whereof, shee considered with her selfe, that the
foule deformitie of this loathed fellow, would greatly avayle
in her determination, and consulting with her Chambermaid, thus she spake.

Thou knowest (my most true and faithfull servant) what trouble and affliction of minde I suffer dayly, by the messages and Letters of the two Florentines, Rinuccio and Alessandro, how hatefull their importunity is to me, as being utterly unwilling to hear them speake, or yeeld to any thing which they desire. Wherefore, to free my selfe from them both together, I have devised (in regard of their great and liberall offers) to make trial of them in such a matter, as I am assured they will never performe.

It is not unknowne to thee, that in the Church-yard of the Gray Friars, and this instant morning, Scannadio (for so was the ugly fellow named) was buried; of whom, when he was living, as also now being dead, both men, women, and children, doe yet stand in feare, so gastly and dreadfull alwayes was his personall appearance to them. Wherefore, first of all go thou to Alessandro, and say to him thus. My Mistris Francesca hath sent me to you, to tell you, that now the time is come, wherein you may deserve to enjoy her love, and gaine the possession of her person, if you will accomplish such a motion as she maketh to you. For some especiall occasion, wherewith hereafter you shall bee better acquainted, a neere Kinsman of hers, must needs have the body of Scannadio (who was buried this morning) brought to her house. And she, being as much affraid of him now he is dead, as when he was living, by no meanes would have his body brought thither.

In which respect, as a Token of your unfeigned love to her, and the latest service you shall ever do for her: shee earnestly entreateth you, that this night, in the very deadest time thereof, you would go to the grave, where Scannadio lyeth yet uncovered with earth untill to morrow, and attyring your selfe in his garments, even as if you were the man himselfe, so to remaine there untill her kinsman doe come. Then, without speaking any one word, let him take you forth of the grave, and bring you thence (insted of Scannadio) to hir house: where she will give you gentle welcome, and disappoint her Kinsman in his hope, by making
THE NINTH DAY

you Lord of her, and all that is hers, as afterward shall plainly appeare. If he say he wil do it, it is as much as I desire: but if hee trifle and make deniall, then boldly tell him, that he must refraine all places wheresoever I am, and forbeare to send me any more Letters, or messages.

Having done so, then repaire to Rinuccio Palermini, and say. My Mistresse Francesca is ready to make acceptance of your love; provided, that you will do one thing for her sake. Namely, this ensuing night, in the midst and stillest season thereof, to go to the grave where Scannadio was this morning buried, and (without making any noise) or speaking one word, whatsoever you shall heare or see: to take him forth of the grave, and bring him home to her house, wher you shall know the reason of this strange businesse, and enjoy her freely as your owne for ever. But if he refuse to do it, then I commaund him, never hereafter to see me, or move further suite unto mee, by any meanes whatsoever.

The Chamber-maide went to them both, and delivered the severall messages from her Mistresse, according as she had given her in charge; whereunto each of them answered, that they woulde (for her sake) not onely descend into a Grave, but also into hell, if it were her pleasure.

She returning with this answer unto her Mistresse, Francesca remained in expectation, what the issue of these fond attempts in them, would sort unto. When night was come, and the middle houre thereof already past, Alessandro Chiarmontesi, having put off all other garments to his doublet and hose; departed secretly from his lodging, walking towards the Church-yard, where Scannadio lay in his grave: but by the way as he went, hee became surprized with divers dreadfull conceites and imaginations, and questioned with himselfe thus.

What a beast am I? What a businesse have I undertaken? And whither am I going? What do I know, but that the Kinsman unto this Woman, perhappes understanding mine affection to her, and crediting some such matter, as is nothing so: hath laide this politicke traine for me, that he may murther me in the grave? Which (if it
should so happen) my life is lost, and yet the occasion never knowne whereby it was done. Or what know I, whether some secret enemy of mine (affecting her in like manner, as I do) have devised this stratagem (out of malice) against mee, to draw my life in danger, and further his owne good Fortune? Then, contrary motions, overswaying these suspitions, he questioned his thoughts in another nature.

Let me (quoth he) admit the case, that none of these surmises are intended, but her Kinsman (by and in this manner devised) must bring me into her house: I am not therefore perswaded, that he or they do covet, to have the body of Scannadio, either to carry it thither, or present it to her, but rather do aime at some other end. May not I conjecture, that my close murthering is purposed, and this way acted, as on him that (in his life time) had offended them? The Maid hath straitly charged me, that whatsoever is said or done unto me, I am not to speake a word. What if they pul out mine eies, teare out my teeth, cut off my hands, or do me any other mischiefe: Where am I then? Shall all these extremities barre me of speaking? On the other side, if I speake, then I shall be knowne, and so much the sooner (perhaps) he abused. But admit that I sustaine no injurie at all, as being guilty of no transgression: yet (perchance) I shall not be carried to her house, but to some other baser place, and afterward she shall reprove me, that I did not accomplish what shee commanded, and so all my labour is utterly lost.

Perplexed with these various contradicting opinions, he was willing divers times to turne home backe againe: yet such was the violence of his love, and the power thereof prevailing against all sinister arguments; as he went to the grave, and removing the boordes covering it, whereinto he entred; and having despoiled Scannadio of his garments, cloathed himselfe with them, and so laid him down, having first covered the grave againe. Not long had hee tarryed there, but he began to bethinke him, what manner of man Scannadio was, and what strange reports had bene noised of him, not onely for ransacking dead mens graves in the night season, but many other abominable Villanies committed
THE NINTH DAY

by him, which so fearfully assaulted him; that his haire stroode on end, every member of him quaked, and every minute he imagined Scannadio rising, with intent to strangle him in the grave. But his fervent affection overcoming all these idle feares, and lying stone still, as if he had beene the dead man indeede; he remained to see the end of his hope.

On the contrary side, after midnight was past, Rinuccio Palermini departed from his lodging, to do what hee was enjouyned by his hearts Mistresse, and as hee went along, divers considerations also ran in his minde, concerning occasions possible to happen. As, falling into the hands of Justice, with the body of Scannadio upon his backe, and being condemned for sacriledge, in robbing graves of the dead; either to be burned, or otherwise so punished, as might make him hatefull to his best friends, and meerely a shame to himselfe.

Many other the like conceits mollested him, sufficient to alter his former determination: but affection was much more prevayling in him, and made him use this consulta- tion. How now Rinuccio? Wilt thou dare to deny the first request, being mooved to thee by a Gentlewoman, whom thou dearly lovest, and is the onely meanes, whereby to gaine assurance of her gracious favour? Undoubtedly, were I sure to die in the attempt, yet I will accomplish my promise. And so he went on with courage to the grave.

Alessandro hearing his arrivall, and also the removall of the bords, although he was excedingly affraid; yet he lay quietly stil, and stirred not, and Rinuccio beeing in the grave, tooke Alessandro by the feete, haling him forth, and (mounting him uppon his backe) went on thus loden, to- wards the house of Madam Francesca. As he passed along the streets, unseene or unmet by any, Alessandro suffered many shrewd rushings and punches, by turnings at the streets corners, and jolting against bulkes, poasts, and stalles, which Rinuccio could not avoyd, in regard the night was so wonderfully darke, as hee could not see which way he went.
NOVELL I

THE DECAMERON

Being come somewhat neere to the Gentlewomans house, and she standing readie in the Window with her Maide, to see when Rinuccio should arrive there with Alessandro, provided also of an apt excuse, to send them thence like a couple of Coxcombes; it fortuned, that the Watchmen, attending there in the same streete, for the apprehension of a banished man, stolne into the City contrarie to order; hearing the trampling of Rinuccioes feete, directed their course as they heard the noise, having their Lanthorne and light closely covered, to see who it should be, and what he intended, and beating their weapons against the ground, demanded, Who goes there? Rinuccio knowing their voyces, and that now was no time for any long deliberation: let fall Alessandro, and ran away as fast as his legs could carry him.

Alessandro being risen againe (although he was cloathed in Scannadioes Garments, which were long and too bigge for him) fledde away also as Rinuccio did. All which Madame Francesca easily discerned by helpe of the Watchmens Lanthorne, and how Rinuccio carried Alessandro on his backe, beeing attired in the Garments of Scannadio: whereat she mervailed not a litle, as also the great boldnesse of them both. But in the midst of her mervailing, she laughed very heartily, when she saw the one let the other fall, and both to runne away so manfully. Which accident pleasing her beyond all comparison, and applauding her good Fortune, to bee so happily delivered from their daily molestation: she betooke her selfe to hir Chamber with the Maide, avouching solemnly to her, that (questionlesse) they both affected her dearely, having undertaken such a straunge imposition, and verie neere brought it to a finall conclusion.

Rinuccio, being sadly discontented, and cursing his hard fortune, would not yet returne home to his Lodging: but, when the watch was gone forth of that streete, came backe to the place where he let fall Alessandro, purposing to accomplish the rest of his enterprize. But not finding the body, and remaining fully persuaded, that the Watchmen were possessed thereof; hee went away, greeving extreamly.
THE NINTH DAY

And Alessandro, not knowing now what should become of him: confounded with the like griefe and sorrow, that all his hope was thus utterly overthrowne, retired thence unto his owne house, not knowing who was the Porter which carried him.

The next morning, the grave of Scannadio being found open, and the body not in it, because Alessandro had thrown it into a deep ditch neere adjoyning: all the people of Pistoya were possessed with sundry opinions, some of the more foolish sort verily beleevinge, that the divell had caried away the dead body. Nevertheless, each of the Lovers severally made knowne to Madam Francesca, what he had done, and how disappointed, either excusing himselfe, that though her command had not bin fully accomplished, yet to continue her favour towards him. But she, like a wise and discreet Gentlewoman, seeming not to credit either the one or other: discharged her selfe honestly of them both, with a cutting answere, That shee would never (afterward) expect any other service from them, because they had fayled in their first injunction.
Madame Usimbalda, Lady Abbess of a Monastery of Nuns in Lombardie, arising hastily in the night time without a Candle, to take one of her Daughter Nunnes in bed with a yong Gentleman, whereof she was enviously accused, by certaine of her other Sisters: The Abbess her selfe (being at the same time in bed with a Priest) imagining to have put on her head her plaited vayle, put on the Priests breeches. Which when the poore Nunne perceyved; by causing the Abbess to see her owne error, she got her selfe to be absolved, and had the freer liberty afterward, to be more familiar with her frend, then formerly she had bin.

**THE SECOND NOVELL**

Whereby is declared, that whosoever is desirous to reprehend sinne in other men, should first examine himselfe, that he be not guiltie of the same crime.

By this time, Madame Philomena sate silent, and the wit of Francesca, in freeing her selfe from them whom she could not fancie, was generally commended: as also on the contrary, the bold presumption of the two amorous suiters, was reputed not to be love, but meerely folly. And then the Queene, with a gracious admonition, gave way for Madam Eliza to follow next; who presently thus began.

Worthy Ladies, Madame Francesca delivered her selfe discreetly from trouble, as already hath bin related: but a yong Nun, by the helpe and favour of Fortune, did also
THE NINTH DAY

free her selfe (in speaking advisedly) from an inconvenience sodainly falling on her. And as you well know, there wants none of them, who (like bold Bayards) will be very forward in checking other mens misdemeanors, when themselves, as my Novell will approve, deserve more justly to bee corrected. As hapned to a Lady Abbesse, under whose governement the same young Nunne was, of whom I am now to speake.

You are then to understand (Gracious Auditors) that in Lombardie there was a goodly Monastery, very famous for Holinesse and Religion, where, among other sanctified Sisters, there was a yong Gentlewoman, endued with very singular beautie, being named Isabella, who on a day, when a Kinsman of hers came to see her at the grate, became en-amored of a young Gentleman, being then in his company.

He likewise, beholding her to be so admirably beautifull, and conceyving by the pretty glances of her eye, that they appeared to bee silent intelligencers of the hearts meaning, grew also as affectionately inclined towards her, and this mutuall love continued thus concealed a long while, but not without great affliction unto them both. In the end, either of them being circumspect and provident enough, the Gentleman contrived a meanes, whereby he might secretly visite his Nunne, wherewith she seemed no way discontented: and this visitation was not for once or twice, but verie often, and closely concealed to themselves.

At length it came to passe, that either through their owne indiscreete carriage, or jelous suspition in some others: it was espied by one of the Sisters, both the Gentlemans comming and departing, yet unknowne to him or Isabella. The saide Sister, disclosing the same to two or three more: they agreed together, to reveale it to the Lady Abbesse, who was named Madame Usimbalda, a holy and devout Lady, in common opinion of all the Nunnes, and whosoever else knew her.

They further concluded (because Isabella should not deny theyr accusation) to contrive the businesse so cunningly: that the Ladie Abbesse should come her selfe in person, and take the yong Gentleman in bed with the Nun. And uppon this determination, they agreed to watch nightly by 4:S
NOVELL II

turnes, because by no meanes they wold be prevented: so to surprise poore Isabella, who beeing ignorant of their treachery, suspected nothing. Presuming thus still on this secret felicitie, and fearing no disaster to befall her: it chaunced (on a night) that the yong Gentleman being entred into the Nuns Dorter, the Scowts had descried him, and intended to be revenged on her.

After some part of the night was overpast, they divided themselves into two bands, one to guard Isabellaes Dorter doore, the other to carry newes to the Abbesse, and knock- ing at her Closet doore, saide. Rise quickely Madame, and use all the hast you may, for we have seene a man enter our Sister Isabellaes Dorter, and you may take her in bed with him. The Lady Abbesse, who (the very same night) had the company of a lusty Priest in bed with her selfe, as oftentimes before she had, and he being alvvayes brought thither in a Chest: hearing these tidings, and fearing also, lest the Nunnes hastie knocking at her doore, might cause it to fly open, and so (by their entrance) have her owne shame discovered: arose very hastily, and thinking she had put on her plaited vaile, which alwayes she walked with in the night season, and used to tearme her Psalter; she put the Priests breeches upon her head, and so went away in all hast with them, supposing them verily to be her Psalter: but making fast the Closet doore with her keye, because the Priest should not be discovered.

Away shee went in all haste with the Sisters, who were so forward in the detection of poore Isabella, as they never regarded what manner of vaile the Lady Abbesse wore on her head. And being come to the Dorter doore, quickly they lifted it off from the hookes, and being entred, found the two Lovers sweetly imbracing: but yet so amazed at this sudden surprisall, as they durst not stirre, nor speake one word. The young Nunne Isabella, was raised forthwith by the other Sisters, and according as the Abbesse had comanded, was brought by them into the Chapter-house: the yong Gentleman remaining still in the Chamber, where he put on his garments, awaiting to see the issue of this businesse, and verily intending to act severe revenge on his
betrayers, if any harme were done to Isabella, and afterward to take her thence away with him, as meaning to make her amends by marriage.

The Abbesse being seated in the Chapter house, and all the other Nunnes then called before her, who minded nothing else but the poore offending Sister: she began to give her very harsh and vile speeches, as never any transgressor suffered the like, and as to her who had (if it should be openly knowne abroad) contaminated by her lewde life and actions, the sanctity and good renowne of the whole Monastery, and threatened her with very severe chastise-ment. Poore Isabella, confounded with feare and shame, as being no way able to excuse her fault, knew not what answer to make, but standing silent, made her case compassionable to all the rest, even those hard-hearted Sisters which betrayed her.

And the Abbesse still continuing her harsh speeches, it fortuned, that Isabella raising her head, which before she dejected into hir bosome, espied the breeches on her head, with the stockings hanging on either side of her; the sight whereof did so much encourage her, that boldly she said. Madam, let a poore offender advise you for to mend your veile, and afterward say to me what you will.

The Abbesse being very angry; and not understanding what she meant, frowningly answered. Why how now saucy companion? What vaile are you prating of? Are you so malapert, to bee chatting already? Is the deed you have done, to be answered in such immodest manner? Isabella not a jot danted by her sterne behaviour, once againe said. Good Madam let me perswade you to sette your vaile right, and then chide me as long as you will. At these words, all the rest of the Nunnes exalted their lookes, to behold what vaile the Abbesse wore on her head, wherewith Isabella should finde such fault, and she her selfe lift up her hand to feele it: and then they all perceived plainly, the reason of Isabellas speeches, and the Abbesse saw her owne error.

Hereupon, when the rest observed, that she had no help to cloud this palpable shame withall, the tide began to
turne, and hir tongue found another manner of Language, then her former fury to poore Isabella, growing to this conclusion, that it is impossible to resist against the temptations of the flesh. And therefore she saide: Let all of you take occasion, according as it offereth it selfe, as both we and our predecessors have done: to be provident for your selves, take time while you may, having this sentence alwaies in remembrance, *Si non caste, tamen caute*.

So, having granted the yong Nunne Isabella free absolution: the Lady Abbesse returned backe againe to bed to the Priest, and Isabella to the Gentleman. As for the other Sisters, who (as yet) were without the benefit of friends; they intended to provide themselves so soone as they could, being enduced thereto by so good example.

Master Simon the Physitian, by the persuasions of Bruno, Buffalmaco, and a third Companion, named Nello, made Calandrino to beleive, that he was conceived great with childe. And having Physicke ministred to him for the disease: they got both good fatte Capons and money of him, and so cured him, without any other manner of deliverance.

**THE THIRD NOVELL**

Discovering the simplicity of some silly witted men, and how easie a matter it is to abuse and beguile them.

*After* that Madame Eliza had concluded her Novell, and every one of the company given thankes to Fortune, for delivering poore Isabella the faire young Nunne, from the bitter reprehensions of the as faulty Abbesse, as also the malice of her envious Sisters: the
THE NINTH DAY

Queene gave command unto Philostratus, that he should be the next in order, and hee (without expecting anie other warning) began in this manner.

Faire Ladies, the paltry Judge of the Marquisate, whereof yesterday I made relation to you; hindred mee then of another Novell, concerning silly Calandrino, wherewith I purpose now to acquaint you. And because whatsoever hath already bin spoken of him, tended to no other end but matter of meriment, hee and his companions duly considered: the Novel which I shal now report, keepeth within the selfesame compasse, and aimeth also at your contentment, according to the scope of imposed variety.

You have already heard what manner of man Calandrino was, and likewise the rest of his pleasant Companions, who likewise are now againe to be remembred, because they are actors in our present discourse. It came so to passe, that an Aunt of Calandrinoes dying, left him a legacy of two hundred Florines, wherewith he purposed to purchase some small Farme-house in the countrey, or else to enlarge the other, whereof he was possessed already. And, as if hee were to disburse some ten thousand Florines, there was not a Broker in all Florence, but understood what he intended to doe: and all the worst was, that the strings of his purse could stretch no higher. Bruno, and Buffalmaco (his auncient Confederates) who heard of this good Fortune befalne him, advised him in such manner as they were wont to do; allowing it much better for him, to make merrie with the money in good cheare among them, then to lay it out in paltry Land, whereto he would not by any meanes listen, but ridde himselfe of them with a dinners cost, as loath to bee at anie further charge with them.

These merry Laddes meant not to leave him so; but sitting one day in serious consultation, and a third man in their companie, named Nello; they all three layde their braines in steep, by what means to wash their mouths well, and Calandrino to bee at the cost thereof.

And having resolved what was to bee done, they met togither the next morning, even as Calandrino was comming foorth of his house, and sundering themselves, to avoyd all
suspition, yet being not farre distant each from other; Nello first met him, and saide unto him, Good Morrow Calandrino: which he requited backe agayne with the same salutation. But then Nello standing still, looked him stedfastly in the face: whereat Calandrino mervailing, sayd. Nello, Why dost thou behold me so advisedly? Whereunto Nello answered, saying Hast thou felt any paine this last night past? Thou lookest nothing so well, as thou didst yesterday. Calandrino began instantly to wax doubtfull, and replied thus. Dost thou see any alteration in my face, whereby to imagine, I should feele some paine? In good faith Calandrino (quoth Nello) me thinks thy countenance is strangely changed, and surely it proceedeth from some great cause, and so he departed away from him.

Calandrino being very mistrustfull, scratched his head, yet felte he no grievance at all; and going still on; Buffalmaco sodainely encountred him, upon his departure from Nello, and after salutations passing betweene them; in a manner of admiration, demanded what he ayled? Truly (quoth Calandrino) well enough to mine owne thinking, yet notwithstanding, I met with Nello but even now; and he told me, that my countenance was very much altred; Is it possible that I should bee sicke, and feele no paine or distaste in any part of me? Buffalmaco answered; I am not so skilfull in judgement, as to argue on the Nature of distemper in the body: but sure I am, that thou hast some daungerous inward impediment, because thou lookst (almost) like a man more then halfe dead.

Calandrino began presently to shake, as if hee had had a Feaver hanging on him, and then came Bruno looking fearefully on him, and before he would utter any words, seemed greatly to bemoane him, saying at length. Calandrino? Art thou the same man, or no? How wonderfully art thou changed since last I saw thee, which is no longer then yester day? I pray thee tell mee, How dooest thou feele thy health?

Calandrino hearing, that they all agreed in one opinion of him; he beganne verily to perswade himselfe, that some
sodaine sicknes, had seised upon him, which they could
discerne, although hee felt no anguish at all: and therefore,
like a man much perplexed in minde, demanded of them,
What he should do? Beleeve me Calandrino (answered
Bruno) if I were worthy to give thee counsell, thou shouldst
returne home presently to thy house, and lay thee downe
in thy warme Bedde, covered with so many cloathes as thou
canst well endure. Then to Morrow morning, send thy
Water unto Learned Mayster Doctor the Physitian, who
(as thou knowest) is a man of most singular skill and
experience: he will instruct thee presently what is the best
course to be taken, and we that have ever beene thy loving
friends, will not faile thee in any thing that lieth in our
power.

By this time, Nello being come againe unto them, they
all returned home with Calandrino unto his owne house,
whereinto he entering very faintly, hee saide to his Wife:
Woman, make my Bed presently ready, for I feele my selfe
to be growne extremely sicke, and see that thou layest
cloathes enow upon me. Being thus laide in his Bedde, they
left him for that night, and returned to visite him againe
the verie next morning, by which time, he had made a
reservation of his Water, and sent it by a young Damosell
unto Maister Doctor, who dwelt then in the olde market
place, at the signe of the Muske Mellone. Then saide
Bruno unto his Companions; Abide you heere to keepe him
company, and I will walke along to the Physitian, to under-
stand what he will say: and if neede be, I can procure him
to come hither with me. Calandrino very kindely accepted
his offer, saying withall. Well Bruno, thou shewst thy
selfe a friend in the time of necessity, I pray thee know of
him, how the case stands with me, for I feele a very strange
alteration within mee, far beyond all compasse of my
conceite.

Bruno being gone to the Physitian, he made such expedi-
tion, that he arrived there before the Damosell, who carried
the Water, and informed Master Simon with the whole
tricke intended: wherefore, when the Damosell was come,
and hee had passed his judgement concerning the water, he said to her.

Maide, go home againe, and tell Calandrino, that he must keepe himselfe very warme: and I my selfe will instantly be with him, to enstruct him further in the quality of his sicknesse. The Damosell delivered her message accordingly, and it was not long before Mayster Doctor Simon came, with Bruno also in his company, and sitting downe on the beds side by Calandrino, hee began to taste his pulse, and within a small while after, his Wife being come into the Chamber, he said. Observe me well Calandrino, for I speake to thee in the nature of a true friend; thou hast no other disease, but only thou art great with child.

So soone as Calandrino heard these words, in dispairing manner he beganne to rage, and cry out aloud, saying to his wife. Ah thou wicked woman, this is long of thee, and thou hast done me this mischeefe: for alwayes thou wilt be upon me, ever railing at mee, and fighting, untill thou hast gotten me under thee. Say thou divellish creature, do I not tell thee true? The Woman, being of verie honest and civill conversation, hearing her husband speake so foolishly: blushing with shame, and hanging downe her head in bashfull manner; without returning any answer, went forth of her Chamber.

Calandrino continuing still in his angry humour, wringing his hands, and beating them upon his breast, said: Wretched man that I am, What shall I do? How shal I be delivered of this child? Which way can it come from me into the world? I plainly perceyve, that I am none other then a dead man, and all through the wickednesse of my Wife: heaven plague her with as many mischiejes, as I am desirous to finde ease. Were I now in as good health, as heeretofore I have beene, I would rise out of my bed, and never cease beating her, untill I had broken her in a thousand peeces. But if Fortune will be so favourable to me, as to helpe mee out of this dangerous agony: hang me, if ever she get me under her againe, or make me such an Asse, in having the mastery over mee, as diuers times she hath done.
Bruno, Buffalmaco and Nello, hearing these raving speeches of Calandrino, were swolne so bigge with laughter, as if their ribbes would have burst in sunder; nevertheless, they abstained so well as they were able; but Doctor Simon gaped so wide with laughing as one might easily have pluckt out all his teeth. In the end, because he could tarry there no longer, but was preparing to depart: Calandrino thanked him for his paines, requesting that hee would be carefull of him, in aiding him with his best advise and counsell, and he would not be unmindfull of him. Honest neighbour Calandrino, answered the Phisition, I would not have you to torment your selfe, in such an impatient and tempestuous manner, because I perceive the time so to hasten on, as we shall soone perceive (and that within very few dayes space) your health well restored, and without the sense of much paine; but indeed it wil cost expences. Alas Sir, said Calandrino, mak not any spare of my purse, to procure that I may have safe deliverance. I have two hundred Florines, lately falne to me by the death of mine Aunt, wherewith I intended to purchase a Farme in the Countrey: take them all if need be, onely reserving some few for my lying in Childbed. And then Master Doctor, Alas, I know not how to behave my selfe, for I have heard the grievous complaint of women in that case, oppressed with bitter pangs and throwes; as questionlesse they will bee my death, except you have the greater care of me.

Be of good cheere neighbour Calandrino, replyed Doctor Simon, I will provide an excellent distilled drinke for you, marveilously pleasing in taste, and of soveraigne vertue, which will resolve all in three mornings, making you as whole and as sound as a Fish newly spawned. But you must have an especiall care afterward, being providently wise, least you fall into the like follies againe. Concerning the preparation of this precious drinke, halfe a dozen of Capons, the very fairest and fattest, I must make use of in the distillation: what other things shall bee imployed beside, you may deliver forty Florines to one of these your honest friends, to see all the necessaries bought and sent me
home to my house. Concerning my businesse, make you no doubt thereof, for I will have all distilled against to morrow, and then doe you drinke a great Glasse full every morning, fresh and fasting next your heart. Calandrino was highly pleased with his words, returning master Doctor infinite thankes, and referring all to his disposing. And having given forty Florines to Bruno, with other money beside, to buy the halfe dozen of Capons: he thought himselfe greatly beholding to them all, and protested to requite their kindenesse.

Master Doctor being gone home to his house, made ready a bottel of very excellent Hypocrasse, which he sent the next day according to his promise: and Bruno having bought the Capons, with other junkets, fit for the turne, the Phisitian and his merry Companions, fed on them hartely for the givers sake. As for Calandrino, he liked his dyet drinke excellently well, quaffing a large Glassefull off three mornings together: afterward Master Doctor and the rest came to see him, and having felt his pulse, the Phisition said. Calandrino, thou art now as sound in health, as any man in all Florence can be: thou needest not to keepe within doores any longer, but walke abroad boldly, for all is well and the childe gone.

Calandrino arose like a joyfull man, and walked daily through the streets, in the performance of such affaires as belonged to him: and every acquaintance he met withall, he told the condition of his sudden sickenesse; and what a rare cure Master Doctor Simon had wrought on him, delivering him (in three dayes space) of a childe, and without the feeling of any paine. Bruno, Buffalmaco, and Nello, were not a little jocond, for meeting so well with covetous Calandrino: but how the Wife liked the folly of her Husband, I leave to the judgement of all good Women.
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Francesco Fortarigo, played away all that he had at Buonconvento, and likewise the money of Francesco Aniolliero, being his Master. Then running after him in his shirt, and avouching that hee had robbed him: he caused him to be taken by Pezants of the Country, clothed himselfe in his Masters wearing garments, and (mounted on his horse) rode thence to Sienna, leaving Aniolliero in his shirt, and walked barefooted.

THE FOURTH NOVELL

Serving as an admonition to all men, for taking Gamesters and Drunkards into their service.

The ridiculous words given by Calandrino to his Wife, all the whole company hartily laughed at: but Philostratus ceasing, Madame Neiphila (as it pleased the Queene to appoint) began to speake thus. Vertuous Ladies, if it were not more hard and uneasie for men, to make good their understanding and vertue, then apparant publication of their disgrace and folly; many would not labour in vaine, to curbe in their idle speeches with a bridle, as you have manifestly observed by the weake wit of Calandrino. Who needed no such fantastick circumstance, to cure the strange disease, which he imagined (by sottish perswasions) to have: had hee not been so lavish of his tongue, and accused his Wife of over-mastering him. Which maketh me remember a Novell, quite contrary to this last related, namely, how one man may strive to surmount another in malice; yet he to sustaine the greater harme, that had (at the first) the most advantage of his enemy, as I will presently declare unto you.

There dwelt in Sienna, and not many yeeres since, two
young men of equall age, both of them bearing the name of Francesco: but the one was descended of the Aniollieri, and the other likewise of the Fortarigi; so that they were commonly called Aniolliero, and Fortarigo, both Gentlemen, and well derived. Now, although in many other matters, their complexions did differ very much: Yet notwithstanding, they varied not in one bad qualitie, namely too great neglect of their Fathers, which caused their more frequent conversation, as very familiar and respective friends. But Aniolliero (being a very goodly and faire conditioned young Gentleman) apparently perceiving, that he could not maintaine himselfe at Sienna, in such estate as he liked, and upon the pension allowed him by his Father, hearing also, that at the Marquisate of Ancona, there lived the Popes Legate, a worthy Cardinall, his much indeared good Lord and friend: he intended to goe visite him, as hoping to advance his fortunes by him.

Having acquainted his Father with this determination, he concluded with him, to have that from him in a moment which might supply his wants for many moneths, because he would be clothed gallantly, and mounted honourably. And seeking for a servant necessary to attend on him, it chanced that Fortarigo hearing thereof, came presently to Aniolliero, intreating him in the best manner he could, to let him waite on him as his serving man, promising both dutiful and diligent attendance: yet not to demaund any other wages, but onely payment of his ordinary expences. Aniolliero made him answere, that he durst not give him entertainment, not in regard of his insufficiency, and unaptness for service: but because he was a great Gamester, and divers times would be beastly drunke? whereto Fortarigo replyed that hee would refraine from both those foule vices, and addict all his endeavor wholly to please him, without just taxation of any grosse errour; making such solemne vowes and protestations beside, as conquered Aniolliero, and won his consent.

Being entred upon his journey, and arriving in a morning at Buonconvento, there Aniolliero determined to dine, and afterward, finding the heate to be unfit for travaile; he

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caused a bed to be prepared, wherein being laid to rest by
the helpe of Fortarigo, he gave him charge, that after the
heates violence was overpast, hee should not faile to call
and awake him. While Aniolliero slept thus in his bed,
Fortarigo, never remembring his solemne vowes and pro-
mises: went to the Taverne, where having drunke indif-
f erently, and finding company fit for the purpose, he fell to
play at the dice with them. In a very short while, he had
not onely lost his money, but all the cloathes on his backe
likewise, and coveting to recover his losses againe; naked
in his shirt, he went to Aniollieroes Chamber, where finding
him yet soundly sleeping, he tooke all the money he had in
his purse, and then returned backe to play, speeding in the
same manner as hee did before, not having one poore penny
left him.

Aniolliero chancing to awake, arose and made him
ready, without any servant to helpe him; then calling for
Fortarigo, and not hearing any tydings of him: he began
immediately to imagine, that he was become drunke, and
so had falne asleepe in one place or other, as very often
he was wont to doe. Wherefore, determining so to leave
him, he caused the male and Saddle to be set on his horse,
and so to furnish himselfe with a more honest servant at
Corsignano.

But when hee came to pay his hoste, hee found not any
penny left him: whereupon (as well he might) he grew
greatly offended, and raised much trouble in the house,
charged the hoasts people to have robde him, and threaten-
ing to have them sent as prisoners to Sienna. Suddenly
entred Fortarigo in his shirt, with intent to have stolne
Aniollieroes garments, as formerly hee did the money out
of his purse, and seeing him ready to mount on horsebacke,
hee saide.

How now Aniolliero? What shall we goe away so
soone? I pray you Sir tarry a little while, for an honest
man is comming hither, who hath my Doublet engaged for
eight and thirty shillings; and I am sure that he will
restore it me back for five and thirty, if I could presently
pay him downe the money.
During the speeches, an other entred among them, who assured Aniolliero, that Fortarigo was the Thiefe which robde him of his money, shewing him also how much hee had lost at the Dice: Wherewith Aniolliero being much mooved, very angrily reprooved Fortarigo, and, but for feare of the Law, would have offered him outrage, thretning to have him hangd by the neck, or else condemned to the Gallies belonging to Florence, and so mounted on his horse. Fortarigo making shew to the standers by, as if Aniolliero menaced some other body, and not him, said. Come Aniolliero, I pray thee let us leave this frivilous prating, for (indeede) it is not worth a Button, and minde a matter of more importance: my Doublet will bee had againe for five and thirty shillings, if the money may bee tendered downe at this very instant, whereas if we deferre it till to morrow, perhaps hee will then have the whole eight and thirty which he lent me, and he doth me this pleasure, because I am ready (at another time) to affoord him the like courtesie; why then should we loose three shillings, when they may so easily be saved.

Aniolliero hearing him speake in such confused manner, and perceiving also, that they which stood gazing by, beleved (as by their lookes appeared) that Fortarigo had not played away his Masters mony at the Dice, but rather that he had some stocke of Fortarigoes in his custody; angrily answered; Thou sawcy companion, what have I to doe with thy Doublet? I would thou wert hangd, not only for playing away my money, but also by delaying thus my journey, and yet boldly thou standest out-facing mee, as if I were no better then thy fellow. Fortarigo held on still his former behaviour, without using any respect or reverence to Aniolliero, as if all the accusations did not concerne him, but saying, Why should wee not take the advantage of three shillings profit? Thinkest thou, that I am not able to doe as much for thee? why, lay out so much money for my sake, and make no more haste then needs we must, because we have day-light enough to bring us (before night) to Torreniero. Come, draw thy purse, and pay the money, for upon mine honest word, I may enquire throughout all
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Sienna, and yet not find such another Doublet as this of mine is. To say then, that I should leave it, where it now lyeth pawned, and for eight and thirty shillings, when it is richly more worth then fifty, I am sure to suffer a double endammagement thereby.

You may well imagine, that Aniolliero was now enraged beyond all patience, to see himselfe both robde of his money, and overborne with presumptuous language: wherefore, without making any more replications, he gave the spurre to his horse, and rode away towards Torreniero. Now fell Fortarigo into a more knavish intention against Aniolliero, and being very speedy in running, followed apace after him in his shirt, crying out still aloude to him all the way, to let him have his Doublet againe. Aniolliero riding on very fast, to free his eares from this idle importunity, it fortuned that Fortarigo espied divers countrey Pezants, laboring in the fields about their businesse, and by whom Aniolliero (of necessity) must passe: To them he cryed out so loude as he could; Stay the Thiefe, Stop the Thiefe, he rides away so fast, having robde me.

They being provided, some with Prongges, Pitchforkes and Spades, and others with the like weapons fit for Husbandry, stept into the way before Aniolliero: and beleeving undoubtedly, that he had robde the man which pursued him in his shirt, stayed and apprehended him. Whatsoever Aniolliero could doe or say, prevailed not any thing with the unmannerly Clownes, but when Fortarigo was arrived among them, he braved Aniolliero most impudently, saying.

What reason have I to spoyle thy life (thou traiterous Villaine) to rob and spoyle thy Master thus on the high way? Then turning to the Countrey Boores: How much deare friends (quoth he) am I beholding to you for this unexpected kindnesse? You behold in what manner he left me in my Lodging, having first playd away all my money at the Dice, and then deceiving me of my horse and garments also: but had not you (by great good lucke) thus holpe mee to stay him; a poore Gentleman had bin undone for ever, and I should never have found him againe.
Aniollierò avouched the truth of his wrong received, but the base peazants, giving credite onely to Fortarigoes lying exclamations: tooke him from his horse, despoyled him of all his wearing apparrell, even to the very Bootes from off his Legges: suffered him to ride away from him in that manner, and Aniollierò left so in his shirt, to dance a bare-foote Galliard after him, either towards Sienna, or any place else.

Thus Aniollierò, purposing to visite his Cousin the Cardinal like a Gallant, and at the Marquisate of Ancona, returned backe poorly in his shirt unto Buonconvento, and durst not (for shame) repaire to Sienna. In the end, he borrowed money on the other horse which Fortarigo rode on, and remained there in the Inne, whence riding to Corsignano, where he had divers Kinsmen and Friends, he continued there so long with them, till he was better furnished from his Father.

Thus you may perceive, that the cunning Villanies of Fortarigo, hindred the honest intended enterprise of Aniollierò, howbeit in fit time and place, nothing afterward was left unpunished.
Calandrino became extraordinarily enamoured of a young Damosell, named Nicholetta. Bruno prepared a Charme or writing for him, avouching constantly to him, that so soone as he touched the Damosell therewith, she should follow him whithersoever hee would have her. She being gone to an appointed place with him, hee was found there by his wife, and dealt withall according to his deserving.

THE FIFT NOVELL

In just reprehension of those vaine-headed ffooles, that are led and governed by idle perswasions.

BECAUSE the Novell reported by Madame Neiphila was so soone concluded, without much laughter, or commendation of the whole Company: the Queene turned hir selfe towards Madam Fiammetta, enjoyning her to succeed in apt order; and she being as ready as sodainly commanded, began as followeth. Most gentle Ladies, I am perswaded of your opinion in judgement with mine, that there is not any thing, which can bee spoken pleasingly, except it be conveniently suited with apt time and place: in which respect, when Ladies and Gentlewomen are bent to discoursing, the due election of them both are necessarily required. And therefore I am not unmindfull, that our meeting heere (ayming at nothing more, then to out-weare the time with our generall contentment) should tye us to the course of our pleasure and recreation, to the same conveniency of time and place; not sparing, though some have bin nominated oftestimes in our passed arguments; yet, if occasion serve, and the nature of variety be well considered, wee may speake of the selfesame persons againe.

Now, notwithstanding the actions of Calandrino have 4:U
beene indifferently canvazed among us; yet, remem'ring what Philostratus not long since saide, That they intended to nothing more then matter of mirth: I presume the boldlier, to report another Novell of him, beside them already past. And, were I willing to conceale the truth, and cloath it in more circumstantiall manner: I could make use of contrary names, and paint it in a poeticall fiction, perhaps more probable, though not so pleasing. But because wandring from the truth of things, doth much diminish (in relation) the delight of the hearers: I will build boldly on my fore-alledged reason, and tel you truly how it hapned.

Niccholao Cornacchini was once a Citizen of ours, and a man of great wealth; who, among other his rich possessions in Camerata, builded there a very goodly house, which being perfected ready for painting: he compounded with Bruno and Buffalmaco, who bicause their worke required more helpe then their owne, they drew Nello and Calandrino into their association, and began to proceed in their businesse. And because there was a Chamber or two, having olde moveables in them, as Bedding, Tables, and other Houshold stuffe beside, which were in the custody of an old Woman that kepte the house, without the helpe of any other servants else, a Son unto the saide Niccholao, beeing named Phillippo, resorted thither divers times, with one or other prety Damosell in his company (in regard he was unmarried) where he would abide a day or two with her, and then convey her home againe.

At one time among the rest, it chanced that he brought a Damosell thither named Nicholetta, who was maintained by a wily companion, called Magione, in a dwelling which hee had at Camaldoli, and (indeed) no honester then she should be. She was a very beautifull young woman, wear-ing garments of great value, and (according to her quality) well spoken, and of commendable carriage. Comming forth of her Chamber one day, covered with a White veyle, because her haire hung loose about her, which shee went to wash at a Well in the middle Court, bathing there also her face and hands: Calandrino going (by chance) to the
same Well for water, gave her a secret salutation. She kindly returning the like courtesie to him, began to observe him advisedly: more, because he looked like a man newly come thither, then any handsomnesse she percyyved in him.

Calandrino threw wanton glances at her, and seeing she was both faire and lovely, began to finde some occasion of tarrying, so that he returned not with water to his other associates, yet neither knowing her, or daring to deliver one word. She, who was not to learn her lesson in alluring, noting what affectionate regards (with bashfulnesse) he gave her: answered him more boldly with the like; but meerly in scorning manner, breathing forth divers dissembled sighs among them: so that Calandrino became foolishly inveigled with her love, and would not depart out of the Court, untill Phillippo, standing above in his Chamber window called her thence.

When Calandrino was returned backe to his businesse, he could do nothing else, but shake the head, sigh, puffe, and blowe, which being observed by Bruno (who alwayes fitted him according to his folly, as making a meer mockery of his very best behaviour) sodainly he said. Why how now Calandrino? Sigh, puffe, and blow man? What may be the reason of these unwonted qualities? Calandrino immediately answered, saying: My friendly Companion Bruno, if I had one to lend me a little helpe, I should very quickly become well enough. How? quoth Bruno, doth any thing offend thee, and wilt thou not reveale it to thy friends? Deare Bruno, said Calandrino, there is a proper handsome woman here in the house, the goodliest creature that ever any eye beheld, much fairer then the Queen of Fairies her selfe, who is so deeply falne in love with mee, as thou wouldst thinke it no lesse then a wonder; and yet I never sawe her before, till yer while when I was sent to fetch water. A very strange case, answered Bruno, take heed Calandrino, that shee bee not the lovely friend to Phillippo, our yong Master, for then it may prove a dangerous matter.

Calandrino stood scratching his head an indifferent while,
and then sodainly replyed thus. Now trust me Bruno, it is to bee doubted, because he called her at his Window, and she immediatly went up to his Chamber. But what doe I care if it be so? Have not the Gods themselves bene beguiled of their Wenches, who were better men then ever Phillippo can be, and shall I stand in feare of him? Bruno replied: Be patient Calandrino, I will enquire what Woman she is, and if she be not the wife or friend to our young master Phillippo, with faire perswasions I can over-rule the matter, because shee is a familiar acquaintance of mine. But how shall wee doe, that Buffalmaco may not know heereof? I can never speake to her, if hee be in my company. For Buffalmaco (quoth Calandrino) I have no feare at all, but rather of Nello, because he is a neer Kinsman to my wife, and he is able to undo me quite, if once it should come to his hearing. Thou saist well, replyed Bruno, therefore the matter hath neede to be very cleanly carried.

Now let me tell you, the Woman was well enough knowne to Bruno, as also her quality of life, which Phillippo had acquainted him withall, and the reason of her resorting thither. Wherefore, Calandrino going forth of the roome where they wrought, onely to gaine another sight of Nicholetta, Bruno revealed the whole history to Buffalmaco and Nello; they all concluding together, how this amorous fit of the foole was to be followed. And when Calandrino was returned backe againe; in whispering maner Bruno said to him. Hast thou once more scene her? Yes, yes Bruno, answered Calandrino: Alas, she hath slaine me with her very eye, and I am no better then a dead man. Be patient said Bruno, I will goe and see whether she be the same woman which I take her for, or no: and if it prove so, then never feare, but refer the businesse unto me.

Bruno descending downe the staires, found Phillippo and Nicholetta in conference together, and stepping unto them, discoursed at large, what manner of man Calandrino was, and how farre he was falne in love with her: so that they made a merry conclusion, what should be performed in this
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And being come backe againe to Calandrino, he saide. It is the same woman whereof I told thee, and therefore wee must worke wisely in the businesse: for if Phillippo perceive any thing, all the water in Arno will hardly serve to quench his fury. But what wouldst thou have me say to her on thy behalfe, if I compass the meanes to speake with her? First of all (quoth Calandrino) and in the prime place, tell her, that I wish infinite bushels of those blessings, which makes Maides Mothers, and begetteth children. Next, that I am onely hers, in any service she wil command me. Dooest thou understand me what I say? Sufficiently answered Bruno, leave all to me.

When supper time was come, that they gave over working, and were descended downe into the Court: there they found Phillippo and Nicholetta readily attending to expect some beginning of amorous behaviour, and Calandrino glanced such leering looks at her, coughing and spetting with hummes and haes, yea in such close and secret manner, that a starke blinde sight might verie easily have perceyved it.

She also on the other side, returned him such queint and cunning carriage, as enflamed him farre more furiously, even as if hee were ready to leape out of himselfe. In the meane while, Phillippo, Buffalmaco and the rest that were there present, seeming as if they were seriouslie consulting together, and perceived nothing of his fantastick behavior, according as Bruno had appointed, could scarce refraine from extremity of laughter, they noted such antick trickes in Calandrino.

Having spent an indifferent space in this foppish folly, the houre of parting came, but not without wonderful affliction to Calandrino; and as they were going towards Florence, Bruno saide closely to Calandrino. I dare assure thee, that thou hast made her to consume and melt, even like ice against the warme Sunne. On my word, if thou wouldst bring thy Gitterne, and sit downe by us, singing some few amorous songs of thine owne making, when we are beneath about our businesse in the Court: shee would
presently leape out of the Window, as being unable to tarry from thee.

I like thy counsell well Bruno, answered Calandrin; but shall I bring my Gitterne thither indeed? Yes, in any case, replied Bruno, for Musicke is a matter of mighty prevailing. Ah Bruno (quoth Calandrino) thou wouldst not credit me in the morning, when I tolde thee, how the very sight of my person had wounded her: I perceived it at the very first looke of her owne, for shee had no power to conceal it. Who but my selfe could so soone have enflamed her affection, and being a woman of such worth and beauty as shee is? There are infinite proper handsome fellowes, that daily haunt the company of dainty Damosels, yet are so shallow in the affayres of love, as they are not able to win one wench of a thousand, no, not with all the wit they have, such is their extreame follie and ill fortune.

Then pausing a while, and sodainely rapping out a Lovers Oath or two, thus he proceeded. My dearest Bruno, thou shalt see how I can tickle my Gitterne, and what good sport will ensue thereon. If thou dost observe me with judgement, why man, I am not so old as I seeme to be, and she could perceive it at the very first view; yea, and she shall finde it so too, when we have leysure to consult upon further occasions: I finde my selfe in such a free and frolieke jocunditie of spirit, that I will make her to follow me, even as a fond woman doth after her child.

But beware, saide Bruno, that thou do not gripe her over-hard, and in kissing, bee carefull of biting, because the teeth stand in thy head like the pegges of a Lute, yet make a comely shew in thy faire wide mouth, thy cheeke looking like two of our artificiall Roses, swelling amiably, when thy jawes are well fild with meat. Calandrino hearing these hansome commendations, thought himselfe a man of action already, going, singing, and frisking before his companie so lively, as if he had not bin in his skin.

On the morrow, carrying his Gitterne thither with him, to the no little delight of his companions, hee both played
and sung a whole Bed-role of Songs, not addicting him-
selfe to any worke all the day: but loitering fantastically,
one while he gazed out at the window, then ran to the
gate, and oftentimes downe into the Court, onely to have
a sight of his Mistresse. She also (as cunningly) encountered
all his follies, by such directions as Bruno gave her, and
many more beside of her owne devising, to quicken him
still with new occasions: Bruno plaid the Ambassador
betweene them, in delivering the messages from Calandrino,
and then returning her answers to him. Sometimes when
she was absent thence (which often hapned as occasions
called her) then he would write letters in her name, and
bring them, as if they were sent by her, to give him hope
of what hee desired, but because she was then among her
kindred, yet she could not be unmindfull of him.

In this manner, Bruno and Buffalmaco (who had the
managing of this amorous businesse) made a meere Gregory
of poore Calandrino, causing him somtimes to send her,
one while a pretty peece of Ivory, then a faire wrought
purse, and a costly paire of knives, with other such like
friendly tokens: bringing him backe againe, as in requital
of them, counterfetted Rings of no valew, Bugles and
bables, which he esteemed as matters of great moment.
Moreover, at divers close and sodain meetings, they made
him pay for many dinners and suppers, amounting to
indifferent charges, onely to be careful in the furtherance
of his love-suit, and to conceale it from his wife.

Having wore out three or foure months space in this
fond and frivolous manner, without any other successe then
as hath bene declared; and Calandrino perceiving, that
the worke undertaken by him and his fellowes, grew very
neere uppon the finishing, which would barre him of any
longer resorting thither: hee began to soliciite Bruno more
importunately, then all the while before he hadde done.
In regard whereof, Nicoletta being one day come thither,
and Bruno having conferred both with her and Phillippo,
with ful determination what was to be done, he began with
Calandrino, saying. My honest Neighbour and Friend, this
Woman hath made a thousand promises, to graunt what
thou art so desirous to have, and I plainly perceive that
she hath no such meaning, but meerely plaies with both
our noses. In which respect, seeing she is so perfidious,
and will not perfourme one of all her faithfull-made
promises: if thou wilt consent to have it so, she shall
be compelled to do it whether she will or no. Yea marry
Bruno, answered Calandrino, that were an excellent course
indeede, if it could be done, and with expedition.

Bruno stood musing awhile to himselfe, as if he had
some strange stratagem in his braine, and afterward said.
Hast thou so much corage in Calandrino, as but to handle a
peece of written parchment, which I will give thee? Yes,
that I have answered Calandrino, I hope that needed not
to be doubted. Well then, saide Bruno, procure that I
may have a piece of Virgin Parchment brought mee, with
a living Bat or Reremouse; three graines of Incense, and
an hallowed Candle, then leave me to effect what shall
content thee. Calandrino watched all the next night
following, with such preparation as he could make, onely
to catch a Bat; which being taken at the last, he broght
it alive to Bruno (with all the other materials appointed)
who taking him alone into a backer Chamber, there hee
wrote divers follies on the Parchment, in the shape of
strange and unusuall Charracters, which he delivered to
Calandrino, saying: Be bold Calandrino, and build con-
stantly unpon my wordes, that if thou canst but touch her
with this sacred Charractred charme, she will immediately
follow thee, and fulfil whatsoever thou pleasest to command
hir. Wherefore, if Phillippo do this day walke any whither
abroad from this house, presume to salute her, in any
manner whatsoever it be, and touching her with the written
lines, go presently to the barn of hay, which thou perceivest
so neere adjoyning, the onely convenient place that can be,
because few or none resort thither. She shall (in des-pight
of her blood) follow thee; and when thou hast her there, I
leave thee then to thy valiant victory. Calandrino stood
on tiptoe, like a man newly molded by Fortune, and
warranted Bruno to fulfil all effectually.

Nello, whom Calandrino most of all feared and mis-
trusted, had a hand as deepe as any of the rest in this deceite, and was as forward also to have it performed, by Brunoes direction, hee went unto Florence, where being in company with Calandrinoes Wife, thus hee began.

Cousine, thine unkinde usage by thine husband, is not unknown to me, how he did beate thee (beyond the compasse of all reason) when he brought home stones from the plain of Mugnone; in which regard, I am very desirous to have thee revenged on him: which if thou wilt not do, never repute me heereafter for thy Kinsman and Friend. He is falne in love with a Woman of the common gender, one that is to be hired for money: he hath his private meetings with her, and the place is partly knowne to me, as by a secret appointment (made very lately) I am credibly given to understand; wherefore walke presently along with me, and thou shalt take him in the heat of his knavery.

All the while as these words were uttering to her, shee could not dissemble her inward impatience, but starting up as halfe frantick with fury, she said. O notorious villaine! Darest thou abuse thine honest wife so basely? I sweare by blessed Saint Bridget, thou shalt be paid with coyne of thine owne stampe. So casting a light wearing Cloake about her, and taking a yong woman in her company; shee went away with Nello in no meane haste. Bruno seeing her comming a farre off, said to Phillippo: You Sir, you know what is to be done, act your part according to your appointment. Phillippo went immediately into the roome, where Calandrino and his other Consorts were at worke, and said to them. Honest friends, I have certaine occasions which command mine instant being at Florence: worke hard while I am absent, and I will not be unthankefull for it. Away hee departed from them, and hid himselfe in a convenient place, where he could not be descryed, yet see whatsoever Calandrino did: who when he imagined Phillippo to be farre enough off, descended downe into the Court, where he found Nicholetta sitting alone, and going towards her, began to enter into discoursing with her.

She knowing what remained to bee done on her behalfe,
drew somewhat neere him, and shewed her selfe more familiar then formerly she had done: by which favourable meanes, he touched her with the charmed Parchment, which was no sooner done; but with out using any other kinde of language, hee went to the hay-Barne, whither Nicholletta followed him, and both being entred, he closed the Barne doore, and then stood gazing on her, as if hee had never scene her before. Standing stil as in a study, or bethinking himselfe what he should say: she began to use affable gesture to him, and taking him by the hand, made shew as if shee meant to kisse him, which yet she refrained, though he (rather then his life) would gladly have had it. Why how now deare Calandrino (quoth she) Jewell of my joy, comfort of my heart, how many times have I longed for thy sweet Company? And enjoying it now, according to mine owne desire, dost thou stand like a Statue, or man alla morte? The rare tunes of the Gitterne, but (much more) the melodious accents of thy voyce, excelling Orpheus or Amphion, so ravished my soule, as I know not how to expresse the depth of mine affection; and yet hast thou brought me hither, onely to looke babies in mine eyes, and not so much as speake one kinde word to me?

Bruno and Buffalmaoco, having hid themselves close behinde Philippo, they both heard and saw all this amorous conflict, and as Calandrino was quickning his courage, and wiping his mouth, with intent to kisse her: his wife and Nello entred into the Barne, which caused Nicholetta to get her gone presently, sheltring her self where Philippo lay scouting. But the enraged woman ranne furiously upon poore daunted Calandrino, making such a pitiful massacre with her nailes, and tearing the haire from his head, as hee meerely looked like an infected Anatomy. Fowle loathsome dog (quoth she) must you be at your minions, and leave mee hunger-starved at home? An olde knave with (almost) never a good tooth in thy head, and yet art thou neighing after young wenches? hast thou not worke enough at home, but must bee gadding in to other mens grounds? Are these the fruietes of wandring abroad?
THE NINTH DAY

Calandrino being in this pittifull perplexity, stood like one neither alive nor dead, nor daring to use any resistance against her; but fell on his knees before his Wife, holding up his hands for mercy, and entreating her (for charities sake) not to torment him any more: for he had committed no harme at all, and the Gentlewoman was his Masters Wife, who came with no such intent thither, as shee fondly imagined. Wife, or wife not (quoth she) I would have none to meddle with my Husband, but I that have the most right to him.

Bruno and Buffalmaco, who had laughed all this while heartily at this pastime, with Phillippo and Nicholetta; came running in haste to know the reason of this loude noise, and after they had pacified the woman with gentle perswa-sions: they advised Calandrino, to walke with his Wife to Florence, and returne no more to worke there againe, least Phillippo hearing what had hapned, should be revenged on him with some outrage. Thus poore Calandrino miserably misused and beaten, went home to Florence with his Wife, scoulded and raild at all the way, beside his other molestations (day and night) afterward: his Companions, Phillippo and Nicholetta, making themselves merry at his mis-fortune.
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL VI

Two yong Gentlemen, the one named Panuccio, and the other Adriano, lodged one night in a poore Inne, where one of them went to bed to the Hostes Daughter, and the other (by mistaking his way in the darke) to the Hostes Wife. He which lay with the daughter, happened afterward to the Hostes bed, and told him what he had done, as thinking he spake to his own companyon. Discontentment growing betweene them, the Mother perceiving her errour, went to bed to her daughter, and with discreet language, made a generall pacification.

THE SIXT NOVELL

Wherein is manifested, that an offence committed ignorantly, and by mistaking; ought to be covered with good advise, and civill discretion.

CALANDRINO, whose mishaps had so many times made the whole assembly merry, and this last passing among them with indifferent commendations: upon a generall silence commanded, the Queene gave order to Pamphilus, that hee should follow next, as indeed he did, beginning thus. Praise-worthy Ladies, the name of Nicoletta, so fondly affected by Calandrino, putteth mee in minde of a Novell, concerning another Nicoletta, of whom I purpose to speake: to the ende you may observe how by a sudden wary fore-sight, a discreet woman compassed the meanes to avoyde a notorious scandall.

On the plaine of Mugnone, neere to Florence, dwelt (not long since) an honest meane man, who kept a poore Inne or Ostery for travellers, where they might have some slender entertainement for their money. As he was but a
poore man, so his house afforded but very small receit of guests, not lodging any but on necessity, and such as he had some knowledge of. This honest poore hoste had a woman (sufficiently faire) to his wife, by whom hee had also two children, the one a comely young maiden, aged about fifteene yeares, and the other a sonne, not fully (as yet) a yeare old, and sucking on the mothers brest.

A comely youthfull Gentleman of our City, became amorously affected to the Damosell, resorting thither divers times as hee travelled on the way, to expresse how much he did respect her. And shee accounting her fortune none of the meanest, to bee beloved by so youthfull a Gallant, declared such vertuous and modest demeanour, as might deserve his best opinion of her: so that their love grew to an equall sympathy, and mutuall contentment of them both, in expectation of further effects; he being named Panuccio, and she Nicholletta.

The heate of affection thus encreasing day by day, Panuccio grew exceedingly desirous to enjoy the fruits of his long continued liking, and divers devises mustred in his braine, how he might compasse one nights lodging in her fathers house, whereof hee knew every part and parcell, as not doubting to effect what hee desired, yet undiscovered by any, but the maide her selfe.

According as his intention aymed, so he longed to put it in execution, and having imparted his mind to an honest loyall friend, named Adriano, who was acquainted with the course of his love: hyring two horses, and having Portmantues behind them, filled with matters of no moment, they departed from Florence, as if they had some great journey to ride. Having spent the day time where themselves best pleased, darke night being entred, they arrived on the plaine of Mugnone, where, as if they were come from the parts of Romanio, they rode directly to this poore Inne, and knocking at the doore, the honest Hoste (being familiar and friendly to all commers) opened the doore, when Panuccio spake in this manner to him. Good man, we must request one nights lodging with you, for we thought to have reached so farre as Florence, but dark
night preventing us, you see at what a late houre wee are come hither. Signior Panuccio, answered the hoste, it is not unknowne to you, how unfitting to you, how unfitting my poore house is, for entertaining such guests as you are: Nevertheless, seeing you are overtaken by so unseasonable an houre, and no other place is neere for your receite; I will gladly lodge you so well as I can.

When they were dismounted from their horses, and entred into the simple Inne: having taken order for feeding their horses, they accepted such provision, as the place and time afforded, requesting the Hoste to suppe with them. Now I am to tell you, that there was but one small Chamber in the house, wherin stood three beds, as best the Hoste had devised to place them, two of them standing by the walles side, and the third fronting them both, but with such close and narrow passage, as very hardly could one step betweene them. The best of these three beds was appointed for the Gentle-men, and therein they layd them down to rest, but sleepe they could not, albeit they dissembled it very formally. In the second Bed was Nicholetta the daughter, lodged by her selfe, and the father and mother in the third, and because she was to give the child sucke in the night time, the Cradle (wherein it lay) stood close by their beds side, because the childes crying or any other occasion concerning it, should not disquiet the Gentlemen.

Panuccio having subtly observed all this, and in what manner they went to bed; after such a space of time, as he imagined them to be all fast asleepe, he arose very softly, and stealing to the bed of Nicholetta, lay downe gently by her. And albeit she seemed somewhat afraid at the first, yet when she perceived who it was, shee rather bad him welcome, then shewed her selfe any way discontented. Now while Panuccio continued thus with the maide, it fortuned that a Cat threw down somewhat in the house, the noise wherof awaked the wife, and fearing greater harme, then (indeed) had hapned, she arose without a Candle, and went groping in the darke, towards the place where shee heard the noyse. Adriano, who had no other meaning but well, found occasion also to rise, about some naturall necessity, and
making his passage in the darke, stumbled on the childe's Cradle (in the way) where the woman had set it, and being unable to passe by, without removing it from the place: tooke and set it by his owne beds side, and having done the businesse for which he rose, returned to his bed againe, never remembiring to set the Cradle where first he found it.

The Wife having found the thing throwne downe being of no value or moment, cared not for lighting any candle; but rating the Cat, returned backe, feeling for the bed where her Husband lay, but finding not the Cradle there, she said to her selfe. What a foolish woman am I, that cannot well tell my selfe what I doe? Instead of my Husbands bed, I am going to both my guests.

So, stepping on a little further, she found the childe's Cradle, and laid her selfe downe by Adriano, thinking shee had gone right to her Husband. Adriano being not yet falne asleepe, feeling the hostesse in bed with him: tooke advantage of so faire an occasion offered, and what he did, is no businesse of mine, (as I heard) neither found the woman any fault. Matters comming to passe in this strange manner, and Panuccio fearing, lest sleepe seazing on him, he might disgrace the maides reputation: taking his kinde farewell of her, with many kisses and sweet imbraces: returned againe to his owne Bed, but meeting with the Cradle in his way, and thinking it stood by the hostes Bed, (as truely it did so at the first) went backe from the Cradle, and stept into the hostes Bed indeed, who awaked upon his very entrance, albeit he slept very soundly before.

Panuccio supposing that he was laid downe by his loving friend Adriano, merrily said to the Hoste. I protest to thee, as I am a Gentleman, Nicholetta is a dainty delicate wench, and worthy to be a very good mans wife: this night shee hath given mee the sweetest entertainement, as the best Prince in the world can wish no better, and I have kist her most kindly for it. The Hoste hearing these newes, which seemed very unwelcome to him, said first to himself: What make such a devill heere in my Bedde? Afterward being more rashly angry, then well advised, hee said to Panuccio. Canst thou make vaunt of such a mounstrous villany? Or thinkest thou, that
heaven hath not due vengeance in store, to requite all wicked deeds of darknesse? If all should sleepe, yet I have courage sufficient to right my wrong, and yet as olde as I am thou shalt be sure to finde it.

Our amorous Panuccio being none of the wisest young men in the world, perceiving his errour; sought not to amend it, (as well he might have done) with some queint straine of wit, carried in quicke and cleanly manner, but angerly answered. What shall I find that thou darst doe to me? am I any way afraid of thy threatnings? The Hoste imagining she was in bed with her Husband, said to Adriano: Harke Husband, I thinke our Guests are quarrelling together, I hope they will doe no harme to one another. Adriano laughing outright, answered. Let them alone, and become friends againe as they fell out: perhaps they dranke too much yesternight.

The woman perceiving that it was her husband that quarrelled, and distinguishing the voyee of Adriano from his: knew presently where shee was, and with whom; wherefore having wit at will, and desirous to cloude an error unadvisedly committed, and with no willing consent of her selfe: without returning any more words, presently she rose, and taking the Cradle with the child in it, removed it thence to her daughters bed side, although shee had no light to helpe her, and afterward went to bed to her, where (as if she were but newly awaked) she called her Husband, to understand what angry speeches had past betwene him and Panuccio. The Hoste replyed, saying. Didst thou not heare him wife, brag and boast, how he hath lyen this night with our daughter Nicholetta? Husband (quoth she) he is no honest Gentleman; if hee should say so, and beleeve me it is a manifest lye, for I am in bed with her my selfe, and never yet closed mine eyes together, since the first houre I laid me downe: it is unmannerly done of him to speake it, and you are little lesse then a logger-head, if you doe beleeve it. This proceedeth from your bibbing and swilling yesternight, which (as it seemeth) maketh you to walke about the roome in your sleepe, dreaming of wonders in the night season: it were no great sinne if you brake your neck, to
THE NINTH DAY

Teach you keepe a fairer quarter; and how commeth it to passe, that Signior Panuccio could not keepe himselfe in his owne bed?

Adriano (on the other side) perceiving how wisely the woman excused her owne shame and her daughters; to backe her in a businesse so cunningly begun, he called to Panuccio, saying. Have not I tolde thee an hundred times, that thou art not fit to lye any where, out of thine owne lodging? What a shame is this base imperfection to thee, by rising and walking thus in the night-time, according as thy dreames doe wantonly delude thee, and cause thee to forsake thy bed, telling nothing but lies and fables, yet avouching them for manifest truths? Assuredly this will procure no meane perill unto thee: Come hither, and keepe in thine owne bedde for meere shame.

When the honest meaning Host heard, what his own Wife and Adriano had confirmed: he was verily perswaded, that Panuccio spake in a dreame all this while: And to make it the more constantly apparant, Panuccio (being now growne wiser by others example) lay talking and blundring to himselfe, even as if dreames or perturbations of the minde did much molest him, with strange distractions in franticke manner. Which the Hoste perceiving, and compassionating his case, as one man should do anothers: he tooke him by the shoulders, jogging and hunching him, saying. Awake Signior Panuccio, and get you gone hence to your owne bed.

Panuccio, yawning and stretching out his limbes, with unusuall groanes and respirations, such as (better) could bee hardly dissembled: seemed to wake as out of a traunce, and calling his friend Adriano, said.

Adriano, is it day, that thou dost waken me? It may be day or night replyed Adriano, for both (in these fits) are alike to thee. Arise man for shame, and come to thine lodging. Then faining to be much troubled and sleepie, he arose from the hoast, and went to Adrianoes bed.

When it was day, and all in the house risen, the hoast began to smile at Panuccio, mocking him with his idle dreaming and talking in the night.

4:V
So, falling from one merry matter to another, yet without any mislike at all: the Gentlemen, having their horses prepared, and their Portmantues fastened behind, drinking to their hoast, mounted on horsebacke, and they rode away towards Florence, no lesse contented with the manner of occasions happened, then the effects they sorted to. Afterward, other courses were taken, for the continuance of this begun pleasure with Nicholetta, who made her mother beleeeve, that Panuccio did nothing else but dreame. And the mother her selfe remembring how kindely Adriano had used her (a fortune not expected by her before :) was more then halfe of the minde, that she did then dreame also, while she was waking.

Talano de Molese dreamed, That a Wolfe rent and tore his wives face and throate. Which dreame he told to her, with advise to keepe her selfe out of danger; which she refusing to doe, received what followed.

THE SEVENTH NOVELL

Whereby (with some indifferent reason) it is concluded, that Dreames do not alwayes fall out to be leasings.

By the conclusion of Pamphilus his Novel, wherein the womans ready wit, at a time of such necessity, carried deserved commendations: the Queen gave command to Madam Pampinea, that she should next begin with hers, and so she did, in this manner. In some discourses (gracious Ladies) already past among us, the truth of apparitions in dreames hath partly bin approved, whereof very many have made a mockery. Nevertheless, whateuer hath heeretofore bin sayde, I purpose to acquaint you with a very short Novell, of a strange accident happening.
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unto a neighbour of mine, in not crediting a Dreame which her Husband told her.

I cannot tell, whether you knew Talano de Molese, or no, a man of much honour, who tooke to wife a yong Gentlewoman, named Margarita, as beautifull as the best: but yet so peevish, scornfull, and fantasticall, that she disdained any good advice given her; nyether could any thing be done, to cause her contentment; which absurd humors were highly displeasing to her husband: but in regard he knew not how to helpe it, constrainedly he did endure it. It came to passe, that Talano being with his wife, at a summer-house of his owne in the country, he dreamed one night, that he saw his Wife walking in a faire wood, which adjoyned neere unto his house, and while she thus continued there, he seemed to see issue foorth from a corner of the said Wood, a great and furious Wolfe, which leaping sodainly on her, caught her by the face and throate, drawing her downe to the earth, and offering to drag her thence. But he crying out for helpe, recovered her from the Wolfe, yet having her face and throat very pitifully rent and tore.

In regard of this terrifying dreame, when Talano was risen in the morning, and sate conversing with his wife, he spake thus unto hir. Woman, although thy froward wilfull Nature be such, as hath not permitted me one pleasing day with thee, since first we becam man and wife, but rather my life hath bene most tedious to me, as fearing still some mischeefe should happen to thee: yet let mee now in loving manner advise thee, to follow my counsell, and (this day) not to walke abroad out of this house. She demanded a reason for this advice of his. He related to her every particular of his dreame, adding with all these speeches.

True it is Wife (quoth he) that little credit should bee given to dreames: nevertheless, when they deliver advertisement of harms to ensuing, there is nothing lost by shunning and avoiding them. She fleering in his face, and shaking her head at him, replyed. Such harms as thou wishest, such thou dreamest of. Thou pretendest much pittie and care of me, but all to no other end: but what mischeefes thou dreamest happening unto mee, so wouldest
thou see them effect on me. Wherefore, I will well enough looke to my selfe, both this day, and at all times else: because thou shalt never make thy selfe merry, with any such misfortune as thou wishest unto me.

Well Wife, answered Talano, I knew well enough before, what thou wouldst say: An unsound head is soone scratcht with the very gentlest Combe: but believe as thou pleasest. As for my selfe, I speake with a true and honest meaning soule, and once againe I do advise thee, to keepe within our doores all this day: at least wise beware, that thou walke not into our wood, bee it but in regard of my dreame. Well sir (quoth she scoffingly) once you shall say, I followed your counsell: but within her selfe she fell to this murmuring. Now I perceive my husbands cunning colouring, and why I must not walke this day into our wood: he hath made a compact with some common Queane, closely to have her company there, and is afaide least I should take them tardy. Blike he would have me feed among blinde folke, and I were worthy to bee thought a starke foole, if I should not prevent a manifest trechery, being intended against me. Go thither therefore I will, and tarry there all the whole day long; but I will meet with him in his merchandize, and see the Pink wherin he adventures.

After this her secret consultation, her husband was no sooner gone forth at one doore, but shee did the like at another, yet so secretly as possibly she could devise to doe, and (without any delaying) she went to the Wood, wherein she hid her selfe very closely, among the thickest of the bushes, yet could discerne every way about her, if any body should offer to passe by her. While shee kept her selfe in this concealment, suspecting other mysterious matters, as her idle imagination had tutord her, rather then the danger of any Wolfe: out of a brakie thicket by her, sodainly rushed a huge and dreadfull Wolfe, as having found her by the sent, mounting uppe, and grasping her throat in his mouth, before she saw him, or could call to heaven for mercy.

Being thus seised of her, he carried her as lightly away, as if shee had bin no heavier then a Lambe, she being (by no
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means) able to cry, because he held her so fast by the throate, and hindred any helping of her selfe. As the Wolfe carried her thus from thence, he had quite strangled her, if certaine Shepheards had not met him, who with their outcries and exclaimes at the Wolfe, caused him to let her fall, and hast away to save his owne life. Notwithstanding the harme done to her throat and face, the shepheards knew her, and caried her home to her house, where she remained a long while after, carefully attended by Physitians and Chirurgians.

Now, although they were very expert and cunning men all, yet could they not so perfectly cure her, but both her throate, and part of her face were so blemished, that whereas she seemed a rare creature before, she was now deformed and much unsightly. In regard of which strange alteration, being ashamed to shew her selfe in any place, where formerly she had bene scene: she spent her time in sorrow and mourning, repenting her insolent and scornfull carriage, as also her rash running forth into danger, upon a foolish and jealous surmise, beleeving her husbands dreames the better for ever after.

Blondello (in a merry maner) caused Guiotto to beguile himselfe of a good dinner: for which deceit, Guiotto became cunningly revenged, by procuring Blondello to be unreasonably beaten and misused.

THE EIGHT NOVELL

Whereby plainly appeareth, that they which take delight in deceiving others, do well deserve to be deceived themselves.

IT was a generall opinion in the whole Joviall Companie, that whatsoever Talano saw in his sleepe, was not anie dreame, but rather a vision: considring, every part thereof fell out so directly, without the lest failing. But
when silence was enjoyned, then the Queene gave forth by evident demonstration, that Madam Lauretta was next to succeed, whereupon she thus began. As all they (judicious hearers) which have this day spoken before me, derived the ground or project of their Novels, from some other argument spoken of before: even so, the cruell revendge of the Scholler, yesterday discoursed at large by Madame Pampinea, maketh me to remember another Tale of like nature, some-what greevous to the sufferer, yet not in such cruell measure inflicted, as that on Madam Helena.

There dwelt sometime in Florence, one who was generally called by the name of Guiotto, a man being the greatest Gourmand, and grossest feeder, as ever was scene in any Countrey, all his meanes and procurements meerly unable to maintaine expences for filling his belly. But otherwise he was of sufficient and commendable carriage, fairely demeaned, and well discoursing on any argument: yet, not as a curious and spruce Courtier, but rather a frequenter of rich mens Tables, where choice of good cheere is sildome wanting, and such should have his company, albeit not invited, yet (like a bold intruder) he had the courage to bid himselfe welcome.

At the same time, and in our City of Florence also, there was another man, named Blondello, very low of stature, yet comly formed, quicke witted, more neat and brisk then a Butterflye, alwaies wearing a wrought silke cap on his head, and not a haire staring out of order, but the tuft flourishing above the forehead, and he such another trencher-fly for the table, as our forenamed Guiotto was. It so fel out on a morning in the Lent time, that hee went into the Fishmarket, where he bought two goodly Lampreyes, for Messer Viero de Cherchi, and was espied by Guiotto, who (comming to Blondello) said. What is the meaning of this cost, and for whom is it? Whereto Blondello thus answered. Yesternight, three other Lampries, far fairer and fatter then these, and a whole Sturgeon, were sent unto Messer Corso Donati, and being not sufficient to feede divers Gentlemen, whom hee hath invited this day to dine with him, hee caused me to buy these two beside: Doest not thou
intend to make one among them? Yes I warrant thee, replied Guiotto, thou knowest I can invite my selfe thither, without any other bidding.

So parting; about the houre of dinner time, Guiotto went to the house of the saide Messer Corso, whom he found sitting and talking with certain of his neighbors, but dinner was not (as yet) ready, neither were they come thither to dinner. Messer Corso demanded of Guiotto, what newes with him, and whither he went? Why Sir (said Guiotto) I come to dine with you, and your good company. Wherto Messer Corso answered, That he was welcom, and his other friends being gone, dinner was served in, none els therat present but Messer Corso and Guiotto: al the diet being a poore dish of Pease, a litle piece of Tunny, and a few smal fishes fried, without any other dishes to follow after. Guiotto seeing no better fare, but being disappointed of his expectation, as longing to feed on the Lampries and Sturgeon, and so to have made a ful dinner indeed: was of a quick apprehension, and apparantly perceived, that Blondello had meerly guld him in a knavery, which did not a litle vex him, and made him vow to be revenged on Blondello, as he could compasse occasion afterward.

Before many daies were past, it was his fortune to meete with Blondello, who having told this jest to divers of his friends, and much good merriment made thereat: he saluted Guiotto in ceremonious manner, saying. How didst thou like the fat Lampreyes and Sturgeon, which thou fedst on at the house of Messer Corso Donati? Wel Sir (answered Guiotto) perhaps before eight dayes passe over my head, thou shalt meet with as pleasing a dinner as I did. So, parting away from Blondello, he met with a Porter or burthen-bearer, such as are usually sent on errands; and hyring him to deliver a message for him, gave him a glasse bottle, and bringing him neere to the Hal-house of Cavieciuli, shewed him there a knight, called Signior Phillipo Argenti, a man of huge stature, stout, strong, vainglorious, fierce and sooner mooved to anger then any other man. To him (quoth Guiotto) thou must go with this bottle in thy hand, and say thus to him. Sir, Blondello sent me to you, and
courteously entreateth you, that you would enrubinate this glasse bottle with your best Claret Wine; because he would make merry with a few friends of his. But beware he lay no hand on thee, because he may bee easily induced to misuse thee, and so my businesse be disappointed. Well Sir replied the Porter, shal I say any thing else unto him? No (quoth Guiotto) only go and deliver this message, and when thou art returned, Ie pay thee for thy paines.

The Porter being gone to the house, delivered his message to the knight, who being a man of no great civill breeding, but furious, rash, and inconsiderate: presently conceived, that Blondello (whom he knew well enough) sent this message in meere mockage of him, and starting up with fiery lookes, said: What enrubination of Claret should I send him? and what have I to do with him, or his drunken friends? Let him and thee go hang your selves together. So he stept to catch hold on the Porter, but he (being well warnd before) was quicke and nimble, and escaping from him, returned backe to Guiotto (who observed all) and told him the answer of Signior Phillippo. Guiotto not a little contented, paied the Porter, and taried not in any place til he met with Blondello, to whom he said. When wast thou at the Hall of Cavicciuli? Not a long while, answerd Blondello, but why dost thou demand such a question? Because (quoth Guiotto) Signior Phillippo hath sought about for thee, yet knowe not I what he would have with thee. Is it so? replied Blondello, then I wil walke thither presently, to understand his pleasure.

When Blondello was thus parted from him, Guiotto folowed not farre off behind him, to behold the issue of this angry businesse; and Signior Phillippo, because he could not catch the Porter, continued much distempered, fretting and fuming, in regard he could not comprehend the meaning of the Porters message: but onely surmized, that Blondello (by the procurement of some body else) had done this in scorne of him. While he remained thus deeply discontented, he espied Blondello comming towards him, and meeting him by the way, he stept close to him, and gave him a cruell blow on the face, causing his nose to fall
THE NINTH DAY

out a bleeding. Alas Sir, said Blondello, wherefore do you strike me? Signior Phillippo, catching him by the haire of the head, trampled his wrought night-cap in the dirt, and his cloke also; when, laying many violent blowes on him, he said. Villanous Traitor as thou art, Ile teach thee what it is to enrubinate with Claret, either thy selfe, or any of thy cupping companions: Am I a child, to be jested withall?

Nor was he more furious in words, then in strokes also, beating him about the face, hardly leaving any haire on his head, and dragging him along in the mire, spoiling all his garments, and he not able (from the first blow given) to speake a word in defence of himselfe. In the end, Signior Phillippo having extreamly beaten him, and many people gathering about them, to succour a man so much misused, the matter was at large related, and manner of the message sending. For which, they all present, did greatly reprehend Blondello, considering he knew what kinde of man Phillippo was, not any way to be jested withall. Blondello in teares constantly maintained, that he never sent any such message for wine, or intended it in the least degree: so, when the tempest was more mildly calmed, and Blondello (thus cruelly beaten and durtied) had gotten home to his owne house, he could then remember, that (questionles) this was occasioned by Guiotto.

After some few dayes were passed over, and the hurts in his face indifferently cured; Blondello beginning to walke abroad againe, chanced to meet with Guiotto: who laughing heartily at him, sayde. Tell me Blondello, how doost thou like the enrubinating Clarret of Signior Phillippo? As well (quoth Blondello) as thou didst the Sturgeon and Lampreyes at Messer Corso Donaties. Why then (sayde Guiotto) let these two tokens continue familiar betweene thee and me, when thou wouldst bestow such another dinner on mee, then wil I enrubinate thy nose with a bottle of the same Clarret. But Blondello perceived (to his cost) that hee had met with the worser bargaine, and Guiotto got cheare, without any blowes: and therefore desired a peacefull attonement, each of them (always after) abstaining from flouting one another.
Two yong Gentlemen, the one named Melisso, borne in the City of Laiazzo: and the other Giosefo of Antioche, travailed together unto Salomon, the famous King of Great Britaine. The one desiring to learne what he should do, whereby to compasse and winne the love of men. The other craved to be enstructed, by what meanes hee might reclaime an headstrong and unruly wife. And what answeres the wise King gave unto them both, before they departed away from him.

THE NINTH NOVELL

Containing an excellent admonition, that such as covet to have the love of other men, must first learne themselves, how to love: Also, by what meanes such women as are curst and self-willed, may be reduced to civill obedience.

UPON the conclusion of Madame Laurettaes Novell, none now remained to succeede next in order, but onely the Queene her selfe, the priviledge reserved, granted to Dioneus; wherefore, after they had all smiled at the folly of Blondello, with a cheerfull countenance thus the Queene began.

Honourable Ladies, if with advised judgement, we do duly consider the order of all things, we shall very easily perceyve, That the whole universall multiplicitie of Women, by Nature, custome, and lawes, are and ought to be subject to men, yea, and to be governd by their discretion. Because every one desiring to enjoy peace, repose and comfort with them, under whose charge they are; ought to be humble, patient and obedient, over and beside her spotlesse
THE NINTH DAY

honesty, which is the crowne and honour of every good woman. And although those lawes, which respect the common good of all things, or rather use and custome (as our wonted saying is) the powers wherof are very great, and worthy to be reverenced, should not make us wise in this case. Yet Nature hath given us a sufficient demonstration, in creating our bodies more soft and delicate, yea, and our hearts timorous, fearefull, benigne and compassionate, our strength feeble, our voyces pleasing, and the motion of our members sweetly plyant: all which are apparant testimonies, that wee have neede of others government.

Now, it is not to be denyed, that whosoever hath need of helpe, and is to bee governed: meerely reason commandeth, that they should bee subject and obedient to their governour. Who then should we have for our helps and governours, if not men? Wherfore, we should be intirely subject to them, in giving them due honour and reverence, and such a one as shall depart from this rule: she (in mine opinion) is not onely worthy of grievous reprehension, but also severe chastisement beside. And to this exact consideration (over and above divers other important reasons) I am the rather induced, by the Novel which Madame Pampinea so lately reported, concerning the froward and wilfull wife of Talano, who had a heavier punishment inflicted on her, then her Husband could devise to doe. And therefore it is my peremptory sentence, that all such women as will not be gracious, benigne and pleasing: doe justly deserve (as I have already said) rude, rough and harsh handling, as both nature, custome and lawes have commanded.

To make good what I have said, I wil declare unto you the counsell and advise, given by Salomon, the wise and famous King of Great Britaine, as a most wholesome and soveraigne medicine for the cure of such a dangerous disease, in any woman so fouly infected. Which counsel (notwithstanding) all such women as have no need of this Phisicke, I would not have them to imagine, that it was meant for them, albeit men have a common Proverbe, to wit.

As the good horse and bad horse, doe both need the spurre. So a good wife and bad wife, a wand will make stirre.
Which saying, whosoever doth interpret it in such pleasing manner as they ought, shal find it (as you al wil affirm no lesse) to be very true: especially in the morall meaning, it is beyond all contradiction. Women are naturally all unstable, and easily enclinig to misgovernment; wherefore to correct the iniquity of such a distemperature in them that out-step the tearmes and bounds of womanhood, a wand hath been allowed for especiall phisicke. As in the like manner, for support of vertue, in those of contrary condition, shaming to be sullyed with so grosse a sinne: the correcting Wand may serve as a walking staffe, to protect them from all other feares. But, forbearing to teach any longer; let mee proceed to my purpose, and tell you my Novell.

In those ancient and reverend dayes, wherof I am now to speake, the high renowne and admirable wisedome of Salomon, King of Great Brittain, was most famous through-out all parts of the world; for answering all doubtfull questions and demandes whatsoever, that possibly could be propounded to him. So that many resorted to him, from the most remote and furthest off countreyes, to heare his miraculous knowledge and experience, yea, and to crave his counsell, in matters of greatest importance. Among the rest of them which repaired thither, was a rich yong Gentleman, honourably descended, named Melisso, who came from the City of Laiazzo, where he was both borne, and dwelt.

In his riding towards France, as he passed by Naples, hee overtooke another yong Gentleman, a native of Antioch, and named Giosefo, whose journey lay the same way as the others did. Having ridden in company some few dayes together, as it is a custome commonly observed among Travellers, to understand one anothers Countrey and condition, as also to what part his occasions call him: so happened it with them, Giosefo directly telling him, that he journyed towards the wise King Salomon, to desire his advise what meanes he should observe, in the reclaiming of a wilfull wife, the most froward and selfe-willed woman that ever lived; whom neither faire perswasions, nor gentle
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courtesies could in any manner prevaille withall. Afterward he demaunded of Melisso, to know the occasion of his travell, and whither.

Now trust me Sir, answered Melisso, I am a native of Laiazzo, and as you are vexed with one great mis-fortune, even so am I offended with another. I am young, wealthy, well derived by birth, and allow liberall expences, for maintaining a worthy table in my house, without distinguishing persons by their rancke and quality, but make it free for all commers, both of the city, and all places els. Notwithstanding all which bounty and honourable entertainement, I cannot meet with any man that loveth me. In which respect, I journey to the same place as you doe, to crave the counsell of so wise a King, what I should doe, whereby I might procure men to love me. Thus like two well-met friendly companions, they rode on together, untill they arrived in Great Britaine, where, by meanes of the Noble Barons attending on the King, they were brought before him. Melisso delivered his minde in very few words, whereto the King made no other answere, but this: Learne to love. Which was no sooner spoken, but Melisso was dismissed from the Kings presence.

Giosefo also relating, wherefore he came thither; the King replying onely thus: Goe to the Goose Bridge: and presently Giosefo had also his dismission from the King. Comming forth, he found Melisso attending for him, and revealed in what manner the King had answered him: whereupon, they consulted together, concerning both their answeres, which seemed either to exceed their comprehension, or else was delivered them in meere mockery, and therefore (more then halfe discontented) they returned homeward againe.

After they had ridden on a few dayes together, they came to a River, over which was a goodly Bridge, and because a great company of Horses and Mules (heavily laden, and after the manner of a Caravan of Camels in Egypt) were first to passe over the saide Bridge; they gladly stayed to permit their passe. The greater number of them being already past over, there was one shie and skittish Mule...
(belike subject to fearefull starting, as oftentimes we see horses have the like ill quality) that would not passe over the Bridge by any meanes, wherefore one of the Muletters tooke a good Cudgell, and smote her at the first gently, as hoping so to procure her passage. Notwithstanding, starting one while backeward, then againe forward, side-ways, and every way indeed, but the direct Roadway she would not goe.

Now grew the Muletter extreamely angry, giving her many cruell stroakes, on the head, sides, flancks and all parts else, but yet they proved to no purpose, which Melisso and Giosefo seeing, (by this meanes) hindred of their passage, they called to the Muletter, saying. Foolish fellow, what doest thou? Intendest thou to kill the Mule? why dost thou not leade her gently, which is the likelier course to prevaile by, then beating and misusing her as thou dost? Content your selves Gentlemen (answered the Muletter) you know your horses qualities, as I doe my Mules, let mee deale with her as I please. Having thus spoken, he gave her so many violent strokes, on head, sides, hipples, and every where else, as made her at last passe over the Bridge quietly, so that the Muletter wonne the Mastery of his Mule.

When Melisso and Giosefo had passed over the Bridge, where they intended to part each from other; a sudden motion happened into the minde of Melisso, which caused him to demaund of an aged man (who sate craving almes of Passengers at the Bridge foot) how the Bridge was called: Sir, answered the old man, this is called, The Goose Bridge. Which words when Giosefo heard, hee called to minde the saying of King Salomon, and therefore immediately saide to Melisso. Worthy friend, and partner in my travell, I dare now assure you, that the counsell given me by King Salomon, may fall out most effectall and true: For I plainly perceive, that I knew not how to handle my selfe-will’d wife, untill the Muletter did instruct me. So, requesting still to enjoy the others Company, they journeyed on, till at the length they came to Laiazzo, where Giosefo retained Melisso still with him, for some repose after so long a journey,
and entertained him with very honourable respect and courtesie.

One day Giosefo said to his Wife: Woman, this Gentleman is my intimate friend, and hath borne me company in all my travell: such dyet therfore as thou wilt welcome him withall, I would have it ordered (in dressing) according to his direction. Melisso perceiving that Giosefo would needs have it to be so; in few words directed her such a course, as (for ever) might be to her Husbands contentment. But she, not altring a jote from her former disposition, but rather farre more froward and tempestuous: delighted to vexe and crosse him, doing every thing quite contrary to the order appointed. Which Giosefo observing, angerly he said unto her. Was it not tolde you by my friend, in what manner he would have our Supper drest? She turning fiercely to him, replyed. Am I to be directed by him or thee? Supper must and shall bee drest as I will have it: if it pleaseth mee, I care not who doth dislike it; if thou wouldst have it otherwise, goe seeke both your Suppers where you may have it.

Melisso marvelling at her froward answere, rebuked her for it in very kind manner: whereupon, Giosefo spake thus to her. I perceive wife, you are the same woman as you were wount to be: but beleeve me on my word, I shal quite alter you from this curst complexion. So turning to Melisso, thus he proceeded. Noble friend, we shall try anone, whether the counsell of King Salomon bee effectuall, or no; and I pray you, let it not be offensive to you to see it; but rather hold all to be done in merriment. And because I would not be hindered by you, doe but remember the answere which the Muletter gave us, when we tooke compassion on his Mule. Worthy friend, replied Melisse, I am in your owne house, where I purpose not to impeach whatsoever you doe.

Giosefo, having provided a good Holly-wand, went into the Chamber, where his wife sate railing, and despitefully grumbling, where taking her by the haire of her head, he threw her at his feete, beating her extremely with the wand. She crying, then cursing, next railing, lastly fight-
ing, biting and scratching, when she felt the cruel smart of the blowes, and that all her resistance served to no end: then she fell on her knees before him, and desired mercy for charities sake. Giosefo fought still more and more on head, arms, shoulders, sides, and all parts else, pretending as if he heard not her complaints, but wearied himselfe well neere out of breath: so that (to be briefe) she that never felt his fingers before, perceived and confessed, it was now too soone. This being done, hee returned to Melisso, and said: To morrow we shall see a miracle, and how availeable the counsell is of going to the Goose Bridge. So sitting a while together, after they had washed their hands, and supt, they withdrew to their lodgings.

The poore beaten woman, could hardly raise her selfe from the ground, which yet (with much ado) she did, and threw her selfe upon the bed, where she tooke such rest as she could: but arising early the next morning, she came to her Husband, and making him a very low courtesie, demaunded what hee pleased to have for his dinner; he smiling heartely thereat, with Melisso, tolde her his mind. And when dinner time came, every thing was ready according to the direction given: in which regard, they highly commended the counsell, whereof they made such an harsh construction at the first.

Within a while after, Melisso being gone from Giosefo, and returned home to his owne house: hee acquainted a wise and reverend man, with the answere which king Salomon gave him, whereto hee received this reply. No better or truer advise could possibly be given you, for well you know, that you love not any man; but the bountiful banquets you bestow on them, is more in respect of your owne vaine-glory, then any kind affection you beare to them: Learne then to love men, as Salomon advised, and you shall be beloved of them againe. Thus our unruly Wife became mildly reclaimed, and the yong Gentleman, by loving others, found the fruits of reciporall affection.
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John de Barolo, at the instance and request of his Gossip Pietro da Tresanti, made an enchantment, to have his wife become a Mule. And when it came to the fastening on of the taile; Gossip Pietro by saying she should have no taile at all, spoyled the whole enchantment.

THE TENTH NOVELL

In just reprooфе of such foolish men, as will be governed by over-light beleefe.

THIS Novell reported by the Queene, caused a little murmuring among the Ladies, albeit the men laughed heartely thereat: but after they were all growne silent, Dioneus began in this manner. Gracious Beauties, among many white Doves, one blacke Crow will seeme more sightly, then the very whitest Swanne can doe. In like manner, among a multitude of wise men, sometimes one of much lesse wisedome and discretion, shall not onely increase the splendour and Majestie of their maturity, but also give an addition of delight and solace.

In which regard, you all being modest and discreet Ladies, and my selfe more much defective in braine, then otherwise able: in making your vertues shine gloriously, through the evident apperance of mine owne weakenesse, you should esteeme the better of mee, by how much I seeme the more cloudy and obscure. And consequently, I ought to have the larger scope of liberty, by plainly expressing what I am, and be the more patiently endured by you all, in saying what absurdly I shall; then I should be if my speeches savoured of absolute wisdome. I will therefore tell you a Tale, which shall not be of any great length, whereby you may comprehend, how carefully such things should be observed, which are commanded by them, as can effect matters by the power of enchantment, and how little

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NOVELL X

delayance also ought to be in such, as would not have an enchantment to be hindered.

About a yeare already past since, there dwelt at Barletta, an honest man, called John de Barolo, who because he was of poore condition; for maintenance in his contented estate, provided himselfe of a Mule, to carry commodities from place to place, where Faires and Markets were in request, but most especially to Apuglia, buying and selling in the nature of a petty Chapman. Travelling thus thorow the Countreyes, he grew into great and familiar acquaintance, with one who named himselfe Pietro da Tresanti, following the same Trade of life as he did, carrying his commodities upon an Asse. In signe of amitie, according to the Countreyes custome, he never tearmed him otherwise, then by the name of Gossip Pietro and always when he came to Barletta, he brought him to his own house, taking it as his Inne, entreating him very friendly, and in the best manner he could devise to doe. On the other side, Gossip Pietro being very poore, having but one simple habitation in the village of Tresanti, hardly sufficient for him, and an handsome young woman which he had to his wife, as also his Asse: evermore when John de Barolo came to Tresanti, he would bring him to his poore abiding, with all his uttermost abilitie of entertainement, in due acknowledgement of the courtesie he afforded to him at Barletta. But when he came to take repose in the night season, Gossip Pietro could not lodge him as gladly he would: because he had but one silly bed, wherein himselfe and his wife lay; so that John de Barolo was faigne to lie on a little straw, in a small stable, close adjoyning by his owne Mule and the Asse.

The woman understanding, what good and honest welcome, Gossip John afforded her husband, when he came to Barletta, was often very willing to goe lodge with an honest neighbour of hers, called Carapresa di Giudice Leo, because the two Gossips might both lie together in one bed; wherewith divers times she acquainted her Husband, but by no meanes he would admit it.

At one time among the rest, as she was making the same
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motion againe to her Husband, that his friend might be lodged in better manner: Gossip John thus spake to her. Good Zita Carapresa, never molest your selfe for me, because I lodge to mine owne contentment, and so much the rather, in regard that whensoever I list: I can convert my Mule into a faire young woman, to give mee much delight in the night-season, and afterward make her a Mule againe: thus am I never without her company.

The young woman wondring at these words, and beleeving he did not fable in them: she told them to her Husband, with this addition beside, Pietro (quoth she) if he be such a deare friend to thee, as thou hast often avouched to me; wish him to instruct thee in so rare a cunning, that thou maist make a Mule of me; then shalt thou have both an Asse and a Mule to travell withall about thy businesse, whereby thy benefit will be double: and when we returne home to our house, then thou maist make mee thy wife againe, in the same condition as I was before. Gossip Pietro, who was (indeed) but a very Coxecombe; beleevd also the words to be true, yeelding therefore the more gladly to her advise; and moving the matter to his Gossip John, to teach him such a wonderfull secret, which would redound so greatly to his benefite: but John began to disswade him from it, as having spoken it in merriment, yet perceiving, that no contradiction would serve to prevale, thus he began.

Seeing you will needs have it so, let us rise to morrow morning before day, as in our travell we use to doe, and then I will shew you how it is to be done: onely I must and doe confesse, that the most difficult thing of all the rest, is, to fasten on the taile, as thou shalt see.

Gossip Pietro and his wife, could hardly take any rest all the night long, so desirous they were to have the deed done; and therefore when it drew towards day, up they arose, and calling Gossip John, he came presently to them in his shirt, and being in the Chamber with them, he said. I know not any man in the world, to whom I would disclose this secret, but to you, and therefore because you so earnestly desire it, I am the more willing to doe it. Onely
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you must consent, to doe whatsoever I say, if you are desirous to have it done. Faithfully they promised to performe all, whereupon John delivering a lighted Candle to Gossip Pietro, to hold in his hand, said. Marke well what I doe, and remember all the words I say: but be very carefull, that whatsoever thou hearest or seest, thou doe not speake one word, for then the enchantment will be utterly overthrowne, onely wish that the taile may be well set on, for therein consisteth all the cunning.

Gossip Pietro holding the Candle, and the woman being prepared as John had appointed her, she bowed her selfe forwardes with her hands set to the ground, even as if she stood upon fourie feete. First with his hands he touched her head and face, saying, Heere is the goodly head of a Mule: then handling her disheveld haire, termed them the goodly mane of a Mule. Afterwardes, touching the body, armes, legs, and feete, gave them all the apt names (for those parts) belonging to a Mule, nothing else remaining, but onely the forming of the taile, which when Pietro perceived, how John was preparing to fasten it on (having no way misliked all his former proceeding:) he called to him, saying: Forbeare Gossippe John, my Mule shal have no taile at all, I am contented to have her without a taile. How now Gossip Pietro? answered John, What hast thou done? Thou hast mard all by this unadvised speaking, even when the worke was almost fully finished. It is no matter Gossip (answered Pietro) I can like my Mule better without a taile, then to see it set on in such manner.

The fond yong woman, more covetously addicted to gayne and commodity, then looking into the knavish intention of her Gossip John; began to grow greatly offended. Beast as thou art (quoth she to her Husband) why hast thou overthrowne both thine owne good Fortune and mine? Diddest thou ever see a Mule without a taile? Wouldst thou have had him make me a monster? Thou art wretchedly poore, and when we might have bin enriched for ever, by a secret knowne to none but our selves, thou art the Asse that hast defeated all, and made thy friend to become thine enemy. Gossippe John began to
THE NINTH DAY

pacifice the woman, with solemne protestations of his still continuing friendship, albeit (afterwards) there was no further desiring of any more Mule-making: but Gossip Pietro fel to his former Trading onely with his Asse, as he was no lesse himselfe, and hee went no more with Gossip John to the Faires in Apuglia, neyther did he ever request, to have the like piece of service done for him.

Although there was much laughing at this Novell, the Ladies understanding it better, then Dioneus intended that they should have done, yet himselfe scarcely smiled. But the Novels being all ended, and the Sunne beginning to loose his heate; the Queene also knowing, that the full period of her government was come: dispossessing her selfe of the Crowne, shee placed it on the head of Pamphilus, who was the last of all to be honoured with this dignity; wherefore (with a gracious smile) thus she spake to him.

Sir, it is no meane charge which you are to undergo, in making amends (perhaps) for all the faults committed by my selfe and the rest, who have gone before you in the same authority; and, may it prove as prosperous unto you, as I was willing to create you our King. Pamphilus having received the Honor with a cheerfull mind, thus answered. Madam, your sacred vertues, and those (beside) remaining in my other Subjects, will (no doubt) worke so effectually for me, that (as the rest have done) I shall deserve your generall good opinion. And having given order to the Master of the Houshold (as all his predecessors had formerly done, for every necessary occasion; he turned to the Ladies, who expected his gracious favour, and said.

Bright Beauties, it was the discretion of your late Soveraigne and Queene, in regard of ease and recreation unto your tyred spirits, to grant you free liberty, for discoursing on whatsoever your selves best pleased: wherefore, having enjoyed such a time of rest, I am of opinion, that it is best to returne once more to our wonted Law, in which respect, I would have every one to speake in this manner to morrow. Namely, of those men or women, who have
THE DECAMERON

done any thing bountifully or magnificently, either in matter of amity, or otherwise. The relation of such worthy arguments, will (doubtlesse) give an addition to our very best desires, for a free and forward inclination to good actions, whereby our lives (how short soever they bee) may perpetuate an ever-living renowne and fame; after our mortall bodies are converted into dust, which (otherwise) are no better then those of bruite beasts, reason onely distinguishing this difference, that as they live to perish utterly, so we respire to reigne in eternity.

The Theame was exceedingly pleasing to the whole Company; who being all risen, by permission of the new King, every one fel to their wonted recreations, as best agreed with their owne disposition; untill the houre for Supper came, wherein they were served very sumptuously. But being risen from the Table, they began their dances, among which, many sweet Sonnets were enterlaced, with such delicate Tunes as moved admiration. Then the King commanded Madam Neiphila, to sing a song in his name, or how her selfe stood best affected. And immediatly with a cleare and rare voice, thus she began.

THE SONG

THE CHORUS SUNG BY ALL THE COMPANIE

In the Spring season,
Maides have best reason,
   To dance and sing;
With Chaplets of Flowers,
   To decke up their Bowers,
And all in honour of the Spring.

I heard a Nimph that sate alone,
   By a Fountaines side:
Much her hard Fortune to bemone,
   For still she cride:
Ah! Who will pitty her distresse,
That findes no foe like ficklenesse?
   For truth lives not in men:
Poore soule, why live I then?
   In the Spring season, etc.
THE NINTH DAY

Oh, How can mighty Love permit,
Such a faithlesse deed,
And not in justice punish it
As treasons meed?
I am undone through perjury,
Although I loved constantly:
But truth lives not in men,
Poore soule, why live I then?
In the Spring season, etc.

When I did follow Dyans traine,
As a loyall Maide,
I never felt oppressing paine,
Nor was dismaide.
But when I listened Loves alluring,
Then I wandred from assuring.
For truth lives not in men:
Poore soule, why live I then?
In the Spring season, etc.

Adiew to all my former joyes,
When I lived at ease,
And welcome now those sad annoies
Which do most displease.
And let none pitty her distresse,
That fell not, but by ficklenesse.
For truth lives not in men,
Alas! why live I then?

In the Spring season,
Maides have best reason,
To dance and sing;
With Chaplets of Flowers,
To decke up their Bowers,
And all in honour of the Spring.

This Song, most sweetly sung by Madame Neiphila, was especially commended, both by the King, and all the rest of the Ladies. Which being fully finished, the King gave order, that everie one should repaire to their Chambers, because a great part of the night was already spent.

THE END OF THE NINTH DAY

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THE TENTH AND LAST DAY

Whereon, under the Government of Pamphilus, the severall Arguments do concerne such persons, as either by way of Liberality, or in Magnificent manner, performed any worthy action, for love, favour, friendship, or any other honourable occasion.

THE INDUCTION

Already began certaine small Clouds in the West, to blush with a Vermillion tincture, when those in the East (having reached to their full heighth) looked like bright burnished Gold, by splendour of the Sun beames drawing neere unto them: when Pamphilus being risen, caused the Ladies, and the rest of his honourable companions to be called. When they were all assembled, and had concluded together on the place, whither they should walke for their mornings recreation: the King ledde on the way before, accompanied with the two Noble Ladies Philomena and Fiammetta, all the rest following after them, devising, talking, and answering to divers demands both what that day was to be don, as also concerning the proposed imposition.

After they had walked an indifferent space of time, and found the rayes of the Sunne to be over-piercing for them: they returned backe againe to the Pallace, as fearing to
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have their blood immoderately heated. Then rinsing their Glasses in the coole cleare running current, each tooke their mornings draught, and then walked into the milde shades about the Garden, untill they should bee summoned to dinner. Which was no sooner over-past, and such as slept, returned waking: they mette together againe in their wonted place, according as the King had appointed, where he gave command unto Madame Neiphila, that shee should (for that day) begin the first Novell, which she humbly accepting, thus began.

A Florentine knight, named Signior Rogiero de Figiovanni, became a servant to Alphonso, King of Spaine, who (in his owne opinion) seemed but sleightly to respect and reward him. In regard whereof, by a notable experiment, the King gave him a manifest testimony, that it was not through any defect in him, but onely occasioned by the Knights ill fortune; most bountifully recompening him afterward.

THE FIRST NOVELL

Wherin may evidently be discerned, that Servants to Princes and great Lords, are many times recompenced, rather by their good fortune, then in any regard of their dutifull services.

I Doe accept it (Worthy Ladies) as no mean favour, that the King hath given me the first place, to speake of such an honourable Argument, as Bounty and Magnificence is, which precious Jewell, even as the Sunne is the beauty, or ornament and bright glory of al heaven; so is bounty and magnificence the Crowne of all vertues. I shall then recount to you a short Novell, sufficiently pleas-
ing, in mine owne opinion, and I hope (so much I dare rely on your judgements) both profitable, and worthy to be remembred.

You are to know then, that among other valiant Knights, which of long have lived in our City, one of them, and (perhappes) of as great merit as any, was one, named Signior Rogiero d’Figiovanni. He being rich, of great courage, and perceiving, that (in due consideration) the quality belonging to life, and the customes observed among our Tuscanes, were not answerable to his expectation, nor agreed with the disposition of his valour; determined to leave his native Countrey, and belong in service (for some time) to Alfonso, King of Spaine, whose fame was generally noised in all places, for excelling all other Princes in those times, for respect of mens well deservings, and bountifull requitall of their paines. Being provided in honorable order, both of Horses, Armes, and a competent train, he travelled to Spaine, where he was worthily entertained.

Signior Rogiero continuing there, living in honorable maner, and performing many admirable actions of arms; in short time he made himselfe sufficiently knowne, for a very valiant and famous man. And having remained there an indifferent long while, observing divers behaviours in the king: he saw, how he enclined himselfe first to one man, then to another, bestowing on one a Castle, a Towne on another, and Baronnies on divers, som-what indiscreetly, as giving away bountifullly to men of no merit. And restraining all his favors from him, as seeming close fistted, and parting with nothing: he took it as a diminishing of his former reputation, and a great empayring of his fame, wherefore he resolved on his departure thence, and made his suit to the king that he might obtaine it. The king did grant it, bestowing on him one of the very best Mules, and the goodliest that ever was backt, a gift most highly pleasing to Rogiero, in regarde of the long journy he intended to ride. Which being deliverd, the king gave charge to one of his Gentlemen, to compasse such convenient meanes, as to ride thorow the country, and in the company of Signior Rogiero, yet in such manner, as he
THE TENTH DAY

should not perceive, that the King had purposely sent him so to do. Respectively he should observe whatsoever he said concerning the king, his gesture, smiles, and other behavior, shaping his answers accordingly, and on the nexte morning to command his returne backe with him to the King.

Nor was the Gentleman slacke in this command, but noting Rogieroes departing forth of the city, he mounted on horseback likewise, and immediatly after came into his company, making him beleeve, that he journied towards Italy. Rogiero rode on the Mule which the king had given him, with diversity of speeches passing between them. About three of the clocke in the afternoone, the Gentleman said. It were not amisse Sir, (having such fit opportunitie) to Stable our horses for a while, till the heate be a little more overpast. So taking an Inne, and the horses being in the stable, they all staled except the Mule.

Being mounted againe, and riding on further, the Gentleman duely observed whatsoever Rogiero spake, and comming to the passage of a small River or Brooke: the rest of the beasts dranke, and not the Mule, but staled in the River: which Signior Rogiero seeing, clapping his hands on the Mules mane, hee said. What a wicked beast art thou? thou art just like thy Master that gave thee to mee. The Gentleman committed the words to memory, as he did many other passing from Rogiero, riding along the rest of the day, yet none in disparagement of the King, but rather highly in his commendation. And being the next morning mounted on horseback, seeming to hold on still the way for Tuscane: the Gentleman fulfilled the Kings command, causing Signior Rogiero to turne back againe with him, which willingly he yeelded to doe.

When they were come to the Court, and the King made acquainted with the words, which Rogiero spake to his Mule; he was called into the presence, where the King shewed him a gracious countenance, and demanded of him, why he had compared him to his Mule? Signior Rogiero nothing daunted, but with a bold and constant spirit, thus answered. Sir, I made the comparison, because, like as
you give, where there is no conveniency, and bestow nothing
where reason requireth: even so, the Mule would not stale
where she should have done, but where was water too much
before, there she did it. Beleeve me Signior Rogiero, re-
plying the King, if I have not given you such gifts, as
(perhaps) I have done to divers other, farre inferiour to you
in honour and merit; this happened not thorough any
ignorance in me, as not knowing you to be a most valiant
Knight, and well-worthy of speciall respect: but rather
through your owne ill fortune, which would not suffer me
to doe it, whereof she is guilty, and not I, as the truth
thereof shall make it selfe apparant to you. Sir, answered
Rogiero, I complaine not, because I have received no gift
from you, as desiring thereby covetously to become the
richer: but in regard you have not as yet any way acknow-
ledged, what vertue is remaining in me. Nevertheless, I
allow your excuse for good and reasonable, and am heartely
contented, to behold whatsoever you please; although I
doe confidently credit you, without any other testimony.

The King conducted him then into the great Hall, where
(as hee had before given order) stood two great Chests, fast
lockt; and in the presence of all his Lords, the King thus
spake. Signior Rogiero, in one of these Chests is mine
imperiall Crowne, the Scepter Royall, the Mound, and
many more of my richest girdles, rings, plate, and Jewels,
even the very best that are mine: the other is full of earth
only. Chuse one of these two, and which thou makest
election of; upon my Royall word thou shalt enjoy it.
Hereby shalt thou evidently perceive, who hath bin ingreat-
ful to the deservings, either I, or thine owne bad fortune.
Rogiero seeing it was the kings pleasure to have it so;
chose one of them, which the King caused presently to be
opened, it approving to be the same that was full of earth,
whereat the King smyling, said thus unto him.

You see Signior Rogiero, that what I said concerning
your ill fortune, is very true: but questionlesse, your valour
is of such desert, as I ought to oppose my selfe against all
her malevolence. And because I know right, that you are
not minded to become a Spaniard; I will give you neither
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Castle nor dwelling place: but I will bestow the Chest on you (in meer despight of your malicious fortune) which she so unjustly tooke away from you. Carry it home with you into your Countrey, that there it may make an apparrant testimony, in the sight of all your well-willers, both of your owne vertuous deservings, and my bounty. Signior Rogiero humbly receiving the Chest, and thanking his Majestie for so liberall a gift, returned home joyfully therewith, into his native Countrey of Tuscane.

Ghinotto di Tacco; tooke the Lord Abbot of Clugni as his prisoner, and cured him of a grievous disease, which he had in his stomacke, and afterward set him at liberty. The same Lord Abbot, when hee returned from the Court of Rome, reconciled Ghinotto to Pope Boniface; who made him a Knight, and Lord Prior of a goodly Hospitall.

THE SECOND NOVELL

Wherein is declared that good men doe sometimes fall into bad conditions, onely occasioned thereto by necessity: And what meanes are to be used, for their reducing to goodnesse againe.

THE magnificence and Royall bounty, which King Alphonso bestowed on the Florentine knight, passed through the whole assembly with no mean applause, and the King (who gave it the greatest praise of all) commanded Madame Eliza, to take the second turne in order; whereupon, thus she began.

Faire Ladies, if a king shewed himselfe magnificently minded, and expressed his liberall bounty to such a man,
as had done him good and honourable services: it can be termed no more then a vertuous deed well done, and becoming a King. But what will we say, when we heare that a Prelate of the Church, shewed himselfe wondrously magnificent, and to such a one as was his enemy: can any malicious tongue speake ill of him? Undoubtedly, no other answere is to be made, but the action of the King was meerely vertue, and that of the Prelate, no lesse then a miracle: for how can it be otherwise, when they are more greedily covetous then women, and deadly enemies to all liberality? And although every man (naturally) desireth revenge for injuries and abuses done unto him: yet men of the Church, in regard that dayly they preached patience, and commaund (above all things else) remission of sinnes: it would appeare a mighty blemish in them, to be more froward and furious then other men. But I am to speake of a reverend Prelate of the Church, as also concerning his munificent bounty, to one that was his enemy, and yet became his reconciled friend, as you shall perceive by my Novell.

Ghinotto di Tacco, for his insolent and stout robberies, became a man very farre famed, who being banished from Sienna, and an enemy to the Countes Disanta Fiore: prevailed so by his bold and headstrong perswasions, that the Towne of Raticonfani rebelled against the Church of Rome, wherein he remaining; all passengers whatsoever, travelling any way thereabout, were robde and rifled by his theeving Companions. At the time whereof now I speake, Boniface the eight, governed as Pope at Rome, and the Lord Abbot of Clugni (accounted to be one of the richest Prelates in the world) came to Rome, and there either by some surfeit, excesse of feeding, or otherwise, his stomacke being grievously offended and pained; the Phisitians advised him, to travell to the Bathes at Sienna, where he should receive immediate cure. In which respect, his departure being licenced by the Pope, to set onward thither, with great and pompous Cariages, of Horses, Mules, and a goodly traine, without hearing any rumour of the theevish Consorts.

Ghinotto di Tacco, being advertised of his comming,
spred about his scouts and nettes, and without missing so much as one Page, shut up the Abbot, with all his traine and baggage, in a place of narrow restraint, out of which he could by no meanes escape. When this was done, he sent one of his most sufficient attendants, (well accompanied) to the Lord Abbot, who said to him in his Masters name, that if his Lordship were so pleased, hee might come and visite Ghinotto at his Castle. Which the Abbot hearing, answered chollerickly, that he would not come thither, because hee had nothing to say to Ghinotto: but meant to proceed on in his journey, and would faine see, who durst presume to hinder his passe. To which rough words, the messenger thus mildly answered. My Lord (quoth he) you are arrived in such a place, where we feare no other force, but the all-controlling power of heaven, clearely exempted from the Popes thunder-cracks, of maledictions, interdictions, excommunications, or whatsoever else: and therefore it would bee much better for you, if you pleased to do as Ghinotto adviseth you.

During the time of this their interparlance, the place was suddenly round ingirt with strongly armed theeves, and the Lord Abbot perceiving, that both he and all his followers were surprized: tooke his way (though very impatiently) towards the Castle, and likewise all his company and carriages with him. Being dismounted, hee was conducted (as Ghinotto had appointed) all alone, into a small Chamber of the Castle, it being very darke and uneasie: but the rest of his traine, every one according to his ranck and quality, were all well lodged in the Castle, their horses, goods and all things else, delivered into secure keeping, without the least touch of injury or prejudice. All which being orderly done, Ghinotto himselfe went to the Lord Abbot, and said. My Lord, Ghinotto, to whom you are a welcome guest, requesteth, that it might be your pleasure to tell him, whither you are travelling, and upon what occasion?

The Lord Abbot being a very wise man, and his angry distemper more moderately qualified; revealed whither he went, and the cause of his going thither. Which when
Ghinotto had heard, hee departed courteously from him, and began to consider with himselfe, how he might cure the Abbot; yet without any Bathe. So, commanding a good fire to be kept continually in his small Chamber, and very good attendance on him: the next morning, he came to visite him againe, bringing a faire white Napkin on his arme, and in it two slices or toasts of fine Manchet, a goodly cleare Glasse, full of the purest white-Bastard of Corniglia (but indeed, of the Abbots owne provision brought thither with him) and then hee spoke to him in this manner.

My Lord, when Ghinotto was yonger then now he is, he studyed Physicke, and he commanded me to tell you, that the very best medicine, he could ever learne, against any disease in the stomacke, was this which he had provided for your Lordship, as an especial preparative, and which he should finde to be very comfortable. The Abbot, who had a better stomacke to eate, then any will or desire to talke: although hee did it somewhat disdainfully, yet hee eate up both the toastes, and roundly dranke off the Glasse of Bastard. Afterward, divers other speeches passed betwene them, the one still advising in Phisicall manner, and the other seeming to care little for it: but moved many questions concerning Ghinotto, and earnestly requesting to see him. Such speeches as savoured of the Abbots discontentment, and came from him in passion; were clouded with courteous acceptance, and not the least signe of any mislike: but assuring his Lordship, that Ghinotto intended very shortly to see him, and so they parted for that time.

Nor returned he any more, till the next morning with the like two toastes of bread, and such another Glasse of white Bastard, as he had brought him at the first, continuing the same course for divers dayes after: till the Abbot had eaten (and very hungerly too) a pretty store of dryed Beanes, which Ghinotto purposely, (yet secretly) had hidden in the Chamber. Whereupon he demanded of him (as seeming to be so enjoyned by his pretended master) in what temper he found his stomacke now? I should finde my
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stomacke well enough (answered the Lord Abbot) if I could get forth of thy masters fingers, and then have some good food to feed on: for his medicines have made me so soundly stomackt, that I am ready to starve with hunger.

When Ghinotto was gone from him, hee then prepared a very faire Chamber for him, adorning it with the Abbots owne rich hangings, as also his Plate and other moveables, such as were always used for his service. A costly dinner he provided likewise, whereeto he invited divers of the Towne, and many of the Abbots chiefest followers: then going to him againe the next morning, he said. My Lord, seeing you doe feele your stomacke so well, it is time you should come forth of the Infirmary. And taking him by the hand, he brought him into the prepared Chamber, where he left him with his owne people, and went to give order for the dinners serving in, that it might be performed in magnificent manner.

The Lord Abbot recreated himsels a while with his owne people, to whom he recounted, the course of his life since hee saw them; and they likewise told him, how kindly they had bin initeated by Ghinotto. But when dinner time was come, the Lord Abbot and all his company, were served with costly viands and excellent Wines, without Ghinottoes making himsels knowne to the Abbot: till after he had bee entertained some few dayes in this order: into the great Hall of the Castle, Ghinotto caused all the Abbots goods and furniture to bee brought, and likewise into a spacious Court, wheron the windowes of the said Court gazed, all his mules and horses, with their sumpters, even to the very silliest of them, which being done, Ghinotto went to the Abbot, and demaunded of him, how he felt his stomacke now, and whether it would serve him to venter on horsebacke as yet, or no? The Lord Abbot answered, that he found his stomacke perfectly recovered, his body strong enough to endure travell, and all things well, so hee were delivered from Ghinotto.

Hereupon, he brought him into the hall where his furniture was, as also all his people, and commanding a
window to be opned, wherat he might behold his horses, he said. My Lord, let me plainly give you to understand, that neither cowardise, or basenesse of minde, induced Ghinotto di Tacco (which is my selfe) to become a lurking robber on the high-wayes, an enemy to the Pope, and so (consequently) to the Romane Court: but onely to save his owne life and honour, knowing himselfe to be a Gentleman cast out of his owne house, and having (beside) infinite enemies. But because you seeme to be a worthy Lord, I will not (although I have cured your stomachs disease) deale with you as I doe to others, whose goods (when they fall into my power) I take such part of as I please: but rather am well contented, that my necessities being considered by your selfe, you spare me out a proportion of the things you have heere, answerable to your owne liking. For all are present here before you, both in this Hall, and in the Court beneath, free from any spoyle, or the least impairing. Wherefore, give a part, or take all, if you please, and then depart hence when you will, or abide heere still, for now you are at your owne free liberty.

The Lord Abbot wondred not a little, that a robber on the high wayes, should have such a bold and liberall spirit, which appeared very pleasing to him; and instantly, his former hatred and spleene against Ghinotto, became converted into cordiall love and kindnes, so that (imbracing him in his armes) he said. I protest upon my vow made to Religion, that to win the love of such a man, as I plainly perceive thee to be: I would undergo far greater injuries, then those which I have received at thy hands. Accursed be cruell destiny, that forced thee to so base a kind of life, and did not blesse thee with a fairer fortune. After he had thus spoken, he left there the greater part of all his goods, and returned backe againe to Rome, with few horses, and a meaner traine.

During these passed accidents, the Pope had received intelligence of the Lord Abbots surprizall, which was not a little displeasing to him: but when he saw him returned, he demaunded, what benefit he received at the Bathes? Whereto the Abbot, merrily smyling, thus replyed. Holy
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Father, I met with a most skilfull Physitian neerer hand, whose experience is beyond the power of the Bathes, for by him I am very perfectly cured: and so discoursed all at large. The Pope laughing heartely, and the Abbot continuinuing on still his report; moved with an high and magnificent courage, he demaunded one gracious favour of the Pope: who imagining that he would request a matter of greater moment, then he did, freely offered to grant, whatsoever he desired.

Holy Father, answered the Lord Abbot, all the humble suit which I make to you, is, that you would be pleased to receive into your grace and favor, Ghinotto di Tacco my Physitian, because among all the vertuous men, deserving to have especial account made of them I never met with any equall to him both in honour and honesty. Whatsoever injury he did to me, I impute it as a greater in-fortune, then any way he deserveth to be charged withall. Which wretched condition of his, if you were pleased to alter, and bestow on him some better meanes of maintenance, to live like a worthy man, as he is no lesse: I make no doubt, but (in very short time) hee will appeare as pleasing to your holinesse, as (in my best judgement) I thinke him to be.

The Pope, who was of a magnanimious spirit, and one that highly affected men of vertue, hearing the commendable motion made by the Abbot; returned answere, that he was as willing to grant it, as the other desired it, sending Letters of safe conduct for his comming thither. Ghinotto receiving such assurance from the Court of Rome, came thither immediatly, to the great joy of the Lord Abbot: and the Pope finding him to be a man of valor and worth, upon reconciliation, remitted all former errors, creating him knight, and Lord Prior of the very chiepest Hospitall in Rome. In which Office he lived long time after, as a loyall servant to the Church, and an honest thankefull friend to the Lord Abbot of Clugny.
Mithridanes envying the life and liberality of Nathan, and travelling thither, with a setled resolution to kill him: chaunceth to conferre with Nathan unknowne. And being instructed by him, in what manner he might best performe the bloody deede, according as hee gave direction, hee meeteth with him in a small Thicket or Woode, where knowing him to be the same man, that taught him how to take away his life: Confounded with shame, hee acknowledgeth his horrible intention, and becommeth his loyall friend.

Shewing in an excellent and lively demonstration, that any especiall honourable vertue, persevering and dwelling in a truly noble soule, cannot be violenced or confounded, by the most politicke attemptes of malice and envy.

IT appeared to the whole assembly, that they had heard a matter of mervaile, for a Lord Abbot to performe any magnificent action: but their admiration ceasing in silence, the King commanded Philostratus to follow next, who forthwith thus began.

Honourable Ladies, the bounty and magnificense of Alphonso King of Spaine, was great indeede, and that done by the Lord Abbot of Clugny, a thing (perhaps) never heard of in any other. But it will seeme no lesse mervailous to you, when you heare, how one man, in expression of great liberality to another man, that earnestly desired to kill him; should bee secretly disposed to give
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him his life, which had bin lost, if the other would have taken it, as I purpose to acquaint you withall, in a short Novell.

Most certaine it is, at least, if Faith may bee given to the report of certaine Genewayes, and other men resorting to those remote parts, that in the Country of Cathaya, there lived somtime a Gentleman, rich beyond comparison, and named Nathan. He having his living adjoyning to a great common rode-way, whereby men travayled from the East to the West (as they did the like from the West unto the East, as having no other means of passage) and being of a bountifull and cheerfull disposition, which he was willing to make known by experience: he summoned together many Master Masons and Carpenters, and there erected (in a short time) one of the greatest, goodliest, and most beautifull houses (in manner of a Princes Pallace) that ever was seene in all those quarters.

With movables and all kinde of furnishment, besitting a house of such outward apparance, hee caused it to be plentifully stored, onely to receive, entertaine, and honor all Gentlemen or other Travailers whatsoever, as had occasion to passe that way, being not unprovided also of such a number of servants, as might continuallie give attendance on all commers and goers. Two and fifty several gates, standing alway wide open, and over each of them in great golden caracters was written, Welcome, welcome, and gave free admission to all commers whatsoever.

In this honourable order (observed as his estated custom) he persevered so long a while, as not onely the East parts, but also those in the west, were every where acquainted with his fame and renown. Being already well stept into yeares, but yet not wearie (therefore) of his great charge and liberality: it fortuned, that the rumor of his noble Hospitality, came to the care of another gallant Gentleman, named Mithridanes, living in a Countrey not farre off from the other.

This Gentleman, knowing himselfe no lesse wealthy then Nathan, and enviously repining at his vertue and liberality,
determined in his mind, to dim and obscure the others bright splendor, by making himselfe farre more famous. And having built a Palace answerable to that of Nathans, with like windings of gates, and welcom inscriptions; he beganne to extend immeasurable courtesies, unto all such as were disposed to visite him: so that (in a short while) hee grew very famous in infinite places. It chanced on a day, as Mithridanes sate all alone within the goodly Court of his Pallace: a poore woman entred at one of the gates, craving an almes of him, which she had; and returned in againe at a second gate, comming also to him, and had a second almes; continuing so still a dozen times; but at the thirteenth returning, Mithridanes saide to her: Good Woman, you goe and come very often, and still you are served with almes. When the old Woman heard these words, she said. O the liberality of Nathan! How honourable and wonderfull is that? I have past through two and thirty gates of his Palace, even such as are here, and at every one I receyved an almes, without any knowledgement taken of me, either by him, or any of his followers: and heere I have past but through thirteene gates, and am there both acknowledged and taken. Farewell to this house, for I never meane to visit it any more; with which words shee departed thence, and never after came thither againe.

When Mithridanes had a while pondered on her speeches, hee waxed much discontented, as taking the words of the olde woman, to extoll the renowne of Nathan, and darken or eclipse his glorie, whereupon he said to himselfe. Wretched man as I am, when shall I attaine to the height of liberality, and performe such wonders, as Nathan doth? In seeking to surmount him, I cannot come neere him in the very meanest. Undoubtedly, I spend all my endeavours but in vaine, except I rid the world of him, which (seeing his age will not make an end of him) I must needs do with my own hands. In which furious and bloody determination (without revealing his intent to any one) he mounted on horse-backe, with few attendants in his company, and after three dayes journey, arrived where Nathan dwelt. He
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gave order to his men, to make no shew of being his servants, or any way to acknowledge him: but to provide them selves of convenient lodgings, untill they heard other tydings from him.

About Evening, and (in this manner) alone by himselfe, neere to the Palace of Nathan, he met him solitarily walking, not in pompous apparrell, whereby to bee distinguished from a meaner man: and, because he knew him not, neyther had heard any relation of his description, he demanded of him, if he knew where Nathan then was? Nathan, with a chearfull countenance, thus replyed. Faire Syr, there is no man in these parts, that knoweth better how to shew you Nathan then I do; and therefore, if you be so pleased, I will bring you to him. Mithridanes said, therein he should do him a great kindnesse: albeit (if it were possible) he would bee neyther knowne nor scene of Nathan. And that (quoth he) can I also do sufficiently for you, seeing it is your will to have it so, if you will goe along with me.

Dismounting from his horse, he walked on with Nathan, diversly discoursing, untill they came to the Pallace, where one of the servants taking Mithridanes his horse, Nathan rounded the fellow in the care, that he should give warning to all throughout the House, for revealing to the Gentleman, that he was Nathan; as accordingly it was performed. No sooner were they within the Pallace, but he conducted Mithridanes into a goodly chamber, wher none (as yet) had scene him, but such as were appointed to attend on him reverently; yea, and he did himselfe greatly honor him, as being loth to leave his company.

While thus Mithridanes conversed with him, he desired to know (albeit he respected him much for his yeares) what he was. Introth Sir, answered Nathan, I am one of the meanest servants to Nathan, and from my child-hood, have made my selfe thus olde in his service: yet never hath he bestowed any other advancement on mee, then as you now see; in which respect, howsoever other men may commend him, yet I have no reason at all to do it. These Words, gave some hope to Mithridanes, that with a little more
counsell, he might securely put in execution his wicked determination. Nathan likewise demanded of him (but in very humble manner) of whence, and what he was, as also the businesse inviting him thither: offering him his utmost aide and counsell, in what soever consisted in his power.

Mithridanes sat an indifferent while meditating with his thoughts before he would returne any answer: but at the last, concluding to repose confidence in him (in regard of his pretended discontentment) with many circumstantial perswasions, first for fidelity, next for constancie, and lastly for counsell and assistance, he declared to him truly what he was, the cause of his comming thither, and the reason urging him thereto. Nathan hearing these words, and the detestable deliberation of Mithridanes, became quite changed in himself: yet wisely making no outward appearance thereof, with a bold courage and setled countenance, thus he replied.

Mithridanes, thy Father was a Noble Gentleman, and (in vertuous qualities) inferior to none, from whom (as now I see) thou desirest not to degenerate, having undertaken so bold and high an enterprise, I meane, in being liberall and bountifull to all men. I do greatly commend the envy which thou bearest to the vertue of Nathan: because if there were many more such men, the world that is now wretched and miserable, would become good and conformable. As for the determination which thou hast disclosed to mee, I have sealed it up secretly in my soule: wherein I can better give thee counsell, then any especiall helpe or furtherance: and the course which I would have thee to observe, followeth thus in few words.

This window, which we now looke forth at, sheweth thee a smal wood or thicket of trees, being litle more then the quarter of a miles distance hence; whereto Nathan usually walketh every morning, and there continueth time long enough: there maist thou very easily meet him, and do whatsoever thou intendest to him. If thou kilst him, because thou maist with safety returne home unto thine owne abiding, take not the same way which guided thee.
THE TENTH DAY

thither, but another, lying on the left hand, and directing speedily out of the wood, as being not so much haunted as the other, but rather free from all resort, and surest for visiting thine owne country, after such a dismal deed is done.

When Mithridanes had receyved this instruction, and Nathan was departed from him; hee secretly gave intelligence to his men, (who likewise were lodged, as welcom strangers, in the same house) at what place they should stay for him the next morning. Night being passed over, and Nathan risen, his heart alterd not a jot from his counsel given to Mithridanes, much lesse changed from anie part thereof: but all alone by himselfe, walked on to the wood, the place appointed for his death. Mithridanes also being risen, taking his Bow and Sword (for other weapons had he none) mounted on horsbacke, and so came to the wood, where (somewhat farre off) hee espyed Nathan walking, and no creature with him. Dismounting from his horse, he had resolved (before he would kill him) not onely to see, but also to heare him speake: so stepping roughly to him, and taking hold of the bonnet on his head, his face being then turned from him, he sayde. Old man, thou must dye. Whereunto Nathan made no other answer, but thus: Why then (belike) I have deserved it.

When Mithridanes heard him speake, and looked advisedly on his face, he knew him immediatly to be the same man, that had entertained him so lovingly, conversed with him so familiarly, and counselled him so faithfully: all which overcomming his former fury, his harsh nature became meerly confounded with shame: So throwing downe his drawne sword, which he held readily prepared for the deede: he prostrated himselfe at Nathans feet, and in teares, spake in this manner. Now do I manifestly know (most loving Father) your admired bounty and liberalitie; considering, with what industrious providence, you made the meanes for your comming hither, prodigally to bestow your life on me, which I have no right unto, although you were so willing to part with it. But those high and supreme powers, more carefull of my dutie, then I my 4 : DD

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selfe: even at the very instant, and when it was most needfull, opened the eyes of my better understanding, which infernal envy had closed up before. And therefore, looke how much you have bin forward to pleasure me; so much the more shame and punishment, I confesse my heinous transgression hath justly deserved: take therefore on me (if you please) such revenge, as you thinke (in justice) answerable to my sin.

Nathan lovingly raised Mithridanes from the ground, then kissing his cheeke, and tenderly embracing him, he said. Sonne, thou needest not to aske, much lesse to obtains pardon, for any enterprise of thine, which thou canst not yet terme to be good or bad: because thou soughtest not to bereave me of my life, for any hatred thou barest me, but onely in coveting to be reputed the Woorthier man. Take then this assurance of me, and beleive it constantly, that there is no man living, whom I love and honour, as I do thee: considering the greatnesse of thy minde, which consisteth not in the heaping up of money, as wretched and miserable Worldlings make it their onely felicity; but, contending in bounty to spend what is thine, didst hold it for no shame to kil me, thereby to make thy selfe so much the more worthily famous.

Nor is it any matter to be wondred at, in regard that Emperors, and the greatest Kings, hadde never made such extendure of their Dominions, and consequently of their renowne, by any other Art, then killing; yet not one man onely, as thou wouldst have done: but infinite numbers, burning whole Countries, and making desolate huge Townes and Cities, onely to enlarge their dominion, and further spreading of their fame. Wherfore, if for the increasing of thine owne renowne, thou wast desirous of my death: it is no matter of novelty, and therefore deserving the lesse mervaile, seeing men are slaine daily, and all for one purpose or other.

Mithridanes, excusing no further his malevolent delibera-
tion, but rather commending the honest defence, which Nathan made on his behalfe; proceeded so farre in after discoursing, as to tel him plainly, that it did wondrously
amaze him, how he durst come to the fatall appointed place, himselfe having so exactly plotted and contrived his owne death: whereunto Nathan returned this aunswere.

I would not have thee Mithridanes, to wonder at my counsel or determination; because, since age hath made mee Maister of mine owne will, and I resolved to doe that, wherein thou hast begun to follow me: never came any man to mee, whom I did not content (if I could) in any thing he demanded of me. It was thy fortune to come for my life, which when I saw thee so desirous to have it, I resolved immediately to bestow it on thee: and so much the rather, because thou shouldst not be the onely man, that ever departed hence, without enjoying whatsoever hee demanded. And, to the end thou mightst the more assuredly have it, I gave thee that advice, least by not enjoying mine, thou shouldest chance to loose thine owne. I have had the use of it full fourescore yeares, with the consummation of all my delights and pleasures: and well I know, that according to the course of Nature (as it fares with other men, and generally all things else) it cannot bee long before it must leave mee.

Wherefore, I hold it much better for me to give it away freely, as I have always done my goods and treasure; then bee curious in keeping it, and suffer it to be taken from me (whether I will or no) by Nature. A small gift it is, if time make me up the full summe of an hundred yeares: how miserable is it then, to stand beholding but for foure or five, and all of them vexation too? Take it then I intreate thee, if thou wilt have it; for I never met with any man before (but thy selfe) that did desire it, nor (perhaps) shall finde any other to request it: for the longer I keepe it, the worse it wil be esteemed: and before it grow contemptible, take it I pray thee.

Mithridanthes, being exceedingly confounded with shame, bashfully sayde: Fortune fore-fend, that I should take away a thing so precious as your life is, or once to have so vile a thought of it as lately I had; but rather then I would diminish one day thereof, I could wish, that my time might more amply enlarge it. Forthwith answered...
Nathan, saying. Wouldst thou (if thou couldst) shorten thine owne dayes, onely to lengthen mine? Why then thou wouldst have me to do that to thee, which (as yet) I never did unto any man, namely, robbe thee, to enrich my selfe. I will enstruct thee in a much better course, if thou wilt be advised by mee. Lusty and young, as now thou art, thou shalt dwell heere in my house, and be called by the name of Nathan. Aged, and spent with yeares, as thou seest I am, I will goe live in thine house, and be called by the name of Mithridanes. So, both the name and place shall illustrate thy Glorie, and I live contentedly, without the very least thought of envie.

Deare Father, answered Mithridanes, if I knew so well howe to direct mine owne actions, as you doe, and alwayes have done, I would gladly accept your most liberall offer: but because I plainlie perceive, that my very best endeavours, must remayne darkened by the bright renowne of Nathan: I will never seeke to impayre that in another, which I cannot (by any means) increase in my selfe, but (as you have worthily taught me) live contented with my owne condition.

After these, and many more like loving speeches had passed between them; according as Nathan very instantly requested, Mithridanes returned back with him to the Pallace, where many dayes he highly honored and respected him, comforting and counselling him, to persever alwayes in his honourable determination. But in the end, when Mithridanes could abide there no longer, because necessary occasions called him home: he departed thence with his men, having found by good experience, that hee could never goe beyond Nathan in liberality.
THE TENTH DAY

Signior Gentile de Carisendi, being come from Modena, took a Gentlewoman, named Madam Catharina, forth of a grave, wherein she was buried for dead; which act he did, in regard of his former honest affection to the said Gentlewoman. Madame Catharina remaining there afterward, and delivered of a goodly Sonne: was (by Signior Gentile) delivered to her owne Husband, named Signior Nicoluccio Caccianimico, and the yong infant with her.

THE FOURTH NOVELL

Wherein is shewne, That true love hath alwayes bin, and so still is, the occasion of many great and worthy courtesies.

By judgment of all the honorable assembly, it was reputed wonderfull, that a man should be so bountifull, as to give away his owne life, and to his hatefull enemy. In which respect, it passed with generall affirmation, that Nathan (in the vertue of liberallity) had exceeded Alphonso, King of Spain, but (especially) the Abbot of Clugny. So, after every one had delivered their opinion, the King, turning himselfe to Madame Lauretta, gave her such a signe, as well instructed her understanding, that she should be the next in order, whereto she gladly yeelding, began in this manner.

Youthfull Ladies, the discourses already past, have been so worthy and magnificent, yea, reaching to such a height of glorious splendour; as (me thinkes) there remaineth no more matter, for us that are yet to speake, whereby to enlarge so famous an Argument, and in such manner as it ought to be: except we lay hold on the actions of love,
wherein is never any want of subject, it is so faire and spacious a field to walke in. Wherefore, as well in behalfe of the one, as advancement of the other, whereto our instant age is most of all inclined: I purpose to acquaint you with a generous and magnificent act, of an amourous Gentleman, which when it shall be duey considered on, perhaps will appeare equall to any of the rest. At least, if it may passe for currant, that men may give away their treasures, forgive mighty injuries, and lay downe life it selfe, honour and renowne (which is farre greater) to infinite dangers, only to attaine any thing esteemed and affected.

Understand then (Gracious hearers) that in Bologna, a very famous City of Lombardie, there lived sometime a Knight, most highly respected for his vertues, named Signior Gentile de Carisendi, who (in his yonger dayes) was enamoured of a Gentlewoman, called Madam Catharina, the Wife of Signior Nicoluccio Caccianimico. And because during the time of his amourous pursuite, he found but a sorry enterchange of affection from the Lady; hee went (as hopelesse of any successe) to be Potestate of Modena, whereto he was called by place and order.

At the same time, Signior Nicoluccio being absent from Bologna, and his Lady at a Farme-house of his in the Countrey (about three miles distant from the City) because she was great with child, and somewhat neere the time of her teeming: it came to passe, that some dangerous accident befell her, which was so powerfull in operation, as no signe of life appeared remained in her, but she was reputed (even in the judgement of the best Phisitians, whereof she wanted no attendance) to be verily dead. And because in the opinion of her parents and neerest kinred, the time for her deliverance was yet so farre off, as the Infant within her, wanted much of a perfect creature: they made the lesse mourning; but in the next Church, as also the vault belonging to her Ancestors, they gave her buriall very speedily.

Which tydings comming to the hearing of Signior Gentile, by one that was his endeared friend: Although (while she lived) he could never be gracious in her favour,
yet her so sudden death did greatly grieve him, whereupon he discoursed in this sort with himselfe. Deare Madame Catharina, I am not a little sorry for thy death, although (during thy life-time) I was scarcely worthy of one kind looke: Yet now being dead, thou canst not prohibite me, but I may robbe thee of a kisse. No sooner had hee spoke the words, but it beeing then night, and taking such order, as none might know of his departure: hee mounted on horse-backe, accompanied onely with one servant, and stayed no where, till hee came to the vault where the Lady was buried. Which when he had opened, with instruments convenient for the purpose, he descended downe into the vault, and kneeled downe by the Beere whereon she lay, and in her wearing garments, according to the usuall manner; with teares trickling mainly downe his cheekes, he bestowed infinite sweet kisses on her.

But as we commonly see, that mens desires are never contented, but still will presume on further advantages, especially such as love entirely: so fared it with Gentile, who being once minded to get him gone, as satisfied with the oblation of his kisses; would needs yet step backe againe, saying. Why should I not touch her yvory breast, the Adamant that drew all desires to adore her? Ah let me touch it now, for never hereafter can I bee halfe so happy. Overcome with this alluring appetite, gently he laid his hand upon her breast, with the like awefull respect, as if she were living, and holding it so an indifferent while: either he felt, or his imagination so perswaded him, the heart of the Lady to beate and pant. Casting off all fond feare, and the warmth of his increasing the motion: his inward soule assured him, that she was not dead utterly, but had some small sense of life remaining in her, whereof he would needs be further informed.

So gently as possible he could, and with the helpe of his man, he tooke her forth of the monument, and laying her softly on his horse before him, conveyed her closely to his house in Bologna. Signior Gentile had a worthy Lady to his Mother, a woman of great wisdome and vertue, who understanding by her Sonne, how matters had happened,
moved with compassion, and suffering no one in the house to know what was done, made a good fire, and very excellent Bathe, which recalled back againe wrong-wandering life. Then fetching a vehement sigh, opening her eyes, and looking very strangely about her, she said. Alas! where am I now? whereto the good old Lady kindly replyed, saying. Comfort your selfe Madame, for you are in a good place.

Her spirits being in better manner met together, and she still gazing every way about her, not knowing well where she was, and seeing Signior Gentile standing before her: he entreated his mother to tell her by what meanes she came thither; which the good old Lady did, Gentile himselfe helping to relate the whole history. A while she grieved and lamented, but afterward gave them most hearty thankes, humbly requesting, that, in regard of the love he had formerly borne her, in his house she might finde no other usage, varying from the honour of her selfe and her Husband, and when day was come, to be conveighed home to her owne house. Madame, answered Signior Gentile, whatsoever I sought to gaine from you in former dayes, I never meane, either here, or any where else, to motion any more. But seeing it hath been my happy fortune, to prove the blessed means, of reducing you from death to life: you shall finde no other entertainment here, then as if you were mine owne Sister. And yet the good deed which I have this night done for you, doth well deserve some courteous requitall: in which respect, I would have you not to deny me one favour, which I will presume to crave of you. Whereto the Lady lovingly replyed, that she was willing to grant it; provided, it were honest, and in her power: whereto Signior Gentile thus answered.

Madame, your parents, kindred and friends, and generally all throughout Bologna, doe verily thinke you to be dead, wherefore there is not any one, that will make any inquisition after you: in which regard, the favour I desire from you, is no more but to abide here secretly with my Mother, untill such time as I returne from Modena, which shall be very speedily. The occasion why I move this motion, aymeth at this end, that in presence of the chiefest persons
of our City, I may make a gladsome present of you to your Husband. The Lady knowing her selfe highly beholding to the Knight, and the request he made to be very honest: disposed her selfe to doe as he desired (although she earnestly longed, to glad her parents and kindred with seeing her alive) and made her promise him on her faith, to effect it in such manner, as he pleased to appoint and give her direction.

Scarcely were these words concluded, but she felt the custome of women to come upon her, with the paines and throwes incident to childing: wherefore, with helpe of the aged Lady, Mother to Signior Gentile, it was not long before her deliverance of a goodly Sonne, which greatly augmented the joy of her and Gentile, who took order, that all things belonging to a woman in such a case, were not wanting, but she was as carefully respected, even as if she had been his owne Wife. Secretly he repaired to Modena, where having given direction for his place of authority; he returned back againe to Bologna, and there made preparation for a great and solemne feast, appointing who should be his invited guests, the very chieuest persons in Bologna, and (among them) Signior Nicoluccio Caccianimico the especiall man.

After he was dismounted from horsebacke, and found so good company attending for him (the Lady also, more faire and healthful then ever, and the Infant lively disposed) he sate downe at the Table with his guests, causing them to be served in most magnificent manner, with plenty of all delicates that could be devised, and never before was there such a Joviall feast. About the ending of dinner, closely he made the Lady acquainted with his further intention, and likewise in what order every thing should be done, which being effected, he returned to his company, and used these speeches.

Honourable friends, I remember a discourse sometime made unto me, concerning the Countrey of Persia, and a kind of custome there observed, not to be disliked in mine opinion. When any one intended to honour his friend in effectuall manner, he invited him home to his house, and
there would shew him the thing, which with greatest love he did respect; were it Wife, Friend, Sonne, Daughter, or any thing else whatsoever; wherewithall he spared not to affirme, that as he shewed him those choyce delights, the like view he should have of his heart, if with any possibility it could be done; and the very same custome I meane now to observe here in our City. You have vouchsafed to honour me with your presence, at this poore homely dinner of mine, and I will welcome you after the Persian manner, in shewing you the Jewell, which (above all things else in the world) I ever have most respectively esteemed. But before I doe it, I crave your favourable opinions in a doubt, which I will plainly declare unto you.

If any man having in his house a good and faithfull servant, who falling into extremity of sickenesse, shall be throwne forth into the open street, without any care or pitty taken on him: A stranger chanceth to passe by, and (moved with compassion of his weakenesse) carryeth him home to his owne house, where using all charitable diligence, and not sparing any cost, he recovereth the sicke person to his former health. I now desire to know, if keeping the said restored person, and imploying him about his owne businesse: the first Master (by pretending his first right) may lawfully complaine of the second, and yeeld him backe againe to the first master, albeit he doe make challenge of him?

All the Gentlemen, after many opinions passing among them, agreed altogether in one sentence, and gave charge to Signior Nicoluccio Caccianimico, (because he was an excellent and elegant speaker) to give answere for them all. First, he commended the custome observed in Persia, saying, he jumpt in opinion with all the rest, that the first Master had no right at all to the servant, having not onely (in such necessity) forsaken him, but also cast him forth into the comfortlesse street. But for the benefits and mercy extended to him; it was more then manifest, that the recovered person, was become justly servant to the second Master, and in detayning him from the first, hee did not offer him any injury at all. The whole Company sitting
THE TENTH DAY

at the Table (being all very wise and worthy men) gave their verdict likewise with the confession of Signior Nicoluccio Caccianimico. Which answer did not a little please the Knight; and so much the rather, because Nicoluccio had pronounced it, affirming himselfe to be of the same minde.

So, sitting in a pretended musing a while, at length he said. My honourable guests, it is now more then high time, that I should doe you such honour, as you have most justly deserved, by performing the promise made unto you. Then calling two of his servants, he sent them to Madame Catharina (whom he had caused to adorne her self in excellent manner) entreating her, that she would be pleased to grace his guests with her presence. Catharina, having deckt her child in costly habiliments, layed it in her armes, and came with the servants into the dyning Hall, and sate down (as the Knight had appointed) at the upper end of the Table, and then Signior Gentile spake thus. Behold, worthy Gentlemen, this is the Jewell which I have most affected, and intend to love none other in the world; be you my Judges, whether I have just occasion to doe so, or no? The Gentlemen saluting her with respective reverence, said to the Knight; that he had great reason to affect her: And viewing her advisedly, many of them thought her to be the very same woman (as indeed she was) but that they beleived her to be dead.

But above all the rest, Nicoluccio Caccianimico could never be satisfied with beholding her; and, enflamed with earnest desire, to know what she was, could not refraine (seeing the Knight was gone out of the roome) but demaunded of her, whether she were of Bologna, or a stranger? when the Lady heard her selfe to be thus questioned, and by her Husband, it seemed painefull to her, to containe from answering: Nevertheless, to perfect the Knights intended purpose, she sate silent. Others demaunded of her, whether the sweet Boy were hers, or no; and some questioned, if she were Gentiles Wife, or no, or else his Kinsewoman; to all which demaunds, she returned not any answer. But when the Knight came to them
againe, some of them said to him. Sir, this woman is a goodly creature, but she appeareth to be dumbe, which were great pitty, if it should be so. Gentlemen (quoth he) it is no small argument of her vertue, to sit still and silent at this instant. Tell us then (said they) of whence, and what she is. Therein (quoth he) I will quickly resolve you, upon your conditionall promise: that none of you do remove from his place, whatsoeuer shall be said or done, untill I have fully delivered my minde. Every one bound himselye by solemnne promise, to perform what he had appointed, and the Tables being voided, as also the Carpets laid; then the Knight (sitting downe by the Lady) thus began.

Worthy Gentlemen, this Lady is that true and faithfull servant, wherof I moved the question to you, whom I tooke out of the cold street, where her parents, kindred and friends (making no account at all of her) threw her forth, as a thing vile and unprofitable. Nevertheless, such hath been my care and cost, that I have rescued her out of deaths gripping power; and, in a meere charitable disposition, which honest affecion caused me to beare her; of a body, full of terror and affrighting (as then she was) I have caused her to become thus lovely as you see. But because you may more apparantly discerne, in what manner this occasion happened; I will lay it open to you in more familiar manner. Then he began the whole history, from the originall of his unbeseeming affection to her (in regard she was a worthy mans wife) and consequently, how all had happened to the instant houre, to the no meane admiration of all the hearers, adding withall. Now Gentlemen (quoth he) if you vary not from your former opinion, and especially Signior Nicoluccio Caccianimico: this Lady (by good right) is mine, and no man else, by any just title, can lay any claime to her.

All sate silent, without answering one word, as expecting what he intended further to say: but in the meane while, Nicoluccio, the parents and kindred, but chiefly the Lady her selfe, appeared as halfe melted into teares with weeping. But Signior Gentile, starting up from the Table, taking the
Infant in his arme, and leading the Lady by the hand, going to Nicoluccio, thus spake. Rise Sir, I will not give thee thy wife, whom both her kindred and thine, threw forth into the street: but I will bestow this Lady on thee, being my Gossip, and this sweet Boy my God-sonne, who was (as I am verily perswaded) begotten by thee, I standing witnesse for him at the Font of Baptisme, and give him mine owne name Gentile. Let me entreat thee, that, although she hath lived here in mine house, for the space of three monethes, she should not be lesse welcome to thee, then before: for I sweare to thee upon my soule, that my former affection to her (how unjust soever) was the onely meanes of preserving her life: and more honestly she could not live, with Father, Mother, or thy selfe, then she hath done here with mine owne Mother.

Having thus spoken, he turned to the Lady, saying, Madame, I now discharge you of all promises made me, delivering you to your Husband franke and free: And when he had given him the Lady, and the child in his armes, he returned to his place, and sate downe againe. Nicoluccio, with no meane joy and hearty contentment received both his wife and childe, being before farre from expectation of such an admirable comfort; returning the Knight infinite thankes (as all the rest of the Company did the like) who could not refraine from weeping for meere joy, for such a strange and wonderful accident: every one highly commending Gentile, and such also as chanced to heare thereof. The Lady was welcommed home to her owne house, with many moneths of Joviall feasting, and as she passed through the streets, all beheld her with admiration, to be so happily recovered from her grave. Signior Gentile lived long after, a loyall friend to Nicoluccio and his Lady, and all that were well-willers to them.

What thinke you now Ladies? Can you imagine, because a King gave away his Crowne and Scepter; and an Abbot (without any cost to hiselphe) reconciled a Male-factor to the Pope; and an old idle-headed man, yeelding to the mercy of his enemy: that all those actions are comparable to this of Signior Gentile? Youth and ardent
affection, gave him a just and lawfull title, to her who was free (by imagined death) from Husband, Parents, and all friends else, she being so happily wonne into his owne possession. Yet honestly not onely over-swayed the heate of desire, which in many men is violent and immoderate: but with a bountifull and liberall soule, that which he coveted beyond all hopes else, and had within his owne command; he freely gave away. Beleeve me (bright Beauties) not any of the other (in a true and unpartiall judgement) are worthy to be equalled with this, or stiled by the name of magnificent actions.
THE TENTH DAY

Madame Dianora, the Wife of Signior Gilberto, being immodestly affected by Signior Ansaldo, to free her selfe from his tedious importunity, she appointed him to performe (in her judgement) an act of impossibility; namely, to give her a Garden, as plentifully stored with fragrant Flowers in January, as in the flourishing moneth of May. Analdo, by meanes of a bond which he made to a Magitian, performed her request. Signior Gilberto, the Ladyes Husband, gave consent, that his Wife should fulfill her promise made to Ansaldo. Who hearing the bountifull mind of her Husband; released her of her promise: And the Magitian likewise discharged Signior Ansaldo, without taking any thing of him.

THE FIFT NOVELL

Admonishing all Ladies and Gentlewomen, that are desirous to preserve their chastity, free from all blemish and taxation: to make no promise of yeelding to any, under a compact or covenant, how impossible soever it may seeme to be.

NOT any one in all the Company, but extolled the worthy Act of Signior Gentile to the skies; till the King gave command to Madame Æmillia, that she should follow next with her Tale, who boldly stepping up, began in this order.

Gracious Ladies, I thinke there is none heere present among us, but (with good reason) may maintaine, that
THE DECAMERON

Signiour Gentile performed a magnificent deede; but whosoever saith, it is impossible to do more; perhaps is ignorant in such actions, as can and may be done, as I meane to make good unto you, by a Novell not overlong or tedious.

The Countrey of Fretulium, better knowne by the name of Forum Julij; although it be subject to much cold, yet it is pleasant, in regard of many goodly Mountaines, Rivers, and cleare running Springs, wherewith it is not meanly stored. Within those Territories, is a City called Udina, where sometime lived a faire and Noble Lady, named Madame Dianora, Wife to a rich and woorthie Knight, called Signior Gilberto, a man of very great fame and merite.

This beautiful Lady, beeing very modest and vertuously inclined, was highly affected by a Noble Baron of those parts, teamed by the name of Signior Ansaldo Gradense; a man of very great spirit, bountifull, active in Armes, and yet very affable and courteous, which caused him to be the better respected. His love to this Lady was extraordinary, hardly to bee contained within any moderate compasse, striving to bee in like manner affected of her: to which end, she wanted no daily solicitings, Letters, Ambassages and Love-tokens, all proving to no purpose.

This vertuous Lady, being wearied with his often temptations, and seeing, that by denying whatsoever he demanded, yet he wold not give over his suite, but so much the more importunately stil pursued her: began to bethinke her selfe, how she might best be rid of him, by imposing some such taske upon him, as should bee impossible (in her opinion) for him to effect. An olde woman, whom hee imploied for his continual messenger to her, as shee came one day about her ordinary errand, with her she communed in this manner. Good woman (quoth she) thou hast so often assured me, that Signiour Ansaldo loveth me above all other Women in the world, offering me wonderfull gifts and presents in his name, which I have alwayes refused, and so stil wil do, in regard I am not to be woon by any such allurements: yet if I could be soundly perswaded, that his affection is answerable to thy peremptory protestations, I shoulde
THE TENTH DAY

(perhaps) be the sooner wonne, to listen to his suite in milder manner, then hitherto I have done. Wherefore, if he wil give me assurance, to perform such a businesse as I mean to enjoyne him, he shall the speedier heare better answer from me, and I wil confirme it with mine oath.

Wonderfully pleased was Mistresse Maquerella, to heare a reply of such comfortable hope; and therefore desired the Lady, to tel hir what she wold have done. Listen to me wel (answerd Madam Dianora) the matter which I would have him to effect for me, is; without the wals of our City, and during the month of Januarie nexte ensuing, to provide me a Garden, as fairely furnished with all kind of fragrant flowers, as the flourishing month of May can yeelde no better. If he be not able to accomplish this imposition, then I command him, never hereafter to solicite me any more, either by thee, or any other whatsoever: for, if he do importune me afterward, as hitherto I have concealed his secret conspiring, both from my husband, and all my friends; so will I then lay his dishonest suite open to the world, that he may receive punishment accordingly, for offering to wrong a Gentleman in his wife.

When Signior Ansaldo heard her demand, and the offer beside thereuppon made him (although it seemed no easie matter, but a thing meerly impossible to be done) he considered advisedly, that she made this motion to no other end, but onely to bereave him of all his hope, ever to enjoy what so earnestly hee desired: nevertheless, he would not so give it utterly over, but would needs approve what could be done. Heereupon, hee sent into divers partes of the world, to find out any one that was able to advise him in this doubtfull case. In the end, one was brought to him, who beeing well recompenced for his paines, by the Art of Nigromancie would under take to do it. With him Signior Ansaldo covenanted, binding himselfe to pay a great summe of mony, upon performance of so rare a deed, awaiting (in hopefull expectation) for the month of Januaries comming.

It being come, and the weather then in extreamity of cold, every thing being covered with ice and snow, the
Magitian prevailed so by his Art, that after the Christmas Holy dayes were past, and the Calends of January entred: in one night, and without the Cittie Wals, the goodliest Garden of flowers and fruities, was sodainely sprung up, as (in opinion of such as beheld it) never was the like seen before. Now Ladies, I think I need not demand the question, whether Signior Ansaldo were wel pleased, or no, who going to beholde it, saw it most plenteously stored, with al kind of fruit trees, flowers, herbes and plants, as no one could be named, that was wanting in this artificiall garden. And having gathered some pretty store of them, secretly he sent them to Madam Dianora, inviting hir to come see her Garden, perfected according to her owne desire, and upon view thereof, to confesse the integrity of his love to her; considering and remembring withall, the promise shee had made him under solemne oath, that she might be reputed for a woman of her word.

When the Lady beheld the fruities and flowers, and heard many other things re-counted, so wonderfully growing in the same Garden: she began to repent her rash promise made; yet notwithstanding her repentance, as Women are covetous to see all rarities; so, accompanied with divers Ladies and Gentlewomen more, she went to see the Garden; and having commended it with much admiration, she returned home againe, the most sorrowfull Woman as ever lived, considering what she had tyed her selfe to, for enjoying this Garden. So excessive grew her griefe and affliction, that it could not be so clouded or concealed: but her Husband tooke notice of it, and would needs understand the occasion thereof. Long the Lady (in regard of shame and modesty) sate without returning any answer; but being in the end constrained, she disclosd the whol History to him.

At the first, Signior Gilberto waxed exceeding angry, but when he further considered withall, the pure and honest intention of his Wife; wisely he pacified his former dis-temper, and saide. Dianora, it is not the part of a wise and honest woman, to lend an eare to ambassages of such immodest nature, much lesse to compound or make agree-
ment for her honesty, with any person, under any condition whatsoever. Those perswasions which the heart listeneth to, by allurement of the eare, have greater power then many do imagine, and nothing is so uneasie or difficult, but in a lovers judgement it appeareth possible. Ill didst thou therefore first of all to listen, but worse (afterward) to contract.

But, because I know the purity of thy soule, I wil yeele (to disoblige thee of thy promise) as perhaps no wise man else would do: mooved thereto onely by feare of the Magitian, who seeing Signior Analdo displeased, because thou makest a mockage of him; will do some such violent wrong to us, as we shal be never able to recover. Wherefore, I would have thee go to Signior Analdo, and if thou canst (by any meanes) obtaine of him, the safe-keeping of thy honour, and ful discharge of thy promise; it shal be an eternall fame to thee, and the crowne of a most victorious conquest. But if it must needs be otherwise, lend him thy body onely for once, but not thy wil: for actions committed by constraint, wherein the will is no way guilty, are halfe pardonable by the necessity.

Madame Dianora, hearing her husbands words, wept exceedingly, and avouched, that shee had not deserved any such especiall grace of him, and therefore she would rather dye, then doe it. Nevertheless, it was the wil of her Husband to have it so, and therefore (against her wil) she gave consent. The next morning, by the breake of day, Dianora arose, and attiring her selfe in her very meanest garments, with two servingmen before her, and a waiting Woman following, she went to the lodging of Signior Ansaldo, who hearing that Madam Dianora was come to visite him, greatly mervailed, and being risen, he called the Magitian to him, saying. Come go with me, and see what effect will follow upon thine Art. And being come into her presence, without any base or inordinate appetite, he did her humble reverence, embracing her honestly, and taking her into a goodly Chamber, where a faire fire was readilie prepared, causing her to sit downe by him, he sayde unto her as followeth.

Madam, I humbly intreat you to resolve me, if the
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL V

affection I have long time borne you, and yet do stil, deserve any recompence at all: you would be pleased then to tel me truly, the occasion of your instant comming hither, and thus attended as you are. Dianora, blushing with modest shame, and the teares trickling mainly down her faire cheekes, thus answered. Signior Ansaldo, not for any Love I beare you, or care of my faithfull promise made to you, but onely by the command of my husband (who respecting more the paynes and travels of your inordinate love, then his owne reputation and honor, or mine;) hath caused me to come hither: and by vertue of his command, am ready (for once onely) to fulfill your pleasure, but far from any will or consent in my selfe. If Signior Ansaldo were abashed at the first, hee began now to be more confounded with admiration, when he heard the Lady speake in such strange manner: and being much moved with the liberall command of her husband, he began to alter his inflamed heate, into most honourable respect and compassion, returning her this answer.

Most noble Lady, the Gods forbid (if it be so as you have sayd) that I should (Villain-like) soile the honour of him, that takes such unusuall compassion of my unchaste appetite. And therefore, you may remaine heere so long as you please, in no other condition, but as mine owne naturall borne Sister; and likewise, you may depart freely when you will: conditionally, that (on my behalfe) you render such thankes to your husband, as you thinke convenient for his great bounty towards me, accounting me for ever heereafter, as his loyalty Brother and faithfull servant. Dianora having well observed his answer, her heart being ready to mount out at her mouth with joy, said. All the world could never make mee beleive (considering your honourable minde and honesty) that it would happen otherwise to me, then now it hath done, for which noble courtesie, I will continually remaine obliged to you. So, taking her leave, she returned home honorably attended to her husband, and relating to him what had happened, it proved the occasion of begetting intire love and friendship, betwenee himselfe and the Noble Lord Ansaldo.
The Tenth Day

Now concerning the skilfull Magitian, to whom Ansaldo meant to give the bountifull recompence agreed on betwenee them, hee having seene the strange liberality, which the husband expressed to Signior Ansaldo, and that of Ansaldo to the Lady, hee presently saide. Great Jupiter strike me dead with thunder, having my selfe seene a husband so liberall of his honour, and you Sir of true noble kindnesse, if I should not be the like of my recompence: for, perceiving it to be so worthily imployed, I am well contented that you shal keepe it. The Noble Lord was modestly ashamed, and strove (so much as in him lay) that he should take all, or the greater part thereof: but seeing he laboured meerly in vaine, after the third day was past, and the Magitian had destroyed the Garden againe, hee gave him free liberty to depart, quite controlling all fond and unchaste affection in himselfe, either towards Dianora, or any Lady else, and living (ever after) as best becommeth any Nobleman to do.

What say you now Ladies? Shal wee make any account of the woman wel-neere dead, and the kindnesse growne cold in Signiour Gentile, by losse of his former hopes, comparing them with the liberality of Signior Ansaldo, affecting more fervently, then ever the other did? And being (beyond hope) possessed of the booty, which (above all things else in the world) he most desired to have, to part with it meerly in fond compassion? I protest (in my judgement) the one is no way comparable to the other; that of Gentile, with this last of Signior Ansaldo.
Victorious King Charles, sirnamed the Aged, and first of that Name, fell in love with a yong Maiden, named Genevera, daughter to an ancient Knight, called Signior Neri degli Uberti. And waxing ashamed of his amorous folly, caused both Genevera, and her fayre Sister Isotta, to be joyned in marriage with two Noble Gentlemen; the one named Signior Maffeo da Palizzi, and the other, Signior Gulielmo della Magna.

Sufficiently declaring, that how mighty soever the power of Love is: yet a magnanimous and truly generous heart, it can by no meanes fully conquer.

Who is able to expresse ingeniously, the diversity of opinions, which hapned among the Ladies, in censuring on the act of Madame Dianora, and which of them was most liberall, either Signior Gilberto the Husband, Lord Ansaldo the importunate suiter, or the Magitian, expecting to bee bountifully rewarded. Surely, it is a matter beyond my capacity: but after the King had permitted their disputation a long while, looking on Madam Fiammetta, he commanded that she should report her Novel to make an end of their controversie; and she (without any further delaying) thus began. I did alwaies (Noble Ladies) hold it fit and decent, that in such an assembly as this of ours is, every one ought to speake so succinctly and plainly: that the obscure understanding, concerning the matters spoken of, should have no cause of disputation. For disputes do much better become the Colledges of Schollers, then to be among us, who hardly...
THE TENTH DAY

can manage our Distaves or Samplers. And therefore I, who intend to relate something, which (peradventure) might appeare doubtfull: will forbeare (seeing you in such a difference; for that which hath bin spoken alreadie) to use any difficult discourse; but will speake of one, a man of no meane ranke or quality, being both a valiant and vertuous King, and what he did, without any impeach or blemish to his honor.

I make no doubt, but you have often heard report, of king Charls the Aged, and first of that name, by reason of his magnificent enterprises, as also his most glorious victory, which he obtaind against King Manfred, when the Ghibelines were expelled foorth of Florence, and the Guelphes returned thither againe. By which occasion, an ancient knight, named Signior Neri degli Uberti; forsaking then the City, with all his family and great store of wealth, woulde live under any other obedience, then the awful power or command of King Charles. And coveting to be in some solitary place, where he might finish the remainder of his dayes in peace, he went to Castello da Mare; where, about a Bow shoote distance from all other dwelling houses, hee bought a parcel of ground, plentifully stored with variety of Trees, bearing Olives, Chesnuts, Oranges, Lemons, Pomcitrons, and other excellent frutages, wherewith the Countrey flourisheth abundantly. There he built a very faire and commodious house, and planted (close by it) a pleasant Garden, in the middst whereof, because he had great plenty of water: according as other men use to do, being in the like case so wel provided; he made a very goodly Pond, which forthwith had all kinde of Fish swimming in it, it being his daily care and endevour, to tend his Garden, and encrease his Fish-pond.

It fortuned, that King Charles (in the Summer time) for his pleasure and recreation, went to repose himselfe (for some certayne dayes) at Castello de Mare, where having heard report of the beautie and singularitie of Signiour Neries Garden; hee grew very desirous to see it. But when he understoode to whome it belonged, then he entred into consideration with himselfe, that hee was an ancient Knight,
maintaining a contrarie faction to his: wherefore, he thought it fit to goe in some familiar manner, and with no trayne attending on him. Wherupon he sent him word, that he wold come to visit him, with foure Gentlemen onely in his companie, meaning to sup with him in his Garden the next night ensuing. The newes was very welcome to Signior Neri, who took order in costly maner for all things to bee done, entertaining the King most joyfully into his beautifull Garden.

When the King had survayed all, and the house likewise, he commended it beyond all other comparison, and the Tables being placed by the Ponds side, he washed his hands therin, and then sat down at the table, commanding the Count, Sir Guy de Montforte (who was one of them which came in his company) to sitte downe by him, and Signior Neri on his other side. As for the other three of the traine, hee commaunded them to attend on his service, as Signior Neri had given order. There wanted no exquisite Viandes and excellent Wines, all performed in most decent manner, and without the least noise or disturbance, wherein the King tooke no little delight.

Feeding thus in this contented manner, and fancying the solitude of the place: sodainly entred into the garden, two yong Damosels, each aged about some fiftene yeares, their haire resembling wyars of Gold, and curiously curled, having Chaplets (made like provinciall Crownes) on their heads, and their delicate faces, expressing them to be rather Angels, then mortall creatures, such was the appearance of their admired beauty. Their under-garments were of costly Silke, yet white as the finest snow, framed (from the girdle upward) close to their bodies, but spreading largely downward, like the extendure of a Pavillion, and so descending to the feet. She that first came in sight, caried on her shoulder a couple of fishing Netts, which she held fast with her left hand, and in the right she carried a long staffe. The other following her, had on her left shoulder a Frying-pan, and under the same arme a small Faggot of woodde, with a Trevit in her hand; and in the other hand a pot of Oyle, as also a brand of fire flaming.
THE TENTH DAY

No sooner did the King behold them, but he greatly wondered what they should be; and, without uttering one word, attended to listen what they wold say. Both the yong damosels, when they were come before the King, with modest and bashfull gesture, they performed very humble reverence to him, and going to the place of entrance into the Pond, she who held the Trevit, set it downe on the ground, with the other things also; and taking the staffe which the other Damosell carried: they both went into the Pond, the water whereof reached so high as to their bosomes.

One of the Servants to Signior Neri, presently kindled the fire, setting the Trevit over it, and putting Oyle into the Frying-panne, held it uppon the Trevit, awaiting untill the Damosels should cast him uppe Fish. One of them did beate a place with the staffe, where she was assured of the Fishes resort, and the other hadde lodged the Nets so conveniently, as they quickly caught great store of Fish, to the Kings high contentment, who observed their behaviour very respectively.

As the Fishes were throwne up to the servant, alive as they were, he tooke the best and fairest of them, and brought them to the Table, where they skipt and mounted before the King, Count Guy de Montfort and the Father: some leaping from the Table into the Pond againe, and others, the King (in a pleasing humour) voluntarily threw backe to the Damosels. Jesting and sporting in this manner, till the servant had drest divers of them in exquisit order, and served them to the Table, according as Signior Neri had ordained. When the Damosels saw the Fishes service performed, and perceived that they had fished sufficiently: they came forth of the water, their garments then (being wet) hanging close about them, even as if they hid no part of their bodies. Each having taken those things againe, which at first they brought with them, and saluting the king in like humility as they did before, returned home to the mansion house.

The King and Count likewise, as also the other attending Gentlemen, having duely considered the behavior of the Damosels: commended extraordinarily their beauty and
faire feature, with those other perfections of Nature so gloriously shining in them. But (beyond all the rest) the King was boundlesse in his praises given of them, having observed their going into the water, the equall carriage there of them both, their comming forth, and gracious demeanor at their departing (yet neither knowing of whence, or what they were) he felt his affection very violently flamed, and grew into such an amorous desire to them both, not knowing which of them pleased him most, they so choisely resembled one another in all things.

But after he had dwelt long enough upon these thoughts, he turned him selfe to Signior Neri, and demanded of him, what Damosels they were. Sir (answered Neri) they are my Daughters, both brought into the world at one birth, and Twinnes, the one being named Genevera the faire, and the other Isotta the amiable. The King began againe to commend them both, and gave him advise to get them both married: wherein he excused himselfe, alleading, that he wanted power to doe it. At the same time instant, no other service remaining to be brought to the table, except Fruit and Cheese, the two Damosels returned againe, attyred in goodly Roabes of Carnation Sattin, formed after the Turkish fashion, carrying two fayre Silver dishes in their hands, filled with divers delicate Fruites, such as the season then afforded, setting them on the Table before the King. Which being done, they retyred a little backeward, and with sweet melodious voyces, sung a ditty, beginning in this manner.

Where Love presumeth into place:  
Let no one sing in Loves disgrace.

So sweet and pleasing seemed the Song to the King (who tooke no small delight, both to heare and behold the Damosels) even as if all the Hirarchies of Angels were descended from the Heavens to sing before him. No sooner was the Song ended, but (humbly on their knees) they craved favour of the King for their departing. Now, although their departure was greatly grieving to him, yet (in outward appearance) he seemed willing to grant it.
THE TENTH DAY

When Supper was concluded, and the King and his Company remounted on horseback: thankfully departing from Signior Neri, the King returned to his lodging, concealing there closely his affection to himselfe, and whatsoever important affaires happened: yet he could not forget the beauty, and gracious behaviour of Genevera the faire (for whose sake he loved her Sister likewise) but became so linked to her in vehement manner, as he had no power to think on any thing else. Pretending other urgent occasions, he fell into great familiarity with Signior Neri, visiting very often his goodly Garden; onely to see his faire Daughter Genevera, the Adamant which drew him thither.

When he felt his amourous assaults, to exceed all power of longer sufferance: he resolved determinately with himselfe, (being unprovided of any better meanes) to take her away from her Father, and not onely she, but her Sister also; discovering both his love and intent to Count Guy de Montforte, who being a very worthy and vertuous Lord, and meet to be a Counseller for a King, delivered his mind in this manner.

Gracious Lord, I wonder not a little at your speeches, and so much the greater is my admiration, because no man els can be subject to the like, in regard I have knowne you from the time of your infancy; even to this instant houre, and alwayes your carriage to bee one and the same. I could never perceive in your youthfull dayes (when love should have the greatest meanes to assaile you) any such oppressing passions: which is now the more novell and strange to me, to heare it but said, that you being old, and called the Aged; should be growne amorous, surely to me it seemeth a miracle. And if it appertained to me to reprehend you in this case, I know well enough what I could say. Considering, you have yet your Armour on your backe, in a Kingdome newly conquered, among a Nation not knowne to you, full of falsehoods, breaches, and treasons; all which are no meane motives to care and needfull respect. But having now wone a little leisure, to rest your selfe a while from such serious affaires; can you give way to the idle suggestions of Love? Beleeve me Sir, it is no act becom-
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL VI

ming a magnanimous King; but rather the giddy folly of
a young braine.

Moreover you say (which most of all I dislike) that you
intend to take the two Virgines from the Knight, who hath
given you entertainment in his house beyond his ability,
and to testifie how much he honoured you, he suffered you
to have a sight of them, meerely (almost) in a naked
manner: witnessing thereby, what constant faith he reposed
in you, beleeving verily, that you were a just King, and not
a ravenous Woolfe. Have you so soone forgot, that the
rapes and violent actions, done by King Manfred to harmes-
lesse Ladies, made your onely way of entrance into this
Kingdome? What treason was ever committed, more
worthy of eternall punishment, then this will be in you:
to take away from him (who hath so highly honoured you)
his chiefest hope and consolation? What will be said by
all men, if you doe it?

Peradventure you thinke, it will be a sufficient excuse for
you, to say: I did it, in regard hee was a Ghibelline. Can
you imagine this to be justice in a King, that such as get
into their possession in this manner (whatsoever it be) ought
to use it in this sort? Let me tell you Sir, it was a most
worthy victory for you, to conquer King Manfred: but it is
farre more famous victory, for a man to conquer himselfe.
You therfore, who are ordained to correct vices in other
men, learne first to subdue them in your selfe, and (by
brideling this inordinate appetite) set not a foule blemish
on so faire a fame, as will be honour to you to preserve
spotlesse.

These words pierced the heart of the King deeply, and
so much the more affected him, because he knew them to
be most true: wherefore, after he had ventred a very
vehement sigh, thus he replied. Beleeve me noble Count,
there is not any enemy, how strong soever he be, but I
hold him weake and easie to be vanquished, by him who is
skilfull in the warre, where a man may learne to conquer
his owne appetite. But because he shall find it a laborious
taske, requiring inestimable strength and courage; your
words have so toucht me to the quicke, that it becommeth
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me to let you effectually perceive (and within the compasse of few dayes) that as I have learned to conquer others, so I am not ignoraunt, in expressing the like power upon my selfe.

Having thus spoken, within some few dayes after, the King being returned to Naples, he determined, as well to free himself from any the like ensuing follie, as also to recom- pence Signior Neri, for the great kindnesse he had shewne to him (although it was a difficult thing, to let another enjoy, what he rather desired for himselfe) to have the two Damosels married, not as the Daughters of Signior Neri, but even as if they were his owne. And by consent of the Father, he gave Genevera the faire, to Signior Maffeo da Palizzi, and Isotta the amiable, to Signior Gulielmo della Magna, two Noble Knights and honourable Barons. After he had thus given them in marriage, in sad mourning he departed thence into Apuglia, where by following worthy and honourable actions, he so well overcame all inordinate appetites: that shaking off the enthralling fetters of love, he lived free from all passions, the rest of his life time, and dyed as an honourable King.

Some perhaps will say, it was a small matter for a King, to give away two Damosels in marriage, and I confesse it: but I maintaine it to be great, and more then great, if we say, that a King, being so earnestly enamoured as this King was; should give her away to another, whom he so dearly affected himselfe, without receiving (in recompeence of his affection) so much as a leaf, flowre, or the least fruit of love. Yet such was the vertue of this magnificent King, expressed in so highly recompening the noble Knights courtesie, honouring the two daughters so royally, and conquering his owne affections so vertuously.
Lisana, the Daughter of a Florentine Apothecary, named Bernardo Puccino, being at Palermo, and seeing Piero, King of Aragon run at the Tilt; fell so affectionately enamored of him, that she languished in an extreame and long sickenesse. By her owne devise, and means of a Song, sung in the hearing of the King: he vouchsafed to visite her, and giving her a kisse, terming himselfe also to bee her Knight for ever after, hee honourably bestowed her in marriage on a young Gentleman, who was called Perdicano, and gave him liberall endowments with her.

THE SEVENTH NOVELL

Wherein is covertly given to understand, that howsoever a Prince may make use of his absolute power and authority, towards Maides or Wives that are his Subjects: yet he ought to deny and reject all things, as shall make him forgetfull of himselfe, and his true honour.

MADAME FIAMMETTA being come to the end of her Novell, and the great magnificence of King Charles much commended (howbeit, some of the Company, affecting the Ghibelline faction, were otherwise minded) Madame Pampinea, by order given from the King, began in this manner.

There is no man of good understanding (honourable Ladies) but will maintaine what you have said of victorious Charles; except such as cannot wish well to any. But because my memory hath instantly informed me, of an action (perhaps) no lesse commendable then this, done by
THE TENTH DAY

an enemy of the said King Charles, and to a yong Maiden of our City, I am the more willing to relate it, upon your gentle attention vouchsafed, as hitherto it hath been courteously granted.

At such time as the French were driven out of Sicilie, there dwelt at Palermo a Florentine Apothecary, named Bernardo Puccino, a man of good wealth and reputation, who had by his Wife one onely Daughter, of marriageable yeares, and very beautifull. Piero, King of Arragon, being then become Lord of that Kingdom, he made an admirable Feast Royall at Palermo, accompanied with his Lords and Barons. In honour of which publique Feast, the King kept a triumphall day (of Justs and Turnament) at Catalana, and whereat it chanced, that the Daughter of Bernardo, named Lisana, was present. Being in a window, accompanied with other Gentlewomen, she saw the King runne at the Tilt, who seemed so goodly a person in her eye; that being never satisfied with beholding him, she grew enamoured, and fell into extremity of affection towards him.

When the Feastivall was ended, she dwelling in the house of her Father, it was impossible for her to thinke on any thing else, but onely the love, which she had fixed on a person of such height. And that which most tormented her in this case, was the knowledge of her owne condition, being but meane and humble in degree; whereby she confessed, that she could not hope for any successefull issue of her proud love. Nevertheless, she would not refraine from affecting the King, who taking no note of this kindnesse in her, by any perceivable meanes; must needs be the more regardles, which procured (by wary observation) her afflictions to be the greater and intollerable.

Whereon it came to passe, that this earnest love encreas-ing in her more and more, and one melancholly conceit taking hold on another: the faire Maide, when she could beare the burden of her griefe no longer; fell into a languishing sickenesse, consuming away daily (by evident appearance) even as the Snow melteth by the warme beames of the Sunne.

The Father and Mother, much dismayed and displeased
NOVELL VII

at this haplesse accident, applying her with continuall comforts, Phisicke, and the best skill remayning in all the Phisitions, sought all possible meanes wayes to give her succour: but all proved to no effect, because in regard of her choyce (which could sort to none other then a desperate end) she was desirous to live no longer. Now it fortuned, that her parents offering her whatsoever remained in their power to performe, a sudden apprehension entred her minde, to wit, that (if it might possible be done) before she dyed, she would first have the King to know, in what manner she stood affected to him. Wherefore, one day she entreated her Father, that a Gentleman, named Manutio de Arezza, might be permitted to come see her. This Manutio was (in those times) held to be a most excellent Musitian, both for his voyce in singing, and exquisite skill in playing on Instruments, for which he was highly in favour with King Piero, who made (almost) daily use of him, to heare him both sing and play.

Her tender and loving father conceived immediately, that shee was desirous to heare his playing and singing, both being comfortable to a body in a languishing sickenesse, whereupon, he sent presently for the Gentleman, who came accordingly, and after he had comforted Lisana with kind and courteous speeches; he played dexteriously on his Lute, which purposely hee had brought with him, and likewise he sung divers excellent Ditties, which insted of his intended consolation to the Maid, did nothing else but encrease her fire and flame.

Afterward, she requested to have some conference with Manutio alone, and every one being gone forth of the Chamber, she spake unto him in this manner.

Manutio, I have made choyce of thee, to be the faithfull Guardian of an especial secret, hoping first of al, that thou wilt never reveale it to any living body, but onely to him whom I shall bid thee: And next, to helpe me so much as possibly thou canst, because my onely hope relyeth in thee. Know then my dearest friend Manutio, that on the solemnne festivall day, when our Soveraigne Lord the King honoured his exaltation, with the noble exercises of Tilt and Turney;
his brave behaviour kindled such a sparke in my soule, as
since brake forth into a violent flame, and brought me to
this weake condition as now thou seest. But knowing and
confessing, how farre unbeseeming my love is, to aime so
ambitiously at a King, and being unable to controule it, or
in the least manner to diminish it: I have made choyce of
the onely and best remedy of all, namely, to dye, and so I
am most willing to doe.

True it is, that I shall travaile in this my latest journey,
with endlesse torment and affliction of soule, except he have
some understanding thereof before, and not knowing by
whom to give him intelligence, in so oft and convenient
order, as by thee: I doe therefore commit this last office of
a friend to thy trust, desiring thee, not to refuse me in the
performance thereof. And when thou hast done it, to let
me understand what he saith, that I may dye the more con-
tentedly, and disburdened of so heavy an oppression, the
onely comfort to a parting spirit: and so she ceased, her
tears flowing forth abundantly.

Manutio did not a little wonder at the Maides great
spirit, and her desperate resolution, which moved him to
exceeding commiseration, and suddenly he conceived, that
honestly he might discharge this duty for her, whereupon,
he returned her this answer. Lisana, here I engage my
faith to thee, that thou shalt find me firme and constant,
and die I will, rather then deceive thee. Greatly I doe
commend thy high attempt, in fixing thy affection on so
Potent a King, wherein I offer thee my utmost assistance:
and I make no doubt (if thou wouldest be of good comfort)
to deale in such sort, as, before three dayes are fully past,
to bring such newes as will content thee, and because I am
loath to loose the least time, I will goe about it presently.

Lisana the yong Maiden, once againe entreated his care
and diligence, promising to comfort her selfe so well as
she could, commending him to his good fortune. When
Manutio was gone from her, hee went to a Gentleman,
named Mico de Sienna, one of the best Poets in the com-
posing of verses, as all those parts yeelded not the like.
At his request, Mico made for him this ensuing Dittie.
THE DECAMERON

THE SONG

SUNG IN THE HEARING OF KING PIERO, ON THE BEHALFE OF LOVE-SICKE LISANA

Goe Love, and tell the torments I endure,
Say to my Soveraigne Lord, that I must die
Except he come, some comfort to procure,
For tell I may not, what I feele, and why.

With heaved hands Great Love, I call to thee,
Goe see my Soveraigne, where he doth abide,
And say to him, in what extremity,
Thou hast (for him) my firm affection tryed.
To die for him, it is my sole desire,
For live with him I may not, nor aspire,
To have my fortunes thereby dignified,
Onely his sight would lend me life a while:
Grant it (great love) mine anguish to beguile.
Goe love, and tell the torments, etc.

Since the first hour that love enthralled me,
I never had the heart, to tell my griefe,
My thoughts did speake, for thoughts be always free,
Yet hopefull thoughts doe find but poore reliefe.
When Gnats will mount to Eagles in the ayre,
Alas! they scorne them, for full well they know,
They were not bred to prey so base and low,
Aloft they look, to make their flight more faire.
And yet his sight would lend me life a while:
Grant it (great love) mine anguish to beguile.
Goe love, and tell the torments, etc.

If sight shall be denyed, then tell them plaine,
His high triumphall day procurd my death,
The Launce that won him Honour, hath me slaine,
For instantly it did bereave my breath.
That speake I could not, nor durst be so bold,
To make the Ayre acquainted with my woe:
Alas! I lookt so high, and doing so,
Justly deserve by death to be controld.
Yet mercies sight would lend me life a while,
Grant it (great love) mine anguish to beguile.

Goe love, and tell the torments I endure,
Say to my Soveraigne Lord, that I must die:
Except he come, some comfort to procure,
For tell I may not, what I feele, and why.
THE TENTH DAY

The lines contained in this Ditty, Manutio fitted with noates so mooving and singularly musicall, that every word had the sensible motion of life in it, where the King being (as yet) not risen from the Table, he commanded him to use both his Lute and voyce.

This seemed a happy opportunity to Manutio, to sing the dittie so purposely done and devised: which hee deliv-ered in such excellent manner, the voice and Instrument concording so extraordinary pleasing; that all the persons then in the Presence, seemed rather Statues, then living men, so strangely they were wrapt with admiration, and the King himselfe farre beyond all the rest, transported with a rare kinde of alteration.

When Manutio had ended the Song, the King demanded of him, whence this Song came, because he had never heard it before? My gracious Lord, answered Manutio, it must needes seeme straunge to your Majesty, because it is not fully three dayes, since it was invented, made, and set to the note. Then the King asked, whom it concerned? Sir (quoth Manutio) I dare not disclose that to any but onely your selfe. Which answer made the King much more desirous, and being risen from the Table, he tooke him into his Bedchamber, where Manutio related all at large to him, according to the trust reposed in him. Wherwith the King was wonderfully well pleased, greatly commending the courage of the Maide, and said, that a Virgin of such a valiant spirit, did well deserve to have her case commiserated: and commanded him also, to goe (as sent from him) and comfort her, with promise, that the very same day, in the evening, he would not faile to come and see her.

Manutio, more then contented, to carry such glad tydings to Lisana; without staying in any place, and taking his Lute also with him, went to the Apothecaries house, where speaking alone with the Maide: he told her what he had done, and afterward sung the song to her, in as excellent manner as he had done before, wherein Lisana conceived such joy and contentment, as even in the very same moment, it was observed by apparant signes, that the violence of her
fits forsooke her, and health began to get the upper hand of them. So, without suffering any one in the house to know it, or by the least meanes to suspect it; she comforted her selfe till the evening, in expectation of her Soveraignes arrivall.

Piero being a Prince, of most liberall and benigne nature, having afterward divers times considered on the matters which Manutio had revealed to him, knowing also the yong Maiden, to bee both beautifull and vertuous: was so much moved with pitty of her extremitie, as mounting on horsebacke in the evening, and seeming as if he rode abroad for his private recreation; he went directly to the Apothecaries house, where desiring to see a goodly garden, appertaining then to the Apothecarie, he dismounted from his horse. Walking into the garden, he began to question with Bernardo, demaunding him for his Daughter, and whether he had (as yet) marrie her, or no? My Gracious Lord, answered Bernardo, as yet shee is not marrie, neither likely to bee, in regard shee hath had a long and tedious sickenesse: but since Dinner time, she is indifferently eased of her former violent paine, which we could not discerne the like alteration in her, a long while before.

The King understood immediately, the reason of this so sudden alteration, and said. In good faith Bernardo, the world would sustaine a great maine and imperfection, by the losse of thy faire daughter; wherefore, we will goe our selfe in person to visite her. So, with two of his Lords onely, and the Father, he ascended to the Maides Chamber and being entred, he went to the Beds side, where she sate, somewhat raised, in expectation of his comming, and taking her by the hand, he said. Faire Lisana, how commeth this to passe? You being so faire a Virgin, yong, and in the delicacy of your daies, which should be the chiefest comfort to you, will you suffer your selfe to be over-awed with sicknesse? Let us intreat you, that (for our sake) you will be of good comfort, and thereby recover your health the sooner, especially, when it is requested by a King, who is sorry to see so bright a beauty sicke, and would helpe it, if it consisted in his power.
THE TENTH DAY

Lisana, feeling the touch of his hand, whom she loved above all things else in the world, although a bashfull blush mounted up into her cheekes: yet her heart was seazed with such a rapture of pleasure, that she thought her selfe translated into Paradise, and, so well as she could, thus she replyed. Great King, by opposing my feeble strength, against a burden of over-ponderous weight, it became the occasion of this grievous sickenesse: but I hope that the violence thereof is (almost) already kild, onely by this soveraigne mercy in you, and doubtlesse it will cause my speedy deliverance. The King did best understand this so well palliated answere of Lisana, which as he did much commend, in regard of her high adventuring; so he did againe as greatly condemne Fortune, for not making her more happy in her birth.

So, after he had stayed there a good while, and given her many comfortable speeches, he returned backe to the Court. This humanity in the King, was reputed a great honour to the Apothecary and his daughter, who (in her owne mind) received as much joy and contentment thereby, as ever any wife could have of her owne Husband.

And being assisted by better hopes, within a short while after, she became recovered, and farre more beautifull (in common judgment) then ever she was before.

Lisana being now in perfect health, the King consulted with his Queene, what meete recompence he should gratifie her withall, for loving and affecting him in such fervent manner. Upon a day determined, the King mounting on horsebacke, accompanied with many of his cheefest Lords and Barons, he rode to the Apothecaries house, where walking in his beautifull Garden, hee called for Bernardo and his daughter Lisana. In the meane space, the Queene also came thither, Royally attended on by her Ladies, and Lisana being admitted into their company, they expressed themselves very gracious to her. Soone after, the King and the Queene cald Lisana, and the King spake in this manner to her.

Faire Virgin, the extraordinary love which you bare to us, calleth for as great honour from us to you; in which respect, it is our Royall desire, by one meanes or other to
requite your kinde Love. In our opinion, the chief honour we can extend to you, is, that being of sufficient yeares for marriage, you would grace us so much, as to accept him for your Husband, whom we intend to bestow on you. Beside this further grant from us, that (notwithstanding whatsoever else) you shall call us your Knight; without coveting any thing else from you, for so great favour, but only one kisse, and thinke not to bestow it nicely on a King, but grant it the rather, because he begges it.

Lisana, whose lookes were dyed with a vermillian tincture, or rather converted into a pure maiden blush, reputing the Kings desire to be her owne; in a low and humbled voyce, thus answered. My Lord, most certaine am I, that if it had beene publikely knowne, how none but your hignes, might serve for me to fixe my love on, I should have been termed the foole of all fooles: they perhaps beleeving, that I was forgetfull of my selfe, in being ignorant of mine owne condition, and much lesse of yours. But the Gods are my witnesses (because they know the secrets of all hearts) that even in the very instant, when Loves fire tooke hold on my yeelding affection: I knew you to be a King, and my selfe the daughter of poore Bernardo the Apothecary: likewise, how farre unfitting it was for me, to be so ambitious in my loves presuming. But I am sure your Majestie doth know (much better then I am able to expresse) that no one becommeth amourous, according to the duty of election, but as the appetite shapeth his course, against whose lawes my strength made many resistances, which not prevailing, I presumed to love, did, and so for ever shall doe, your Majestie.

Now Royall Soveraigne, I must needes confesse, that so soone as I felt my selfe thus wholly conquered by loving you, I resolved for ever after, to make your will mine owne, and therefore, am not onely willing to accept him for my Husband, whom you shall please to appoint, befitting my honor and degree: but if you will have me to live in a flaming fire, my obedience shall sacrifice it selfe to your will, with the absolute conformity of mine owne. To stile you by the name of my Knight, whom I know to be my
THE TENTH DAY

lawfull King and Soveraigne; you are not ignorant, how farre unfitting a word that were for me to use: As also the kisse which you request, in requitall of my love to you; to these two I will never give consent, without the Queenes most gracious favour and license first granted. Neverthel-}

lesse, for such admirable benignity used to me, both by your Royall selfe, and your vertuous Queene: heaven shower downe all boundlesse graces on you both, for it exceedeth all merit in me, and so she ceased speaking, in most dutifull manner.

The answer of Lisana pleased the Queene exceedingly, in finding her to be so wise and faire, as the King himself had before informed her: who instantly called for her Father and Mother, and knowing they would be well pleased with whatsoever he did; he called for a proper yong Gentleman, but somewhat poore, being named Perdicano, and putting certaine Rings into his hand, which he refused not to receive, caused him there to espouse Lisana. To whome the King gave immediately (besides Chaines and Jewels of inestimable valew, delivered by the Queene to the Bride) Ceffala and Calatabelotta, two great territories abounding in divers wealthy possessions, saying to Perdicano. These wee give thee, as a dowry in marriage with this beautifull Maid, and greater gifts we will bestow on thee hereafter, as we shall perceive thy love and kindnesse to her.

When he had ended these words,hee turned to Lisana, saying: Heere doe I freely give over all further fruits of your affection towards me, thanking you for your former love: so taking her head betweene his hands, he kissed her faire forhead, which was the usuall custome in those times. Perdicano, the Father and Mother of Lisana, and she her selfe likewise, extraordinarily joyfull for this so fortunate a marriage, returned humble and hearty thankes both to the King and Queene, and (as many credible Authors doe affirme) the King kept his promise made to Lisana, because (so long as he lived) he alwaies termed himselfe by the name of her Knight, and in al actions of Chivalry by him undertaken, he never carried any other devise, but such as he received still from her.
By this, and divers other like worthy deeds, not onely did he win the hearts of his subjects; but gave occasion to the whole world beside, to renowne his fame to all succeeding posterity. Whereto (in these more wretched times of ours) few or none bend the sway of their understanding: but rather how to bee cruell and tyrannous Lords, and thereby win the hatred of their people.
Sophronia, thinking her selfe to be the married wife of Gisippus, was (indeed) the wife of Titus Quintus Fulvius, and departed thence with him to Rome. Within a while after, Gisippus also came thither in very poore condition, and thinking that he was despised by Titus, grew weary of his life, and confessed that he had murdered a man, with ful intent to die for the fact. But Titus taking knowledge of him, and desiring to save the life of Gisippus, charged himself to have done the bloody deed. Which the murderer himself (standing then among the multitude) seeing, truly confessed the deed. By meanes whereof, all three were delivered by the Emperor Octavius; and Titus gave his Sister in marriage to Gisippus, giving them also the most part of his goods and inheritances.

THE EIGHT NOVELL

Declaring, that notwithstanding the frownes of Fortune, diversity of occurrences, and contrary accidents happening: yet love and friendship ought to be preciously preserved among men.

By this time Madam Philomena, at command of the King, (Madam Pampinea ceasing) prepared to follow next in order, whereupon thus she began. What is it (Gracious Ladies) that Kings cannot do (if they list) in matters of greatest importance, and especially unto such as most they should declare their magnificence? He then that performeth what he ought to do, when it is 4:II
within his owne power, doth well. But it is not so much
to bee admired, neither deserveth halfe the commendations,
as when one man doth good to another, when least it is
expected, as being out of his power, and yet performed.
In which respect, because you have so extolled king Piero,
as appearing not meanly meritorious in your judgements;
I make no doubt but you will be much more pleased, when
the actions of our equals are duly considered, and shal
paralell any of the greatest Kings. Wherefore I purpose
to tell you a Novel, concerning an honorable curtesie of two
worthy friends.

At such time as Octavius Caesar (not as yet named
Augustus, but only in the office called Triumveri) governed
the Romane Empire, there dwelt in Rome a Gentleman,
named Publius Quintus Fulvius, a man of singular under-
standing, who having one son, called Titus Quintus Fulvius,
of towrdly yeares and apprehension, sent him to Athens to
learne Philosophy, but with letters of familiar commenda-
tions, to a Noble Athenian Gentleman, named Chremes,
being his ancient friend, of long acquaintance. This
Gentleman lodged Titus in his owne house, as companion
to his son, named Gisippus, both of them studying together,
under the tutoring of a Philosopher, called Aristippus.
These two yong Gentlemen living thus in one Citty, House,
and Schoole, it bred betweene them such a brother-hoode
and amity, as they could not be severed from one another,
but only by the accident of death; nor could either of them
enjoy any content, but when they were both together in
company.

Being each of them endued with gentle spirits, and
having begun their studies together: they arose (by
degrees) to the glorious height of Philosophy, to their
much admired fame and commendation. In this manner
they lived, to the no meane comfort of Chremes, hardly
distinguishing the one from the other for his Son, and thus
the Schollers continued the space of three yeares. At the
ending wherof (as it hapneth in al things else) Chremes
died, whereat both the young Gentlemen conceived such
hearty griefe, as if he had bin their common father; nor
could the kinred of Chremes discerne, which of the two had most need of comfort, the losse touched them so equally.

It chanced within some few months after, that the kinred of Gisippus came to see him, and (before Titus) avised him to marriage, and with a yong Gentlewoman of singular beauty, derived from a most noble house in Athens, and she named Sophronia, aged about fifteen years. This marriage drawing neere, Gisippus on a day, intreated Titus to walk along with him thither, because (as yet) he had not seene her. Coming to the house, and she sitting in the midst betweene them, Titus making himselfe a considerator of beauty, and especially on his friends behalfe; began to observe her very judiciaul, and every part of her seemed so pleasing in his eie, that giving them al a privat praise, yet answerable to their due deserving; he becam so enflamed with affection to her, as never any lover could bee more violentlie surprized, so sodainly doth beauty beguile our best senses.

After they had sate an indifferent while with her, they returned home to their lodging, where Titus being alone in his chamber, began to bethink himselfe on her, whose perfections had so powerfully pleased him: and the more he entred into this consideration, the fiercer he felt his desires enflamed, which being unable to quench, by any reasonable perswasions, after hee had vented foorth infinite sighes, thus he questioned with himselfe.

Most unhappie Titus as thou art, whether doost thou transport thine understanding, love, and hope? Doost thou not know as well by the honourable favours, which thou hast received of Chremes and his house, as also the intire amity betweene thee and Gisippus (unto whom faire Sophronia is the affianced friend) that thou shouldst holde her in the like reverent respect, as if shee were thy true borne Sister? Darest thou presume to fancie her? Whether shall beguiling Love allure thee, and vaine immaging hopes carrie thee? Open the eyes of thy better understanding, and acknowledge thy selfe to bee a most miserable man. Give way to reason, bridle thine intemperate appetites, reforme all irregulare desires, and guide thy fancy to a
place of better direction. Resist thy wanton and lascivious will in the beginning, and be master of thy selfe, while thou hast opportunity, for that which thou aimest at, is neither reasonable nor honest. And if thou wert assured to prevaille upon this pursuite, yet thou oughtst to avoide it, if thou hast any regard of true friendship, and the duty therein justly required. What wilt thou do then Titus? Fly from this inordinate affection, if thou wilt be reputed to be a man of sensible judgement.

After he had thus discoursed with himselfe, remembring Sophronia, and converting his former allegations, into a quite contrarie sense, in utter detestation of them, and guided by his idle appetite, thus he began againe. The lawes of love are of greater force, then any other whatsoever, they not only breake the bands of friendship, but even those also of more divine consequence. How many times hath it bin noted, the father to affect his own daughter, the brother his sister, and the stepmother her son in law, matters far more monstrous, then to see one friend love the wife of another, a case happening continually? Moreover, I am yong, and youth is wholly subjected to the passions of Love: is it reasonable then, that those should be bard from me, which are fitting and pleasing to Love? Honest things, belong to men of more years and maturity, then I am troubled withall, and I can covet none, but onely those wherein Love is directer. The beauty of Sophronia is worthy of generall love, and if I that am a yongman do love her, what man living can justly reprove me for it? Shold not I love her, because she is affianced to Gisippus? That is no matter to me, I ought to love her, because she is a woman, and women were created for no other occasion, but to bee Loved. Fortune had sinned in this case, and not I, in directing my friends affection to her, rather then any other; and if she ought to be loved, as her perfections do challenge, Gisippus understanding that I affect her, may be the better contented that it is I, rather then any other.

With these, and the like crosse entercourses, he often mockt himselfe, falling into the contrary, and then to this
againe, and from the contrary, into another kind of alteration, wasting and consuming himselfe, not only this day and the night following, but many more afterward, til he lost both his feeding and sleepe, so that through debility of body, he was constrained to keepe his bed. Gisippus, who had divers dayes noted his melancholly disposition, and now his falling into extreamitie of sicknesse, was very sorry to behold it: and with all means and inventions he could devise to use, hee both questioned the cause of this straunge alteration, and essayed everie way, how hee might best comfort him, never ceasing to demaunde a reason, why he should become thus sad and sickely. But Titus after infinite importuning (which still he answered with idle and frivolous excuses, farre from the truth indeede, and (to the no meane affliction of his friend) when he was able to use no more contradictions; at length, in sighes and teares, thus he replied.

Gisippus, were the Gods so wel pleased, I could more gladly yeild to dye, then continue any longer in this wretched life, considering, that Fortune hath brought mee to such an extremity, as profe is now to be made of my constancie and vertue; both which I finde conquered in me, to my eternall confusion and shame. But my best hope is, that I shal shortly be requited, as I have in justice deserved, namely with death, which will be a thousand times more welcome to me, then a loathed life, with remembrance of my base dejection in courage, which because I can no longer conceale from thee; not without blushing shame, I am well contented for to let thee know it.

Then began hee to recount, the whole occasion of this straunge conflict in him, what a maine battaile hee had with his private thoughts, confessing that they got the victory, causing him to die hourly for the love of Sophronia, and affirming withall, that in due acknowledgement, how greatly hee had transgressed against the lawes of friendship, he thought no other penance sufficient for him, but onely death, which he willingly expected every houre, and with all his heart would gladly bid welcome.

Gisippus hearing this discourse, and seeing how Titus
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL VIII

bitterly wept, in agonies of most moving afflictions: sat an indifferent while sad and pensive, as being wounded with affection to Sophronia, but yet in a well-governed and temperate manner. So, without any long delaying, hee concluded with himselfe; that the life of his friend ought to be accounted much more deare, then any love hee could beare unto Sophronia: And in this resolution, the teares of Titus forcing his eyes to flow forth like two Fountaines, thus he replyed.

Titus, if thou hadst not neede of comfort, as plainly I see thou hast, I would justly complaine of thee to my selfe, as of the man who hath violated our friendship, in keeping thine extreamitie so long time concealed from mee, which hath beene over-tedious for thee to endure. And although it might seeme to thee a dishonest case, and therefore kept from the knowledge of thy friend, yet I plainly tell thee, that dishonest courses (in the league of amitie) deserve no more concealment, then those of the honestest nature. But leaving these impertinent wandrings, let us come to them of much greater necessitie.

If thou doest earnestly love faire Sophronia, who is betroathed and affianced to me, it is no matter for me to marvaile at: but I should rather be much abashed, if thou couldst not intyrely affect her, knowing how beautifull she is, and the nobility of her minde, being as able to sustaine passion, as the thing pleasing is fullest of excellence. And looke how reasonable thou fanciest Sophronia, as unjustly thou complainest of thy fortune, in ordaining her to be my wife, although thou doest not speake it expresly: as being of opinion, that thou mightst with more honesty love her, if she were any others, then mine. But if thou art so wise, as I have always held thee to be, tell me truely upon thy faith, to whom could Fortune better guide her, and for which thou oughtest to be more thankfull, then in bestowing her on me? Any other that had enjoyed her, although thy love were never so honest, yet he would better affect her himselfe, then for thee, which thou canst not (in like manner) looke for from me, if thou doest account me for thy friend, and as constant now as ever.
THE TENTH DAY

Reason is my warrant in this case, because I cannot remember, since first our entrance into friendship, that ever I enjoyed any thing, but it was as much thine, as mine. And if our affairs had such an equall course before, as otherwise they could not subsist; must they not now be kept in the same manner? Can any thing more particularly appertaine to me, but thy right therein is as absolute as mine? I know not how thou maist esteeme of my friendship, if in any thing concerning my selfe, I can plead my priviledge to be above thine. True it is, that Sophronia is affianced to me, and I love her dearely, daily expecting when our nuptials shall be celebrated. But seeing thou doest more fervently affect her, as being better able to judge of the perfections, remaining in so excellent a creature as she is, then I doe: assure thy selfe, and beleve it constantly, that she shall come to my bed, not as my wife, but onely thine. And therefore leave these despairing thoughts, shake off this cloudy disposition, reassume thy former Joviall spirit, with comfort and what else can content thee: in expectation of the happy houre, and the just requitall of thy long, loving, and worthy friendship, which I have always valued equall with mine owne life.

Titus hearing this answer of Gisippus, looke how much the sweet hope of that which he desired gave him pleasure, as much both duty and reason affronted him with shame; setting before his eyes this du consideration, that the greater the liberality of Gisippus was, farre greater and unreasonable it appeared to him in disgrace, if hee should unmannerly accept it. Wherefore, being unable to refrain from tears, and with such strength as his weaknesse would give leave, thus he replied.

Gisippus, thy bounty and firme friendship suffereth me to see apparently, what (on my part) is no more then ought to be done. All the Gods forbide, that I should receive as mine, her whom they have adjudged to be thine, by true respect of birth and desert. For if they had thought her a wife fit for me, doe not thou or any else imagine, that ever she should have beene granted to thee. Use freely therefore thine owne election, and the gracious favour
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL VIII

wherewith they have blessed thee: leave me to consume away in teares, a mourning garment by them appointed for me, as being a man unworthy of such happinesse; for either I shall conquer this disaster, and that will be my crowne, or else will vanquish me, and free me from all paine: whereto Gisippus presently thus answered.

Worthy Titus, if our amity would give me so much licence, as but to contend with my selfe, in pleasing thee with such a thing as I desire, and could also induce thee therein to be directed: it is the onely end whereat I aime, and am resolved to pursue it. In which regard, let my perswasions prevale with thee, and thereto I conjure thee, by the faith of a friend, suffer me to use mine authority, when it extendeth both to mine owne honour, and thy good, for I will have Sophronia to bee onely thine. I know sufficiently, how farre the forces of love doe extend in power, and am not ignorant also, how not once or twice, but very many times, they have brought lovers to unfortunate ends, as now I see thee very neere it, and so farre gone, as thou art not able to turne backe againe, nor yet to conquer thine owne teares, but proceeding on further in this extremity, thou wilt be left vanquished, sinking under the burthen of loves tyrannicall oppression, and then my turne is next to follow thee. And therefore, had I no other reason to love thee, yet because thy life is deare to me, in regard of mine owne depending thereon; I stand the neerer thereto obliged. For this cause, Sophronia must and shal be thine, for thou canst not find any other so conforme to thy fancy: albeit I who can easily convert my liking to another wife, but never to have the like friend againe, shall hereby content both thee, and my selfe.

Yet perhaps this is not a matter so easily done, or I to expresse such liberality therein, if wives were to be found with the like difficultie, as true and faithfull friends are: but, (being able to recover another wife) though never such a worthy friend; I rather chuse to change, I doe not say loose her (for in giving her to thee, I loose her not my selfe) and by this change, make that which was good before, tenne times better, and so preserve both thee and my selfe. To
this end therefore, if my prayers and persuasions have any power with thee, I earnestly entreat thee, that, by freeing thy selfe out of this affliction, thou wilt (in one instant) make us both truly comforted, and dispose thy selfe (living in hope) to embrace that happiness, which the fervent love thou bearest to Sophronia, hath justly deserved.

Now although Titus was confounded with shame, to yeeld consent, that Sophronia should be accepted as his wife, and used many obstinate resistances: yet notwithstanding, Love pleading on the one side powerfully, and Gisippus as earnestly persuading on the other, thus he answered. Gisippus, I know not what to say, neither how to behave my selfe in this election, concerning the fitting of mine contentment, or pleasing thee in thy importunate persuasion. But seeing thy liberalty is so great, as it surmounteth all reason or shame in me, I will yeeld obedience to thy more then noble nature. Yet let this remaine for thine assurance, that I doe not receive this grace of thine, as a man not sufficiently understanding, how I enjoy from thee, not onely her whom most of all I doe affect, but also doe hold my very life of thee. Grant then you greatest Gods (if you be the Patrones of this mine unexpected felicitie) that with honor and due respect, I may hereafter make apparrantly knowne: how highly I acknowledge this thy wonderfull favour, in being more mercifull to me, then I could be to my selfe.

For abridging of all further circumstances, answered Gisippus, and for easier bringing this matter to full effect, I hold this to be our onely way. It is not unknowne to thee, how after much discourse had between my kindred, and those belonging to Sophronia, the matrimoniall conjunction was fully agreed on, and therefore, if now I shall flye off, and say, I will not accept thee as my wife: great scandall would arise thereby, and make much trouble among our friends, which could not be greatly displeasing to me, if that were the way to make her thine. But I rather stand in feare, that if I forsake her in such peremptory sort, her kinred and friends will bestow her

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on some other, and so she is utterly lost, without all possible means of recovery. For prevention therefore of all sinister accidents, I think it best, (if thy opinion jumpe with mine) that I still pursue the busines, as already I have begun, having thee alwaies in my company, as my dearest friend and onely associate. The nuptials being performed with our friends, in secret manner at night (as we can cunningly enough contrive it) thou shalt have her maiden honour in bed, even as if she were thine owne wife. Afterward, in apt time and place, we will publiquely make knowne what is done; if they take it well, we will be as jocond as they: if they frowne and waxe offended, the deed is done, over-late to be recalled, and so perforce they must rest contented.

You may well imagine, this advise was not a little pleasing to Titus, wherupon Gisippus received home Sophronia into his house, with publike intention to make her his wife, according as was the custome then observed, and Titus being perfectly recovered, was present at the Feast very ceremonially observed. When night was come, the Ladies and Gentlewomen conducted Sophronia to the Bride-Chamber, where they left her in her Husbands bed, and then departed all away. The Chamber wherein Titus used to lodge, joyned close to that of Gisippus, for their easier access each to the other, at all times whensoever they pleased, and Gisippus being alone in the Bride-Chamber, preparing as if he were comming to bed: extinguishing the light, he went softly to Titus, willing him to goe to bed to his wife. Which Titus hearing, overcome with shame and feare, became repentant, and denied to goe. But Gisippus, being a true intyre friend indeed, and confirming his words with actions: after a little lingring dispute, sent him to the Bride, and so soone as he was in the bed with her, taking Sophronia gently by the hand, softly he moved the usall question to her, namely, if she were willing to be his wife.

She believing verily that he was Gisippus, modestly answered. Sir, I have chosen you to be my Husband, reason requires then, that I should be willing to be your
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wife. At which words, a costly Ring, which Gisippus used daily to weare, he put upon her finger, saying. With this Ring, I confesse my selfe to be your Husband, and bind you (for ever) my Spouse and Wife; no other kind of marriage was observed in those dayes, and so he continued all the night with her, she never suspecting him to be any other than Gisippus, and thus was the marriage consumated, betwene Titus and Sophronia, albeit the friends (on either side) thought otherwise.

By this time, Publius, the father of Titus, was departed out of this mortall life, and letters came to Athens, that with all speed he should returne to Rome, to take order for occasions there concerning him; wherefore he concluded with Gisippus about his departure, and taking Sophronia thither with him, which was no easie matter to be done, until it were first known, how occasions had bin caried among them. Wherupon, calling her one day into her Chamber, they tolde her entirely, how all had past, which Titus confirmed substantially, by such direct passages betwene themselves, as exceeded all possibility of denyall, and moved in her much admiration; looking each on other very discontentedly, she heavily weeping and lamenting, and greatly complaining of Gisippus, for wronging her so unkindly.

But before any further noyse was made in the house, shee went to her Father, to whom, as also to her Mother, shee declared the whole trecherie, how much both they and their other friends were wronged by Gisippus, avouching her selfe to be the wife of Titus, and not of Gisippus, as they supposed. These newes were highly displeasing to the Father of Sophronia, who with hir kinred, as also those of Gisippus, made great complaints to the Senate, very dangerous troubles and commotions arising daily betwene them, drawing both Gisippus and Sophronia into harsh reports; he being generally reputed, not onely worthy of all bitter reprooфе, but also the severest punishment. Neverthelesse, hee maintained publiquely what he had done, avouching it for an act both of honour and honestie, wherewith Sophronia's friends had no reason to bee offended, but rather to take it
in very thankfull part, having married a man of farre greater worth and respect, than himselfe was, or could be.

On the other side, Titus hearing these unceivill acclamaations, became much moved and provoked at them, but knowing it was a custome observed among the Greeks, to be so much the more hurried away with rumours and threatnings, as lesse they finde them to be answered, and when they finde them, shew themselves not onely humble enough, but rather as base men, and of no courage; he resolved with himselfe, that their braveries were no longer to be endured, without some bold and manly answere. And having a Romane heart, as also an Athenian understanding, by politique persuasions, he caused the kinred of Gisippus and Sophronia, to be assembled in a Temple, and himselfe comming thither, accompanied with none but Gisippus onely, he began to deliver his minde before them all, in this manner following.

The Oration uttered by Titus Quintus Fulvius, in the hearing of the Athenians, being the kinred and friends to Gisippus and Sophronia.

Many Philosophers doe hold opinion, that the actions performed by mortall men, doe proceed from the disposing and ordination of the immortall gods. Whereupon some doe maintaine, that things which be done, or never are to be done, proceed of necessity: howbeit some other doe hold, that this necessity is onely referred to things done. Both which opinions (if they be considered with mature judgment) doe most manifestly approve, that they who reprehend any thing which is irrevocable, doe nothing else but shew themselves, as if they were wiser then the Gods, who we are to beleeeve, that with perpetuall reason, and void of any error, doe dispose and governe both us, and all our actions; In which respect, how foolish and beast-like a thing it is, presumptuously to checke or controule their operations, you may very easily consider; and likewise, how
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justly they deserve condigne punishment, who suffer themselves to be transported in so temerarious a manner.

In which notorious transgression, I understand you all to be guiltie, if common fame speake truely, concerning the marriage of my selfe and Sophronia, whom you imagined as given to Gisippus; for you never remember that it was so ordained from eternitie, shee to be mine, and no Wife for Gisippus, as at this instant is made manifest by full effect. But because the kinde of speaking, concerning divine providence, and intention of the Gods, may seeme a difficult matter to many, and somewhat hard to bee understood: I am content to presuppose, that they meddle not with any thing of ours, and will onely stay my selfe on humane reasons, and in this nature of speech, I shall be enforced to doe two things, quite contrary to my naturall disposition. The one is, to speake somewhat in praise and commendation of my selfe: And the other, justly to blame and condemne other mens seeming estimation. But because both in the one and the other, I doe not intend to swerve a jot from the Truth, and the necessitie of the present case in question, doth not onely require, but also command it, you must pardon what I am to say.

Your complaints doe proceed, rather from furie then reason, and (with continuall murmurings, or rather seditions) slander, backe-bite and condemne Gisippus, because (of his owne free will and noble disposition)hee gave her to be my Wife, whom (by your election) was made his; wherein I account him most highly praise-worthy: and the reasons inducing mee thereunto, are these. The first, because he hath performed no more then what a friend ought to doe: And the second, in regard he hath dealt more wisely, then you did. I have no intention, to display (at this present) what the sacred law of amitie requireth, to be acted by one friend towards another, it shall suffice mee onely to informe you, that the league of friendship (farre stronger then the bond of bloud and kinred) confirmed us in our election of either at the first, to be true, loyall and perpetuall friends; whereas that of kinred, commeth onely by fortune or chance. And therefore if Gisippus affected more my life, then your benevo-
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lence, I being ordained for his friend, as I confesse my selfe to be; none of you ought to wonder thereat, in regard it is no matter of mervaile.

But let us come now to our second reason, wherein, with farre greater instance I will shew you, that he hath (in this occasion) shewn himselfe to be much more wise, then you did, or have done: because it plainly appeareth, that you have no feeling of the divine providence, and much lesse knowledge in the effects of friendship. I say, that your foresight, councell and deliberation, gave Sophronia to Gisippus, a yong Gentleman, and a Philosopher: Gisippus likewise hath given her to a yong Gentleman, and a Philosopher, as himselfe is. Your discretion gave her to an Athenian; the gift of Gisippus, is to a Romaine. Yours, to a Noble and honest man; that of Gisippus, to one more Noble by race, and no lesse honest then himselfe. Your judgement hath bestowed her on a rich young man: Gisippus hath given her to one farre richer. Your wisedome gave her to one who not onely loved her not, but also one that had no desire to know her: Gisippus gave her unto him, who, above all felicitie else, yea, more than his owne life, both entirely loved and desired her.

Now, for proofe of that which I have said, to be most true and infallible, and that his deede deserveth to bee much more commended then yours, let it bee duely considered on, point by point. That I am a young man and a Philosopher, as Gisippus is; my yeaers, face, and studies, without seeking after further profe, doth sufficiently testifie: One selfsame age is both his and mine, in like quality of course have wee lived and studied together. True it is, that hee is an Athenian, and I am a Romaine. But if the glory of these two Cities should bee disputed on: then let mee tell you, that I am of a Citie that is Francke and Free, and hee is of a Tributarie Citie. I say that I am of a Citie, which is chiefe Lady and Mistresse of the whole World, and hee is of a Citie subject to mine. I say that I am of a Citie, that is strong in Arms, Empire, and studies: whereas his can commend it selfe but for Studies onely. And although you seeme heere to bee a Scholler, in appearance meane...
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enough, yet I am not descended of the simplest stocke in Rome.

My houses and publique places, are filled with the ancient Statues of my Predecessors, and the Annales recorde the infinite triumphs of the Quintij, brought home by them into the Romane Capitole, and yeares cannot eate out the glory of our name, but it will live and flourish to all posteritie.

Modest shame makes me silent in my wealth and possessions, my minde truely telling mee, that honest contented povertie, is the most ancient and richest inheritance, of our best and Noblest Romanes, which opinion, if it bee condemned by the understanding of the ignorant multitude, and heerein wee shall give way to them by preferring riches and worldly treasures, then I can say that I am abundantly provided, not as ambitious, or greedily covetous, but sufficiently stored with the goods of Fortune.

I know well enough, that you held it as a desired benefit, Gisippus being a Native of your Citie, should also be linked to you by alliance: but I know no reason, why I should not be as neere and deere to you at Rome, as if I lived with you heere. Considering, when I am there, you have a ready and well wishing friend, to stead you in all beneficall and serviceable offices, as carefull and provident for your support, yea, a protectour of you and your affaires, as well publique as particular. Who is it then, not transported with partiall affection, that can (in reason) more approue your act, then that which my friend Gisippus hath done? Questionlesse, not any one, as I thinke. Sophronia is married to Titus Quintus Fulvius, a Noble Gentleman by antiquitie, a rich Citizen of Rome, and (which is above all) the friend of Gisippus: therfore, such a one as thinkes it strange, is sorrie for it, or would not have it to be; knoweth not what he doth.

Perhaps there may be some, who will say, they doe not so much complain, that Sophronia is the wife to Titus; but of the manner whereby it was done, as being made his wife secretly, and by theft, not any of her parents, kinred or friends called thereto: no, nor so much as advertised thereof.
Why Gentlemen, this is no miraculous thing, but heeretofore hath oftentimes happened, and therefore no noveltie.

I cannot count unto you, how many there have beene, who (against the will of their Fathers) have made choice of their husbands; nor them that have fled away with their lovers into strange Countries, being first friends, before they were wives: nor of them who have sooner made testimonie of marriage by their bellies, then those ceremonies due to matrimonie, or publication thereof by the tongue; so that meere necessity and constraint, hath forced the parents to yeeld consent: which hath not so happened to Sophronia, for she was given to me by Gisippus discretely, honestly, and orderly.

Others also may say, that shee is married to him, to whom it belonged not to marrie her. These complaints are foolish, and womanish, proceeding from verie little, or no consideration at all. In these daies of ours, Fortune makes no use of novell or inconsiderate meanes, whereby to bring matters to their determined effect. Why should it offend me, if a Cobler, rather than a Scholler, hath ended a businesse of mine, either in private or publique, if the end be well made? Well I may take order, if the Cobler bee indiscreet, that hee meddle no more with any matters of mine, yet I ought, in courtesie, to thanke him for that which hee did.

In like manner, if Gisippus hath married Sophronia well, it is foolish and superfluous, to finde fault with the manner hee used in her marriage. If you mislike his course in the case, beware of him hereafter, yet thanke him because it is no worse.

Neverthelesse, you are to understand, that I sought not by fraud or deceit, (but onely by witte) any opportunitie, whereby any way to sullie the honestie and cleere Nobilitie of your bloud, in the person of Sophronia: for although in secret I made her my wife, yet I came not as an enemie, to take her perforce, nor (like a ravisher) wronged her virginitie, to blemish your noble titles, or despising your alliance. But fervently, enflamed by her bright beauty, and incited also by her unparalleld vertues, I shaped my course; knowing
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well enough, that if I tooke the ordinarie way of wiving, by moving the question to you, I should never winne your consent, as fearing, lest I would take her with me to Rome, and so convey out of your sight, a Jewell by you so much esteemed, as she is.

For this, and no other reason, did I presume to use the secret cunning which now is openly made knowne unto you: and Gisippus disposed himselfe thereunto, which otherwise hee never determined to have done, in contracting the marriage for mee, and shee consenting to me in his name.

Moreover, albeit most earnestly I affected her, I sought to procure your union, not like a lover, but as a true husband, nor would I immodestly touch her, till first (as her selfe can testify) with the words becomming wedlocke, and the Ring also I espoused her, demanding of her, if shee would accept mee as her husband, and shee answered mee, with her full consent. Wherein, if it may seeme that shee was deceived, I am not any way to be blamed, but she, for not demanding, what, and who I was.

This then is the great evill, the great offence, and the great injurie committed by my friend Gisippus, and by mee as a Lover: that Sophronia is secretly become the wife of Titus Quintus Fulvius. And for this cause, like spies you watch him, threaten him daily, as if you intended to teare him in pieces. What could you doe more, if hee had given her to a man of the very vilest condition? to a villaine, to a slave? What prisons? what fetters? Or what tortments are sufficient for this fact? But leaving these frivolous matters, let us come to discourse of more moment, and better be-seeming your attention.

The time is come, that I may no longer continue heere, because Publius my Father is dead, and I must needs returne to Rome, wherefore being minded to take Sophronia thither with mee, I was the more willing to acquaint you therewith, as also what else I have said, which otherwise had still beene concealed from you. Nor can you but take it in good part, if you be wise, and rest well contented with what is done: considering, if I had any intention eyther to deceive, or otherwise wrong you, I could have basely left her.
and made a scorne both of her and you, you not having any
to stay mee here. But the Gods will never permissive
that any couragious Romane, should ever conceive so vile
and degenerate a thought.

Sophronia, by ordination of the Gods, by force of humane
Lawes, and by the laudable consent of my friend Gisippus,
as also the powerfull command of Love is mine. But you
perchance, imagining your selves to be wiser then the Gods,
or any other men whatsoever; may thinke ill of it, and
more brutishly then beasts, condemne their working in
two kinds, which would be offensive to mee. The one is,
your detaining of Sophronia from mee, of whom you
have no power, but what pleaseth mee. The other, is your bitter
threatnings against Gisippus my deare friend, to whom you
are in duty obliged. In both which cases, how unreasonable
soever you carrie your selves, I intend not at this time
to presse any further. But rather let mee counsell you
like a friend, to cease your hatred and disdaine, and suffer
Sophronia to be delivered mee, that I may depart con-
tentedly from you as a kinsman, and (being absent) remaine
your friend: assuring you, that whether what is done shall
please or displease you, if you purpose to proceed any other-
wise: I will take Gisippus along with mee, and when I come
to Rome, take such sure order, to fetch her hence, who in
Justice is mine, even in meere despight of you all, and then
you shall feele by sound experience, how powerfull is the
just indignation of the wronged Romanes.

When Titus had thus concluded his Oration, he arose
with a sterne and discontented countenance, and tooke
Gisippus by the hand, plainly declaring, that he made small
account of all the rest that were in the Temple; and shak-
ing his head at them, rather menaced then any other wise
seemed to care for them.

They which tarried, when they were gone, considering
partly on the reasons alleadged by Titus, and partly terrri-
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kinsman (seeing Gisippus had made manifest refusall thereof) than to lose the kinred of the one, and procure the hatred of the other. Wherefore they went to seeke Titus, and said unto him, they were very well contented that Sophronia should bee his Wife, hee their deare and loving kinsman, and Gisippus to remaine their much respected friend. And embracing one another, making a solemn feast, such as in the like cases is necessarilie required, they departed from him, presently sending Sophronia to him, who making a vertue of necessity, converted her love (in short time after) to Titus, in as effectuall manner, as formerly shee had done to Gisippus, and so was sent away with him to Rome, where she was received and welcommed with very great honour.

Gisippus remaining still at Athens, in small regard of eyther theirs or his owne friends: not long after by meanes of sundry troublesome Citizens; and partialities happening among the common people, was banished from Athens, and hee, as also all his familie, condemned to perpetuall exile: during which tempestuous time, Gisippus was become not onely wretchedly poore, but wanded abroad as a common begger; in which miserable condition he travelled to Rome, to try if Titus would take any acknowledgement of him. Understanding that he was living, and one most respected among the Romanes, as being a great Commander and a Senator: he enquired for the place where hee dwelt, and going to be neere about his house, stayed there so long, till Titus came home, yet not daring to manifest himselfe, or speake a word to him, in regard of his poore and miserable estate, but strove to have him see him, to the end, that hee might acknowledge and call him by his name; notwithstanding, Titus passed by him without either speech, or looking on him. Which when Gisippus perceivd, and making full account, that (at the least) he would remember him, in regard of former courtesies, done to him: confounded with griefe and desperate thoughtes, hee departed thence, never meaning to see him any more.

Now, in regard it was night, he having eaten nothing all that day, nor provided of one penny to buy him any food,
wandred he knew not whether, desiring rather to die than live; hee came at last to an old ruinous part of the City, over-spred with briers and bushes, and seldom resorted unto by any: where finding a hollow Cave or vault, he entred into it, meaning there to weare away the comfortlesse night, and laying himselfe downe on the hard ground, almost starke naked, and without any warme garments, over-wearied with weeping, at last he fell into a sleepe.

It fortuned that two men, who had beene abroad the same night, committing thefts and robberies together; somewhat very earlie in the morning, came to the same Cave, intending there to share and divide their booties, and difference happening betweene them about it, hee that was the stronger person, slew there the other, and then went away with the whole purchase.

Gisippus having heard and seene the manner of this accident, was not a little joyfull, because he had now found a way to death, without laying any violent hand on himself; for life being very loathsome to him, it was his only desire to die. Wherfore, he would not budge from the place, but taried there so long, till the Sergeants and Officers of Justice (by information of him that did the deede) came thither well attended, and furiously ledde Gisippus thence to prison.

Being examined concerning this bloudy fact, he plainly confessed, that hee himselfe had committed the murder, and afterward would not depart from the Cave, but purposely stayed for apprehension, as being truely toucht with compunction for so foule an offence: upon which peremptorie confession, Marcus Varro being then Prætor, gave sentence that he should be crucified on a Crosse, as it was the usuall manner of death in those dayes. Titus chancing to come at the same time into Prætorium, advisedly beholding the face of the condemned man (as hee sate upon the bench) knew him to bee Gysippus, not a little wondring at this strange accident, the povertie of his estate, and what occasion should bring him thither, especially in the questioning for his life, and before the Tribunall of Justice.

His soule earnestly thristing, by all possible meanes to 268
helpe and defend him, and no other course could now be taken for safetie of his life, but by accusing himselfe, to excuse and clear the other of the crime: hee steped from off the judgement bench, and crouding through the throng to the Barre, called out to the Praetor in this manner. Marcus Varro, recall thy sentence given on the condemned man sent away, because hee is truly guiltlesse and innocent: With one bloudie blow have I offended the Gods, by killing that wretched man, whom the Serjeants found this morning slaine, wherefore Noble Praetor, let no innocent mans bloud be shed for it, but onely mine that have offended.

Marcus Varro stood like a man confounded with admiration, being very sorrie, for that which the whole assistants had both seene and heard, yet hee could not (with honour) desist from what must needs be done, but would performe the Lawes severe injunction. And sending for condemned Gisippus backe againe, in the presence of Titus, thus he spake to him. How becamest thou so madly incensed, as (without any torment inflicted on thee) to confesse an offence by thee never committed? Art thou wearie of thy life? Thou chargest thy selfe falsly, to be the person who this last night murdered the man in the Cave, and there is another that voluntarily also doth confesse his guiltiness.

Gisippus lifting up his eyes, and perceiving it was Titus, conceived immediately, that he had done this onely for his deliverance, as one that remembred him sufficiently, and would not be ungratefull for former kindnesses received. Wherefore, the teares flowing abundantly down his cheekes, he said to the Judge Varro, it was none but I that murdered the man, wherefore, I commiserate the case of this Noble Gentleman Titus, who speakes now too late for the safety of my life. Titus on the other side, said. Noble Praetor, this man (as thou seest) is a stranger heere, and was found without any weapon, fast asleepe by the dead body: thou mayst then easily perceive, that meerely the miserable condition wherein he is, hath made him desperate, and he would make mine offence the occasion of his death. Absolve him, and send me to the Crosse, for none but I have deserved to die for this fact.
Varro was amazed, to observe with what earnest instance each of them strove to excuse the other, which halfe persuaded him in his soule, that they were both guiltlesse. And as he was starting up, with full intent to acquaint them: a yong man, who had stood there all this while, and observed the hard pleading on either side; he crowded into the Barre, being named Publius Ambustus, a fellow of lewd life, and utterly out of hopes, as being debauched in all his fortunes, and knowne among the Romaines to be a notorious theefe, who verily had committed the murder. Well knew his conscience, that none of them were guilty of the crime, wherewith each so wilfully charged himselfe: being therefore truly toucht with remorse, he stept before Marcus Varro, saying.

Honourable Prætor, mine owne horrid and abominable actions, have induced me thus to intrude my selfe, for clearing the strict contention betweene these two persons. And questionlesse, some God or greater power, hath tormented my wretched soule, and so compunctually solicited me, as I cannot chuse, but make open confession of my sinne. Here therefore, I doe apparently publish, that neither of these men is guilty of the offence, wherewith so wilfully each chargeth himselfe. I am the villaine, who this morning murdered the man in the Cave, one of no greater honesty then my selfe, and seeing this poore man lie there sleeping, while we were dividing the stolne booties betweene us; I slew my Companyon, because I would be the sole possessor. As for Noble Lord Titus, he had no reason thus to accuse himselfe, because [he] is a man of no such base quality: let them both then be delivered, and inflict the sentence of death on me.

Octavius Cæsar, to whom tydings was brought of this rare accident, commanding them al three to be brought before him; would needs understand the whole History, in every particular as all had happened, which was substantially related to him. Whereupon, Octavius pleased them all three: the two noble friendes, because they were innocent, and the third, for openly revealing the very truth.

Titus tooke home with him his friend Gisippus, and
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after he had sharply reproved him for his distrust, and cold credence of his friendship: he brought him to Sophronia, who welcomed him as lovingly, as if he had bin her naturall borne brother, bemoaning his hard and disastrous fortune, and taking especiall care, to convert all passed distresses, into as happy and comfortable a change, fitting him with garments and attendants, beseeing his degree both in Nobility and vertue. Titus, out of his honourable bounty, imparted halfe his lands and rich possessions to him, and afterward gave him in marriage, his owne Sister, a most beautifull Lady, named Fulvia, saying to him beside. My deare friend Gisippus, it remaineth now in thine owne election, whether thou wilt live here still with me, or returne backe to Athens, with all the wealth which I have bestowed on thee. But Gisippus, being one way constrayned, by the sentence of banishment from his native City, and then againe, in regard of the constant love, which he bare to so true and thankefull friend as Titus was: concluded to live there as a loyall Roman, where he with his Fulvia, and Titus with his faire Sophronia, lived long after together in one and the same house, augmenting daily (if possible it might be) their amity beyond all other equalizing.

A most sacred thing therefore is cordiall amity, worthy not onely of singular reverence, but also to be honoured with eternall commendation, as being the onely wise Mother of all magnificence and honesty, the Sister of Charity and Gratitude, the enemy to hatred and avarice, and which is always ready (without attending to be requested) to extend all vertuous actions to others, which she would have done to her selfe. Her rare and divine effects, in these contrary times of ours, are not to be found between two such persons, which is a mighty fault, and greatly checketh the miserable covetousnesse of men, who respecting nothing but onely their particular benefit; have banished true Amity, to the utmost confines of the whole earth, and sent her into perpetuall exile.

What love, what wealth, or affinity of kindred, could have made Gisippus feele (even in the intyrest part of his soule) the fervent compassion, the teares, the sighes of
Titus, and with such efficacy as plainly appeared: to make him consent, that his faire elected Spouse, by him so dearly esteemed, should become the wife of his Companion, but onely the precious league of Amity? What Lawes, what threatnings, what feares, could cause the yong armes of Gisippus to abstaine embraces, betaking himselfe to solitary walkes, and obscure places, when in his owne bedde, he might have enjoyed so matchlesse a beauty (who perhaps desired it so much as himselfe) but onely the gracious title of Amity? What greatnesse, what merits or precedence, could cause Gisippus not to care, for the losse of his kindred, those of Sophronia, yea, of Sophronia her selfe, not respecting the dishonest murmurings of base minded people, their vile and contemptible language, scornes and mockeries, and all to content and satisfie a friend, but onely Divine Amity? 

Come now likewise to the other side. What occasions could compell Noble Titus, so promptly and deliberatly, to procure his owne death, to rescue his friend from the crosse, and inflict the pain and shame upon himselfe, pretending not [to] see or know Gisippus at all, had it not bin wrought by powerfull Amity? What cause else could make Titus so liberall, in dividing (with such willingnesse) the larger part of his patrimony to Gisippus, when Fortune had disposset him of his owne, but onely heaven-borne Amity? What else could have procured Titus, without any further dilation, feare or suspition, to give his Sister Fulvia in marriage to Gisippus, when he saw him reduced to such extreame poverty, disgrace and misery, but onely infinite Amity? To what end doe men care then, to covet and procure great multitudes of kinred, store of brethren, numbers of children, and to encrease (with their owne monyes) plenty of servants: when by the least losse and dammage happening, they forget all duty to Father, Brother, or Master? Amity and true friendship is of a quite contrary nature, satisfying (in that sacred bond) the obligation due to all degrees, both of parentage, and all alliances else.
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Saladine, the great Soldan of Babylon, in the habite of a Merchant, was honourably received and welcommed, into the house of Signior Thorello d'Istria. Who travelling to the Holy Land, prefixed a certaine time to his Wife, for his returne backe to her againe, wherein, if he failed, it was lawfull for her to take another Husband. By clouding himselfe in the disguise of a Faulkner, the Soldan tooke notice of him, and did him many great honours. Afterward, Thorello falling sicke, by Magicall Art, he was conveighed in one night to Pavia, when his Wife was to be married on the morrow: where making himselfe knowne to her, all was disappointed, and shee went home with him to his owne house.

THE NINTH NOVELL

Declaring what an honourable vertue Courtesie is, in them that truely know how to use them.

MADAME PHILOMENA having concluded her discourse, and the rare acknowledgement, which Titus made of his esteemed friend Gisippus, extolled justly as it deserved by all the Company: the King, reserving the last office to Dioneus (as it was at the first granted him) began to speake thus. Without all question to the contrary (worthy Ladies) nothing can be more truely said, then what Madame Philomena, hath delivered, concerning Amity, and her complaint in the conclusion of her Novell, is not without great reason, to see it so slenderly reverenced and respected (now a dayes) among all men. But if we had met here in duty onely for correcting the abuses of iniquity, and the malevolent courses of this pre-
posterus age; I could proceed further in this just cause of complaint. But because our end aimeth at matters of other nature, it commeth to my memory to tel you of a History, which (perhaps) may seeme somewhat long, but altogether pleasant, concerning a magnificent act of great Saladine: to the end, that by observing those things which you shall heare in my Novell, if we cannot (by reason of our manifold imperfections) intirely compasse the amity of any one; yet (at least) we may take delight, in stretching our kindnesse (in good deeds) so farre as we are able, in hope one day after, some worthy reward will ensue thereon, as thereto justly appertaining.

Let me tell you then, that (as it is affirmed by many) in the time of the Emperour Frederick, first of that name, the Christians, for the better recovery of the holy land, resolved to make a generall voyage over the Seas. Which being understood by Saladine, a very worthy Prince, and then Soldan of Babylon: he concluded with himselfe, that he would (in person) goe see, what preparation the Christian Potentates made for this Warre, that hee might the better provide for himselfe. Having setled all things orderly in Egypt for the busines, and making an outward appearance, as if he purposed a pilgrimage to Mecha: he set onward on his journey, habited like a Merchant, attended onely with two of his most Noble and wisest Baschaes, and three waiting servants.

When he had visited many Christian Provinces, and was riding thorow Lombardie, to passe the mountaines; it fortuned, in his journeying from Millaine to Pavia, and the day being very farre spent, so that night hastened speedily on him: he met with a Gentleman, named Signior Thorella d'Istria, but dwelling at Pavia, who with his men, Hawkes and Hounds, went to a house of his, seated in a singular place, and on the River of Ticinum. Signior Thorello seeing such men making towards him, presently imagined, that they were some Gentle-strangers, and such hee desired to respect with honor.

Wherefore, Saladine demanding of one of Thorelloes men, how farre (as then) it was to Pavia, and whether they might
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reach thither by such an houre, as would admit their entrance into the Citty: Thorello would not suffer his servant to returne the answer, but replied thus himselfe. Sir (quoth he) you cannot reach Pavia, but night will abridge you of any entrace there. I beseech you then Sir, answered Saladine, favour us so much (because we are all strangers in these parts) as to tell us where we may be well lodged. That shal I Sir, said Thorello, and very gladly too.

Even at the instant Sir, as we met with you, I had determined in my mind, to send one of my servants somewhat neere to Pavia, about a businesse concerning my selfe: he shall go along with you, and conduct you to a place, where you will be very well entertayned. So, stepping to him, who was of best discretion amongst his men, he gave order to him what should bee done, and sent him with them. Himselfe, making hast by a farre neerer way, caused Supper to be prepared in worthy manner, and the Tables to be covered in his Garden; and all things being in good readiness, he sate downe at his doore, to attend the comming of his guests. The Servingman, discoursing with the Gentlemen on divers occasions, guided them by such unusuall passages, as (before they could discerne it) hee brought them to his Masters house; where so soone as Thorello saw them arrived, he went forth to meet them, assuring them all of most hearty welcome.

Saladine, who was a man of accute understanding, did well perceive, that this Knight Thorello misdoubted his going with him, if (when he met him) hee should have invited him; and therefore, because he would not be denied, of entertaining him into his house; he made choise of this kinde and honourable course, which caused him to returne this answer. Gentle Sir, if courtesie in one man to another, do deserve condemning, then may we justly complaine of you, who meeting us upon the way, which you have short-ened by your kindees, and which we are no way able to deserve, wee are constrained to accept, taking you to bee the mirrour of courtesie. Thorello being a Knight of ingenious apprehension, and wel languaged, replied thus.

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Gentlemen; this courtesie (seeing you terme it so) which you receive of me, in regard of that justly belonging to you, as your faces do sufficiently informe mee, is matter of very slender account. But assuredly out of Pavia, you could not have any lodging, deserving to be termed good. And therefore, let it not bee displeasing to you, if you have a little gone forth of the common rode way, to have your entertainement somewhat bettered, as many travaylers are easily induced to do.

Having thus spoken, all the people of the house shewed themselves, in serviceable manner to the Gentlemen, taking their horses as they dismounted, and Thorello himselfe, conducted the three Gentlemen, into three severall faire Chambers, which in costly maner were prepared for them, where their boots were pluckt off, faire Napkins with Man-chets lay ready, and delicate Wines to refresh their wearied spirits, much pretty conference being entercoursed, til Supper time invited them thence.

Saladine, and they that were with him, spake the Latine tongue very readily, by which meanes they were the better understooode; and Thorello seemed (in their judgement) to bee the most gracious, compleate, and best spoken Gentle-man, as ever they met with in all their journey. It appeared also (on the other side) to Signiour Thorello, that his guests were men of great merit, and worthy of much more esteeme, then there he could use towards them: wherefore, it did highly distast him, that he had no more friends there this night to keepe them company, or himselfe better pro-vided for their entertainment, which hee intended (on the morrow) to recompence with larger amends at dinner.

Heereupon, having instructed one of his men with what hee intended, he sent him to Pavia, which was not farre off (and where he kept no doore shut) to his Wife, named Madam Adialetta; a Woman singularly wise, and of a Noble spirit, needing little or no direction, especially when she knew her husbands minde. As they were walking in the Garden, Thorello desired to understand, of whence, and what they were? Whereto Saladine thus answered. Sir, wee are Cyprian Marchants, comming now from Cyprus, and
are travailing to Paris, about affaires of importance. Now trust me Syr, replied Thorello, I could heartily wish, that this Countrey of ours would yeeld such Gentlemen, as your Cyprus affordeth Marchants. So, falling from one discourse unto another, Supper was served in; and looke howe best themselves pleased, so they sate at the Table, where (we neede make no doubt) they were respected in honourable order.

So soone as the Tables were withdrawne, Thorello knowing they might be weary, brought them againe to their Chambers, where committing them to their good rest, himselfe went to bed soone after. The Servant sent to Pavia, delivered the message to his Lady; who, not like a woman of ordinary disposition, but rather truely Royall, sent Thorelloes servants into the City, to make preparation for a Feast indeed, and with lighted Torches (because it was somewhat late) they invited the very greatest and noblest persons of the Citie, all the roomes being hanged with the richest Arras, Clothes and Golde worke, Velvets, Silkes, and all other rich adornments, in such manner as her husband had commanded, and answerable to her owne worthy mind, being no way to learne, in what manner to entertaine strangers.

On the morrow morning, the Gentlemen arose, and mounting on horsebacke with Signior Thorello, he called for his Hawkes and Hounds, brought them to the River, where he shewed two or three faire flights: but Saladine desiring to know, which was the fayrest Hostery in all Pavia, Thorello answered. Gentlemen, I wil shew you that my selfe, in regard I have occasion to ride thither. Which they beleeving, were the better contented, and rode on directly unto Pavia; arriving there about nine of the clocke, and thinking he guided them to the best Inne, he brought them to his owne house; where, above fifty of the worthiest Citizens, stood ready to welcome the Gentlemen, embracing them as they lighted from their Horsses. Which Saladine, and his associates perceiving, they guessed as it was indeede, and Saladine sayd. Beleeve me worthy Thorello, this is not answerable to my demand; you did too much yester night, and much more then we could desire
or deserve: Wherefore, you might wel be the sooner discharged of us, and let us travaile on our journey.

Noble Gentlemen, replyed Thorello (for in mine eye you seeme no lesse) that courtesie which you met with yesternight, I am to thanke Fortune for, more then you, because you were then straited by such necessity, as urged your acceptance of my poore Country house. But now this morning, I shall account my selfe much beholding to you (as the like will all these worthy Gentlemen here about you) if you do but answer kindnes with kindnes, and not refuse to take a homely dinner with them.

Saladine and his friends, being conquerd with such potent perswasions, and already dismounted from their horses, saw that all deniall was meerly in vaine: and therefore thankfully condiscending (after some few ceremonious complements were over-past) the Gentlemen conducted them to their Chambers, which were most sumptuously prepared for them, and having laid aside their riding garments, being a little refreshed with Cakes and choice Wines; they descended into the dining Hall, the pompe whereof I am not able to report.

When they had washed, and were seated at the Tables, dinner was served in most magnificent sort; so that if the Emperor himself had bin there, he could not have bin more sumptuously served. And although Saladine and his Baschaes were very Noble Lords, and wonted to see matters of admiration: yet could they do no lesse now, but rather exceeded in marvaile, considering the qualitie of the Knight, whom they knew to bee a Citizen, and no Prince or great Lord. Dinner being ended, and divers familiar conferences passing amongst them: because it was exceeding hot, the Gentlemen of Pavia (as it pleased Thorello to appoint) went to repose themselves awhile, and he keeping company with his three guests, brought them into a goodly Chamber, where, because he would not faile in the least scruple of courtesie, or conceale from them the richest Jewell which he had; he sent for his Lady and wife, because (as yet) they had not seene her.

She was a Lady of extraordinary beauty, tall stature,
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very sumptuously attired, and having two sweet Sonnes (resembling Angels) she came with them waiting before her, and graciously saluted her guests. At her comming, they arose, and having received hir with great reverence, they seated her in the midst, kindly cherishing the two Children. After some gracious Language past on eyther side, she demanded of whence, and what they were, which they answered in the same kind as they had done before to her husband. Afterward, with a modest smiling countenance, she sayd. Worthy Gentlemen, let not my weake Womanish discretion appeare distastable, in desiring to crave one especiall favour from you, namely, not to refuse or disdaine a small gift, where-with I purpose to present you. But considering first, that women (according to their simple faculty) are able to bestow but silly gifts: so you would be pleased, to respect more the person that is the giver, then the quality or quantity of the gift.

Then causing to be brought (for each of them) two goodly gowns or Robes (made after the Persian manner) the one lyned thorough with cloth of Gold, and the other with the costlyest Fur; not after such fashion as Citizens or Marchants use to weare, but rather beseeming Lords of greatest account, and three light under-wearing Cassocks or Mandillions, of Carnatian Sattin, richly Imbroidred with Gold and Pearles, and lined thorow with White Taffata, presenting these gifts to him, she sayd. I desire you Gentlemen to receive these meane triffles, such as you see my Husband weares the like, and these other beside, considering you are so far from your Wives, having travailed a long way already, and many miles more yet to overtake; also Marchants (being excellent men) affect to be comely and handsome in their habits; although these are of slender value, yet (in necessity) they may do you service.

Now was Saladine and his Baschaes halfe astonyed with admiration, at the magnificent minde of Signiour Thorello, who would not forget the least part of courtesie towards them, and greatly doubted (seeing the beauty and riches of the Garments) least they were discovered by Thorello. Nevertheless, one of them thus answered the Lady. Beleeve...
me Madame, these are rich guiftes, not lightly either to be given, or receyved: but in regard of your strict imposition, we are not able to deny them. This being done, with most gracious and courteous demeanour, she departed from them, leaving her Husband to keepe them still companie; who furnished their servants also, with divers worthy necessaries fitting for their journey.

Afterward, Thorello (by very much importunitie) wonne them to stay with him all the rest of the day; wherefore, when they had rested themselves awhile, being attyred in their newly given robes; they rode on Horsebacke thorow the Citty. When supper time came, they supt in most honourable and worthy company, beeing afterwards Lodged in most faire and sumptuous Chambers, and being risen in the morning, in exchange of their horses (over-wearied with Travaile) they found three other very richly furnished, and their men also in like manner provided. Which when Saladine had perceyved, he tooke his Baschaes aside, and spake in this manner.

By our greatest Gods, I never met with any man, more compleat in all noble perfections, more courteous and kinde then Thorello is. If all the Christian Kings, in the true and heroicall nature of Kings, do deale as honourably as I see this Knight doeth, the Soldane of Babylon is not able to endure the comming of one of them, much lesse so many, as wee see preparing to make head against us. But beholding, that both refusall and acceptation, was all one in the minde of Thorello: after much kinde Language had bin intercoursed betweene them, Saladine (with his Attendants) mounted on horsebacke.

Signiour Thorello, with a number of his honourable Friends (to the number of an hundred Horsse) accompanied them a great distance from the Citie, and although it greeved Saladine exceedingly, to leave the company of Thorello, so dearely he was affected to him: but necessity (which controlleth the power of all lawes whatsoever) must needs divide them: yet requesting his returne agayne that way, if possibly it might be granted; which Saladine promised but did not performe. Well Gentlemen (quoth
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Thorello at parting) I know not what you are, neither (against your will) do I desire it: but whether you be Marchants or no, remember me in your kinndesse, and so to the heavenly powers I commend you. Saladine, having taken his leave of all them that were with Thorello, returned him this answer. Sir, it may one day hereafter so happen, as we shal let you see some of our Marchandises, for the better confirmation of your beleefe, and our profession.

Thus parted Signior Thorello and his friends, from Saladine and his company, who verily determined in the heighth of his minde, if he should be spared with life, and the warre (which he expected) concluded: to requite Thorello with no lesse courtesie, then hee had already declared to him; conferring a long while after with his Baschaes, both of him and his beauteous Lady, not forgeting any of their courteous actions, but gracing them all with deserved commendation. But after they had (with very laborious paines) surveyed most of the Westerne parts, they all tooke Shipping, and returned into Alexandria: sufficiently informed, what preparation was to be made for their owne defence. And Signior Thorello being come backe againe to Pavia, consulted with his privat thoughts (many times after) what these three travellers should be, but came farre short of knowing the truth, till (by experience) hee became better informed.

When the time was come, that the Christians were to make their passage, and wonderfull great preparations, in all places performed: Signiour Thorello, notwithstanding the teares and intreaties of his Wife, determined to be one in so woorthy and honourable a voyage: and having made his provision ready, nothing wanting but mounting on Horsebacke, to go where he should take shipping; to his Wife (whom he most intirely affected) thus hee spake. Madame, I goe as thou seest in this famous Voyage, as well for mine Honour, as also the benefite of my soule; all our goodes and possessions, I commit to thy vertuous care. And because I am not certaine of my returning backe againe, in regard of a thousand accidents which may
happen, in such a Countrey as I goe unto: I desire onely but one favour of thee, whatsoever daunger shall befall mee; Namely, when any certaine tydings shall be brought you of my death; to stay no longer before thy second marriage, but one yeare, one month, and one day; to begin on this day of my departing from thee.

The Lady, who wept exceedingly, thus answered. Alas Sir: I know not how to carry my selfe, in such extremity of greefe, as now you leave me; but if my life surmount the fortitude of sorrow, and whatsoever shall happen to you for certainty, either life or death: I will live and dye the Wife of Signiour Thorello, and make my obsequies in his memory onely.

Not so Madame (replyed her Husband) not so; Be not overrash in promising any thing, albeit I am well assured, that so much as consisteth in thy strength, I make no question of thy performance. But consider withall (deare heart) thou art a yong woman, beautifull, of great parentage, and no way thereto inferior in the blessings of Fortune.

Thy Vertues are many, and universally both divulged and known, in which respect, I make no doubt; but divers and sundrie great Lords and Gentlemen (if but the least rumor of my death be noysed) will make suite for thee to thy parents and brethren, from whose violent solicitings, wouldst thou never so resolutely make resistance, yet thou canst not be able to defend thy selfe; but whether thou wilt or no, thou must yeeld to please them; and this is the only reason, why I would tie thee to this limited time, and not one day or minute longer.

Adalietta, sweetly hugging him in her armes, and melting her selfe in kisses, sighes, and teares on his face, said. Well Sir, I will do so much as I am able, in this your most kinde and loving imposition: and when I shall bee com- pelled to the contrary: yet rest thus constantly assured, that I will not breake this your charge, so much as in thought. Praying ever heartily to the heavenly powers, that they will direct your course home againe to me, before your prefixed date, or else I shall live in continual languishing. In the knitting up of this woful parting,
embracing and kissing either infinit times, the Lady tooke a Ring from off her finger, and giving it to her husband, said. If I chaunce to die before I see you againe, remember me when you looke on this. He receiving the Ring, and bidding all the rest of his Friends farewell, mounted on horsebacke, and rode away wel attended.

Being come unto Geneway, he and his company boorded a Galley, and (in few dayes after) arrived at Acres, where they joyned themselves with the Christian Army, wherein there happened a verie dangerous mortality: During which time of so sharpe visitation (the cause unknowne whence it proceeded) whether thorough the industrie, or rather the good Fortune of Saladine, well-neere all the rest of the Christians (which escaped death) were surprized his prisoner (without a blow strucken) and sundred and imprisoned in divers Townes and Citties. Amongst the which number of prisoners, it was Signior Thorelloes chaunce to be one, and walked in bonds to Alexandria, where being unknowne, and fearing least he should be discovered: constrained thereto meerly by necessity, hee shewed himselfe in the condition of a Faulconer; wherein he was very excellently experienced, and by which means his profession was made knowne to Saladine, hee delivered out of prison, and created the Soldans Faulconer.

Thorello (whom the Soldane called by no other name, then the Christian, neyther of them knowing the other) sadly now remembred his departure from Pavia, devising and practising many times, how he might escape thence, but could not compasse it by any possible meanes. Wherefore, certaine Ambassadours beeing sent by the Genewayes, to redeeme divers Cittizens of theirs, there detained as prisoners, and being ready to returne home againe: he purposed to write to his Wife, that he was living, and wold repaire to her so soone as he could, desiring the still continued rememberance of her limited time. By close and cunning meanes hee wrote the Letter, earnestly intreating one of the Ambassadors (who knew him perfectly, but made no outward appearance thereof) to deale in such sort for him, that the Letter might be delivered to the handes of
the Abbot Di San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro, who was (indeed) his Uncle.

While Thorello remayned in this his Faulconers condition, it fortuned uppon a day, that Saladine, conversing with him about his Hawkes: Thorello chanced to smile, and used such a kinde of gesture or motion with his Lippes, which Saladine (when he was in his house at Pavia) had heedfully observed, and by this note, instantly he remembred Signiour Thorello, and began to eye him very respectively, perswading himselfe that he was the same man. And therefore falling from their former kinde of discoursing: Tell mee Christian (quoth Saladine) what Country-man art thou of the West? Sir, answered Signiour Thorello, I am by Country a Lombard, borne in a Citty called Pavia, a poore man, and of as poore condition.

So soone as Saladine had heard these Words; becomming assured in that which (but now) he doubted, he saide within himselfe. Now the Gods have given me time, wherein I may make knowne to this man, how thankfully I accepted his kinde courtesie, and cannot easily forget it. Then, without saying any thing else, causing his Guardrobe to be set open, he tooke him with him thither, and sayde. Christian, observe well all these Garments, and quicken thy remembrance, in telling mee truly, whether thou hast seene any of them before now, or no. Signiour Thorello looked on them all advisedly, and espyed those two especiall Garments, which his Wife had given one of the strange Merchants; yet he durst not credit it, or that possibly it could be the same, neverthelesse he said. Sir, I doe not know any of them, but true it is, that these two doe resemble two such Robes, as I was wont to weare my selfe, and these (or the like) were given to three Merchants, that happened to visite my poore house.

Now could Saladine containe no longer, but embracing him joyfully in his armes, he said. You are Signiour Thorello d'Istria, and I am one of those three Merchants to whom your Wife gave these Robes: and now the time is come to give you credible intelligence of my Merchandise, as I promised at my departing from you, for such a time
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(I told you) would come at length. Thorello, was both glad, and bashfull together: glad, that he had entertained such a Guest, and bashfully ashamed, that his welcome had not exceeded in more bountifull manner. Thorello, replyed Saladine, seeing the Gods have sent you so happily to me: account your selfe to be soly Lord here, for I am now no more then a private man.

I am not able to expresse their counterchanges of courtesie, Saladine commanding him to be cloathed in Royall garments, and brought into the presence of his very greatest Lords, where having spoken liberally in his due commendation, he commanded them to honour him as himselfe, if they expected any grace or favour from him, which every one did immediatly, but (above all the rest) those two Baschaes, which accompanied Saladine at his house. The greatnesse of this pompe and glory, so suddenly throwne on Signior Thorello, made him halfe forget all matters of Lomberdie; and so much the rather, because he had no doubt at all, but that his letters, were safely come to the hands of his Uncle.

. Here I am to tell you, that in the Campe or Army of the Christians, on the day when Saladine made his surprizall, there was a Provinciall Gentleman dead and buried, who was Signior Thorello de Dignes, a man of very honourable and great esteeme, in which respect (Signior Thorello d'Istria, knowne throughout the Army, by his Nobility and valour) whosoever heard that Signior Thorello was dead: believed it to be Thorello d'Istria, and not he of Dignes, so that Thorello d'Istriaes unknowne surprizall and thraldome, made it also to passe for an assured truth.

Beside, many Italians returning home, and carrying this report for credible; some were so audaciously presumptuous, as they avouched upon their oathes, that not onely they saw him dead, but were present at his buriall likewise. Which rumour comming to the eare of his Wife, and likewise to his kinred and hers: procured a great and grievous mourning among them, and all that happened to heare thereof.

Over-tedious time it would require, to relate at large,
the publique griefe and sorrow, with the continuall lamentations of his Wife, who (within some few moneths after) became tormented with new marriage solicitings, before she had halfe sighed for the first: the very greatest persons of Lomberdie making the motion, being daily followed and furthered by her owne brothers and friends. Still (drowned in teares) she returned denyall, till in the end, when no contradiction could prevalle, to satisfie her parents, and the importunate pursuers: she was constrained to reveale, the charge imposed on her by her Husband, which shee had vowed infallibly to keepe, and till that very time, she would in no wise consent.

While wooing for a second wedding with Adalietta, proceeded in this manner at Pavia, it chanced on a day, that Signior Thorello had espied a man in Alexandria, whom he saw with the Geneway Ambassadours, when they set thence towards Geneway with their Gallies. And caus-ing him to be sent for, he demaunded of him, the successe of the voyage, and when the Gallies arrived at Geneway; whereto he returned him this answere. My Lord, our Gallies made a very fatall voyage, as it is (already) too well knowne in Creete, where my dwelling is. For when we drew neere Sicilie, there suddenly arose a very dangerous North-West-winde, which drove us on the quicke-Sands of Barbarie, where not any man escaped with life, onely my selfe excepted, but (in the wracke) two of my brethren perished.

Signior Thorello, giving credit to the mans words, because they were most true indeed, and remembring also, that the time limitted to his Wife, drew neere expiring within very few dayes, and no newes now possibly to be sent thither of his life, his Wife would questionlesse be marryed againe: he fell into such a deepe conceited melancholly, as food and sleepe forsooke him, whereupon, he kept his bed, setting downe his peremptory resolution for death. When Saladine (who dearely loved him) heard thereof, he came in all haste to see him, and having (by many earnest perswasions and entreaties) understood the cause of his melancholly and sickenesse: he very severely reproved him, because he could no sooner acquaint him
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therewith. Many kind and comfortable speeches, he gave him, with constant assurance, that (if he were so minded) he would so order the business for him; as he should be at Pavia, by the same time as he had appointed to his Wife, and revealed to him also the manner how.

Thorello verily beleaved the Soldaness promise, because he had often heard the possibility of performance, and others had effected as much, divers times else-where: whereupon he began to comfort himselfe, soliciting the Soldan earnestly that it might be accomplished. Saladine sent for one of his Sorcerers (of whose skill he had formerly made experience) to take a direct course, how Signior Thorello should be carryed (in one night) to Pavia, and being in his bed. The Magitian undertooke to doe it, but, for the Gentlemans more ease, he must first be possessed with an entraunced dead sleep. Saladine being thus assured of the deeds full effecting, he came againe to Thorello, and finding him to be setled for Pavia (if possibly it might be accomplished by the determined time, or else no other expectation but death) he said unto him as followeth.

Signior Thorello, if with true affection you love your Wife, and misdoubt her marriage to some other man: I protest unto you, by the supreme powers, that you deserve no reprehension in any manner whatsoever. For, of all the Ladyes that ever I have scene, she is the onely woman, whose carriage, vertues, and civile speaking (setting aside beauty, which is but a fading flowre) deserveth most graciously to be respected, much more to be affected in the highest degree. It were to me no meane favour of our Gods, (seeing Fortune directed your course so happily hither) that for the short or long time we have to live, we might reigne equally together in these Kingdomes under my subjection. But if such grace may not be granted me, yet, seeing it stands mainly upon the perill of your life, to be at Pavia againe by your own limitted time, it is my chiefest comfort, that I am therewith acquainted, because I intended to have you conveyd thither, yea, even into your owne house, in such honourable order as your vertues doe justly merit, which in regard it cannot be so con-
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NOVELL IX

veniently performed, but as I have already informed you, and as the necessity of the case urgently commandeth; accept it as it may be best accomplished.

Great Saladine (answered Thorella) effects (without words) have already sufficiently warranted your Gracious disposition towards me, farre beyond any requitall remaying in me; your word onely being enough for my comfort in this case, either dying or living. But in regard you have taken such order for my departure hence, I desire to have it done with all possible expedition, because to morrow is the very last day, that I am to be absent. Saladine protested that it should be done, and the same evening in the great Hall of his Pallace, commanded a rich and costly Bedde to be set up, the mattras formed after the Alexandrian manner, of Velvet and cloth Gold, the Quilts, counterpoints and coverings, sumptuously imbroydered with Orient Pearles and Precious Stones, supposed to be of inestimable value, and two rarely wrought Pillowes, such as best beseeemed so stately a Bedde, the Curtaines and Vallans every way equall to the other pompe.

Which being done, he commanded that Thorello (who was indifferently recovered) should be attyred in one of his owne sumptuous Saracine Roabes, the very fairest and richest that ever was seene, and on his head a Majesticall Turbant, after the manner of his owne wearing, and the houre appearing to be somewhat late, he with many of his best Baschaes, went to the Chamber where Thorello was, and sitting downe a while by him, in teares thus he spake. Signior Thorello, the houre for sundering you and me, is now very neere, and because I cannot beare you company, in regard of the businesse you goe about, and which by no meanes will admit it: I am to take my leave of you in this Chamber, and therefore am purposely come to doe it. But before I bid you farewell, let me entreat you, by the love and friendship confirmed betweene us, to be mindfull of me, and to take such order (your affaires being fully finished in Lombardie) that I may once more enjoy the sight of you here, for a mutuall solace and satisfaction of our mindes, which are now divided by this urgent hast. Till which

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may be granted, let me want no visitation of your kind letters, commanding thereby of me, whatsoever here can possibly be done for you: assuring your selfe, no man living can command me as you doe.

Signior Thorello could not forbeare weeping, but being much hindred therby, answered in few words. That he could not possibly forget, his Gracious favours and extraordinary benefits used towards him, but would accomplish whatsoever hee commaunded, according as heaven did enable him.

Hereupon, Saladine embracing him, and kissing his forehead, said. All my Gods goe with you, and guard you from any perill, departing so out of the Chamber weeping, and his Baschaes (having likewise taken their leave of Thorello) followed Saladine into the Hall, whereas the Bedde stood readily prepared. Because it waxed very late, and the Magitian also there attending for his dispatch: the Phisitian went with the potion to Thorello, and persuading him, in the way of friendship, that it was onely to strengthen him after his great weaknes: he drank it off, being thereby immediately entraunced, and so presently sleeping, was (by Saladines command) laid on the sumptuous and costly Bed, whereon stood an Imperiall Crowne of infinite value, appearing (by a description engraven on it) that Saladine sent it to Madame Adalietta, the wife of Thorello. On his finger also hee put a Ring, wherein was enchased an admirable Carbuncle, which seemed like a flaming Torche, the value thereof not to bee estimated. By him likewise hee laid a rich sword, with the girdle, hangers, and other furniture, such as seldome can be seene the like. Then hee laid a Jewell on the Pillow by him, so sumptuouslie embelished with Pearles and precious Stones, as might have besiemed the greatest Monarch in the World to weare. Last of all, on either side of them, hee set two great Basons of pure Gold, full of double ducates, many cords of Orient Pearles, Rings, Girdles, and other costly Jewells (over-tedious to bee recounted) and kissing him once more as hee lay in the bedde, commanded the Magitian to dispatch and be gone.
Instantly, the bedde and Thorello in it, in the presence of Saladine, was invisibly carried thence, and while he sate conferring with his Baschaes, the bed, Signior Thorello, and all the rich Jewells about him, was transported and set in the Church of San Pietro in Ciel d'Ore in Pavia, according to his own request, and soundly sleeping, being placed directly before the high Altar. Afterward, when the bells rung to Mattines, the Sexton entring the Church with a light in his hand (where hee beheld a light of greater splendor) and suddenly espied the sumptuous bedde there standing: not only was he smitten into admiration, but hee ranne away also very fearefully. When the Abbot and the Monkes mette him thus running into the Cloyster, they became amazed, and demanded the reason why he ranne in such haste, which the Sexton told them. How? quoth the Abbot, thou art no childe, or a new-come hither, to be so easilie affrighted in our holy Church, where Spirits can have no power to walke, God and Saint Peter (wee hope) are stronger for us then so: wherefore turne backe with us, and let us see the cause of thy feare.

Having lighted many Torches, the Abbot and his Monkes entred with the Sexton into the Church, where they beheld the wonderful riche bedde, and the Knight lying fast asleepe in it. While they stood all in amazement, not daring to approach neere the bedde, whereon lay such costly Jewells: it chanced that Signior Thorello awaked, and breathed forth a vehement sigh. The Monkes and the Abbot seeing him to stirre, ranne all away in feare, crying aloud, God and S. Peter defend us.

By this time Thorello had opened his eyes, and looking round about him, perceived that hee was in the place of Saladines promise, whereof hee was not a little joyfull. Wherefore, sitting up in the bedde, and particularly observing all the things about him: albeit he knew sufficiently the magnificence of Saladine, yet now it appeared far greater to him, and imagined more largely thereof, then hee could doe before. But yet, without any other ceremony, seeing the flight of the Monkes, hearing their cry, and perceiving the reason; he called the Abbot by his name, desiring him
THE TENTH DAY

not to be afraid, for he was his Nephew Thorello, and no other.

When the Abbot heard this, hee was ten times worse affrighted then before, because (by publique fame) hee had beeene so many moneths dead and buried; but receiving (by true arguments) better assurance of him, and hearing him still call him by his name: blessing himselfe with the signe of the Crosse, hee went somewhat neerer to the bed, when Thorello said. My loving Uncle, and religious holy Father, wherof are you afraid? I am your loving Nephew, newly returned from beyond the Seas. The Abbot, seeing his beard to be grown long, and his habit after the Arabian fashion, did yet collect some resemblance of his former countenance; and being better persuaded of him, tooke him by the hand, saying:

Sonne thou art happily returned, yet there is not any man in our Citie, but doth verily beleeve thee to bee dead, and therefore doe not much wonder at our feare. Moreover, I dare assure thee, that thy Wife Adalietta, being conquered by the contreuling command, and threatnings of her kinred (but much against her owne minde) is this very morning to be married to a new husband, and the marriage feast is solemnly prepared, in honour of this second nuptials.

Thorello arising out of the bedde, gave gracious salutations to the Abbot and his Monkes, intreating earnestly of them all, that no word might be spoken of his returne, untill he had compleated an important businesse. Afterward, having safely secured the bedde, and all the rich Jewells, he fully acquainted the Abbot with all his passed fortunes, whereof he was immeasurably joyfull, and having satisfied him, concerning the new elected husband, Thorello said unto the Abbot. Unckle, before any rumour of my returne, I would gladly see my wives behavior at this new briding feast, and although men of religion are seldome scene at such Joviall meetings: yet (for my sake) doe you so order the matter, that I (as an Arabian stranger) may be a guest under your protection; wherto the Abbot very gladly condescended.

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In the morning, he sent to the Bridegroom, and advertised him, that he (with a stranger newly arrived) intended to dine with him, which the Gentleman accepted in thankful manner. And when dinner time came, Thorello in his strange disguise went with the Abbot to the Bridegroomes house, where he was lookt on with admiration of all the guests, but not knowne or suspected by any one; because the Abbot reported him to be a Sarracine, and sent by the Soldane (in Ambassage) to the King of France. Thorello was seated at a by-table, but directly opposite to the new Bride, whom hee much delighted to looke on, and easily collected by her sad countenance, that shee was scarcely well pleased with this new nuptialls. She likewise beheld him very often, not in regard of any knowlege she took of him: for the bushiness of his beard, strangeness of habit, (but most of all) firm beleefe of his death, was the maine prevention.

At such time as Thorello thought it convenient, to approve how farre he was falne out of her remembrance; he took the ring which she gave him at his departure, and calling a young Page that waited on none but the Bride, said to him in Italian: Faire youth, goe to the Bride, and saluting her from me, tell her, it is a custome observed in my Country, that when any Stranger (as I am heere) sitteth before a new married Bride, as now shee is, in signe that hee is welcome to her feast, she sendeth the same Cup (wherein she drinketh her selfe) full of the best wine, and when the stranger hath drunke so much as him pleaseth, the Bride then pledgeth him with all the rest. The Page delivered the message to the Bride, who, being a woman of honourable disposition, and reuniting him to be a Noble Gentleman, to testifie that his presence there was very acceptable to her, shee commanded a faire Cuppe of gold (which stood directlie before her) to bee neatly washed, and when it was filled with excellent Wine, caused it to bee carried to the stranger, and so it was done.

Thorello having drunke a heartie draught to the Bride, conveyed the Ring into the Cuppe, before any person could perceive it, and having left but small store of Wine in it,
covered the Cuppe, and sent it againe to the Bride, who received it very graciously, and to honour the Stranger in his Countries custome, dranke up the rest of the Wine, and espying the Ring, shee tooke it forth undescribed by any: Knowing it to be the same Ring which shee gave Signior Thorello at his parting from her; she fixed her eyes often on it, and as often on him, whom she thought to be a stranger, the cheerfull bloud mounting up into her cheeks, and returning againe with remembrance to her heart, that howsoever thus disguised) he only was her husband.

Like one of Bacchus Froes, up furiously she started, and throwing downe the Table before her, cried out aloud: This is my Lord and Husband, this truely is my Lord Thorello. So running to the Table where he sate, without regard of all the riches thereon, down she threw it likewise, and clasping her armes about his necke, hung so mainly on him (weeping, sobbing, and kissing him) as she could not be taken off by any of the company, nor shewed any moderation in this excess of passion, till Thorello spake, and entreated her to be more patient, because this extremity was over-dangerous for her. Thus was the solemnitie much troubled, but every one there very glad and joyfull for the recovery of such a famous and worthy Knight, who intreated them all to vouchsafe him silence, and so related all his fortunes to them, from the time of his departure, to the instant houre. Concluding withall, that hee was no way offended with the new Bride-groome, who upon the so constant report of his death, deserved no blame in making election of his wife.

The Bridegroome, albeit his countenance was somewhat cloudie, to see his hope thus disappointed: yet granted freely, that Adalietto was Thorello's wife in equitie, and hee could not justly lay any claime to her. She also resigned the Crown and Rings which she had so lately received of her new Spouse, and put that on her finger which she found in the Cup, and that Crowne was set upon her head, in honor sent her from great Saladine. In which triumphant manner, she left the new Bridegrooms abiding, and repayred home to Thorello's house, with such pompe
and magnificence as never had the like been seen in Pavia before, all the Citizens esteeming it as a miracle, that they had so happily recovered Signior Thorello againe.

Some part of the Jewells he gave to him, who had beene at cost with the marriage feasting, and some to his Uncle the Abbot, beside a bountie bestowed on the Monkes. Then he sent a messenger to Saladine, with Letters of his whole successe, and confessing himselfe (for ever) his obliged servant: living many yeeres (after) with his wife Adalietta, and using greater curtesies to strangers, then ever before he had done.

In this manner ended the troubles of Signior Thorello, and the afflictions of his dearely affected Lady, with due recompence to their honest and ready courtesies. Many strive (in outward shew) to doe the like, who although they are sufficiently able, doe performe it so basely, as it rather redoundeth to their shame, then honour. And therefore if no merit ensue thereon, but onely such disgrace as justly should follow; let them lay the blame upon themselves.
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The Marquesse of Saluzzo, named Gualtiero, being constrained by the importunate solliciting of his Lords, and other inferior people, to joyne himselfe in marriage; tooke a woman according to his owne liking, called Grizelda, she being the daughter of a poore Countriman, named Janiculo, by whom he had two children, which he pretended to be secretly murdered. Afterward, they being grown to yeres of more stature, and making shew of taking in marriage another wife, more worthy of his high degree and Calling: made a seeming publique liking of his owne daughter, expulsing his wife Grizelda poorely from him. But finding her incomparable patience; more dearely (then before) hee received her into favour againe, brought her home to his owne Pallace, where (with her children) hee caused her and them to be respectively honoured, in despight of all her adverse enemies.

THE TENTH NOVELL

Set downe as an example or warning to all wealthie men, how to have care of marrying themselves. And likewise to poore and meane women, to be patient in their fortunes, and obedient to their husbands.

QUESTIONLESSE, the Kings Novell did not so much exceed the rest in length, but it proved as pleasing to the whole assembly, and past with their generall approbation, till Dioneus (in a merry jesting humour) said. The plaine honest simple
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man, that stood holding the Candle, to see the setting on of
his Mules tayle; deserved two penny-worth of more praise,
then all our applauding of Signior Thorello: And knowing
himselfe to bee left for the last speaker, thus he began.

Milde and modest Ladies, for ought I can perceive to
the contrary, this day was dedicated to none but Kings,
Soldanies, and great Potentates, not in favour of any in-
ferior or meaner persons. And therefore, because I would
be loth to dis-ranke my selfe from the rest, I purpose to
speake of a Lord Marquesse, not any matter of great
magnificence, but rather in a more humble nature, and
sorted to an honest end: which yet I will not advise any to
immitate, because (perhaps) they cannot so well digest it,
as they did whom my Novell concerneth; thus then I begin.

It is a great while since, when among those that were
Lord Marquesses of Saluzzo, the very greatest and worthiest
man of them al, was a young Noble Lord, named Gualtierno,
who having neyther wife nor childe, spent his time in no-
thing else but hawking and hunting: nor had he any minde
of marriage, or to enjoy the benefit of children, wherein
many did repute him the wiser. But this being distastfull
to his subjects, they very often earnestly solicited him, to
match himselfe with a wife, to the end, that hee might not
decease without an heire, nor they be left destitute of a
succeeding Lord; offering themselves to provide him of
such a one, so well descended by Father and Mother, as not
only should confirm their hope, but also yeeld him high
contentment; whereto the Lord Marquess thus answered.

Worthie friends, you would constraine me to the thing,
wherewith I never had any intent to meddle, considering,
how difficult a case it is to meet with such a woman, who
can agree with a man in all his conditions, and how great the
number is of them, who daily happen on the contrarie: but
most (and worst of all the rest) how wretched and miser-
able prooves the life of man, who is bound to live with a
wife not fit for him. And in saying, you can learn to
understand the custome and qualities of children, by
behaviour of the fathers and mothers, and so to provide
mee of a wife, it is a meere argument of folly: for neither
THE TENTH DAY

shall I comprehend, or you either, the secret inclinations of parents; I meane of the Father, and much lesse the complection of the mother. But admitte it were within compasse of power to know them; yet it is a frequent sight, and observed every day; that daughters doe resemble neither father nor mother, but that they are naturally governed by their owne instinct.

But because you are so desirous to have me fettered in the chains of wedlocke; I am contented to grant what you request. And because I would have no complaint made of any but my selfe, if matters should not happen answerable to expectation; I will make mine owne eyes my electors, and not see by any others sight. Giving you this assurance before, that if she whom I shall make choice of, be not of you honoured and respected as your Lady and Mistresse: it will ensue to your detriment, how much you have displeased me, to take a wife at your request, and against mine owne will.

The Noble men answered, that they were well satisfied, provided that he tooke a wife.

Some indifferent space of time before, the beauty, manners, and well-seeming vertues, of a poore Countrie-mans daughter, dwelling in no farre distant village, had appeared very pleasing to the Lord Marquesse, and gave him full perswasion, that with her hee should lead a comfortable life. And therefore without any further search or inquisition, he absolutely resolved to marry her, and having conferred with her Father, agreed, that his daughter should be his wife. Whereupon, the Marquesse made a generall convocation of all his Lords, Barons, and other of his especiall friends, from all parts of his Dominion; and when they were assembled together, hee then spake unto them in manner as followeth.

Honourable friends, it appeared pleasing to you all, and yet (I thinke) you are of the same minde, that I should dispose my selfe to take a wife: and I thereto condescended, more to yeeld you contentment, then for any particular desire in my selfe. Let mee now remember you of your solemnne made promise, with full consent to honor and obey her (whosoever) as your Soveraigne Lady and Mistresse,
that I shall elect to make my wife: and now the time is come, for my exacting the performance of that promise, and which I look you must constantly keepe. I have made choyce of a yong virgine, answerable to mine owne heart and liking, dwelling not farre off hence, whom I intend to make my wife, and (within few daies) to have her brought home to my Pallace. Let your care and diligence then extend so farre, as to see that the feast may be sumptuous, and her entertainment to bee most honourable: to the end that I may receive as much contentment in your promise performed, as you shall perceive I doe in my choice.

The Lords and all the rest, were wondrously joyfull to heare him so well inclined, expressing no lesse by their shouts and jocund suffrages: protesting cordially, that she should be welcommed with pompe and majestie, and honoured of them all, as their Liege Ladie and Soveraigne. Afterward, they made preparation for a princely and magnificent feast, as the Marquesse did the like, for a marriage of extraordinary state and qualitie, inviting all his kinred, friends, and acquaintance in all parts and Provinces, about him. Hee made also readie most riche and costly garments, shaped by the body of a comely young Gentlewoman, who he knew to be equall in proportion and stature, to her of whom hee hade made his election.

When the appointed nuptiall day was come, the Lord Marques, about nine of the clocke in the morning, mounted on horse-backe, as all the rest did, who came to attend him honourably, and having all things in due readinesse with them, he said: Lords, it is time for us to goe fetch the Bride. So on hee rode with his traine, to the same poore Village whereat shee dwelt, and when hee was come to her Fathers house, hee saw the maiden returning very hastily from a Well, where shee had beene to fetch a paile of water, which shee set downe, and stood (accompanied with other maidens) to see the passage by of the Lord Marquesse and his traine. Gualtiero called her by her name, which was Grizelda, and asked her, where her Father was: who bashfully answered him, and with an humble courtesie, saying. My gracious Lord, hee is in the house.
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Then the Marquesse dismounted from his horse, commanding every one to attend him, then all alone hee entred into the poore Cottage, where he found the maides father, being named Janiculo, and said unto him. God speed good Father, I am come to espouse thy daughter Grizelda: but first I have a few demands to make, which I will utter to her in thy presence. Then hee turned to the maide, and saide.

Faire Grizelda, if I make you my wife, will you doe your best endeavours to please me, in all things which I shall doe or say? will you also be gentle, humble, and patient? with divers the like questions: whereto she still answered, that she would, so neere as heaven (with grace) should enable her.

Presently he tooke her by the hand, so led her forth of the poore homely house, and in the presence of all his company, with his owne hands, he took off her meane wearing garments, smocke and all, and cloathed her with those Robes of State which he had purposely brought thither for her, and plaighting her haire over her shoulders, hee placed a Crowne of gold on her head, whereat every one standing as amazed, and wondring not a little, hee said: Grizelda, wilt thou have me to thy husband? Modestly blushing, and kneeling on the ground, she answered. Yes my gracious Lord, if you will accept so poore a maiden to be your wife. Yes Grizelda, quoth hee, with this holy kisse, I confirme thee for my wife; and so espoused her before them all. Then mounting her on a milke-white Palfray, brought thither for her, shee was thus honourably conducted to her Pallace.

Now concerning the marriage feast and triumphes, they were performed with no lesse pome, then if she had beene daughter to the King of France. And the young Bride apparently declared, that (with her garments) her minde and behavior were quite changed. For indeed shee was (as it were shame to speake otherwise) a rare creature, both of person and perfections, and not onely was shee absolute for beautie, but so sweetely amiable, gracious, and goodlie; as if she were not the daughter of poore Janicula, and a Countrie Shepheardesse, but rather of some Noble Lord, whereat every one wondred that formerly had knowne her. Beside all this, shee was so obedient to her husband, so
fervent in all dutifull offices, and patient, without the very least provoking: as hee held himselfe much more then contented, and the onely happy man of the world.

In like manner, towards the subjects of her Lord and Husband, she shewed her selfe alwayes so benigne and gracious; as there was not any one, but the more they lookt on her, the better they loved her, honouring her voluntarily, and praying to the heavens, for her health, dignity and well-fares long continuance. Speaking now (quite contrary to their former opinion of the Marquesse) honourably and worthily, that he had shewne him selfe a singular wise man, in the election of his Wife, which few else (but he) in the world would have done: because their judgement might fall farre short, of discerning those great and precious vertues, veiled under a homely habite, and obscured in a poore Countrey cottage. To be briefe, in very short time, not onely the Marquisate it selfe, but all neighbouring Provinces round about, had no other common talke, but of her rare course of life, devotion, charity, and all good actions else; quite quailing all sinister Instructions of her Husband, before he received her in marriage.

About foure or five yeeres after the birth of her daughter, shee conceived with child againe, and (at the limitted houre of deliverance) had a goodly Sonne, to the no little liking of the Marquesse. Afterward, a strange humour entred into his braine, namely, that by a long continued experience, and courses of intollerable quality; he would needes make proofe of his faire Wives patience. First he began to provoke her by injurious speeches, shewing fierce and frowning lookes to her, intimating; that his people grew displeased with him, in regard of his Wives base birth and education, and so much the rather, because she was likely to bring children, who (by her blood) were no better then beggers, and murmured at the daughter already borne. Which words when Grizelda heard, without any alteration of countenance, for the least distemperature in any appearing action she said.

My honourable and gracious Lord, dispose of me, as you thinke best, for your owne dignity and contentment, for I
shall therewith be well pleased: as she that knowes her selfe, farre inferiour to the meaneast of your people, much lesse worthy of the honour, whereto you liked to advance me.

This answere was very welcome to the Marquesse, as apparently perceiving hereby, that the dignity whereto hee had exalted her, or any particular favours beside, could not infect her with any pride, coynesse, or disdaine. Not long after, having told her in plaine and open speeches, that his subjects could not endure her so late borne daughter: he called a trusty servant of his, and having instructed him what he should doe, sent him to Grizelda, and he being alone with her, looking very sadde, and much perplexed in mind, he saide. Madame, except I intend to loose mine owne life, I must accomplish what my Lord hath strictly enjoyned me, which is, to take this your yong daughter, and then I must: So breaking off abruptly, the Lady hearing his words, and noting his frowning lookes, remembred also what the Marquesse himselfe had formerly said; she presently imagined, that he had commanded his servant to kill the childe. Suddenly therefore, she tooke it out of the Cradle, and having sweetly kissed, and bestowne her blessing on it (albeit her heart throbbed, with the inward affection of a Mother) without any alteration of countenance, she tenderly laid it in the servants armes, and said. Here friend, take it, and doe with it as thy Lord and mine hath commanded thee: but leave it in no rude place, where birds or savage beasts may devour it, except it be his will to have it so.

The servant departing from her with the child, and reporting the Marquesse what his Lady had said; he wondered at her incomparable constancy. Then he sent it by the same servant to Bologna, to an honourable Lady his kinsewoman, requesting her (without revealing whose child it was) to see it both nobly and carefully educated.

At time convenient afterward, being with child againe, and delivered of a Princely Sonne (then which nothing could be more joyfull to the Marquesse) yet all this was not sufficient for him; but with farre ruder language then before, and lookes expressing harsh intentions, he said unto
her. Grizelda, though thou pleasest me wonderfully, by the birth of this Princely Boy, yet my subjects are not therewith contented, but blunder abroad maliciously; that the grand-child of Janiculo, a poore countrey pezant, when I am dead and gone, must be their Soveraigne Lord and Master. Which makes me stand in feare of their expulsion, and to prevent that, I must be rid of this childe, as well as the other, and then send thee away from hence, that I may take another wife, more pleasing to them.

Grizelda, with a patient sufferent soule, hearing what he had said, returned no other answere but this. Most Gracious and Honourable Lord, satisfie and please your owne Royall minde, and never use any respect of me: for nothing is precious or pleasing to mee, but what may agree with your good liking. Within a while after, the Noble Marquesse in the like manner as he did before for the Daughter, so he sent the same servant for the Sonne, and seeming as if he had sent it to have been slaine, conveyed it to be nursed at Bologna, in company of his sweete Sister. Whereat the Lady shewed no other discontentment in anykinde, then formerly she had done for her Daughter, to the no meane marvell of the Marquesse, who protested in his soule, that the like woman was not in all the world beside. And were it not for his heedfull observation, how loving and carefull she was of her children, prizing them as dearely as her owne life: rash opinion might have perswaded him, that she had no more in her, then a carnall affection, not caring how many she had, so shee might thus easily be rid of them; but he knew her to be a truely vertuous mother, and wisely liable to endure his severest impositions.

His Subjects beleeving, that he had caused the children to bee slaine, blamed him greatly, thought him to be a most cruell man, and did highly compassionate the Ladies case: who when shee came in company of other Gentlewomen, which mourned for their deceased children, would answere nothing else: but that they could not be more pleasing to her, then they were to the father that begot them.

Within certaine yeares after the birth of these children,
THE TENTH DAY

the Marquesse purposed with himselfe, to make his last and finall prooffe of faire Grizeldaes patience, and said to some neere about him: that he could no longer endure, to keepe Grizelda as his wife, confessing, he had done foolishly, and according to a young giddie braine, when he was so rash in the marriage of her. Wherfore he would send to the Pope, and purchase a dispensation from him, to repudiate Grizelda, and take another Wife. Wherein although they greatly reproved him; yet he told them plainly, that it must needes be so.

The Lady hearing these newes, and thinking she must returne againe to her poore father's house, and (perhaps) to her old occupation of keeping sheepe, as in her Yonger dayes she had done, understanding withall, that another woman must enjoy him, whom shee dearely loved and honoured; you may well thinke (worthy Ladies) that her patience was now put to the maine prooffe indeede. Neverthelesse, as with an invincible true vertuous courage, she had outstood all the other injuries of Fortune; so did she constantly settle her soule, to beare this with an undaunted countenance and behaviour.

At such time as was prefixed for the purpose, counterfeit Letters came to the Marquesse (as sent from Rome) which he caused to be publiquely read in the hearing of his subjects: that the Pope had dispensed with him, to leave Grizelda, and marry with another Wife, wherfore, sending for her immediatly, in presence of them all, thus he spake to her. Woman, by concession sent me from the Pope, he hath dispensed with me, to make choyce of another Wife, and to free my selfe from thee. And because my predecessors have beeene Noblemen, and great Lords in this Country, thou being the daughter of a poore Countrey Clowne, and their blood and mine notoriously imbased, by my marriage with thee: I intend to have thee no longer my Wife, but will returne thee home to thy Fathers house, with all the rich Dowry thou broughtest me; and then I wil take another Wife, with whom I am already contracted, better beseeming my birth, and farre more contenting and pleasing to my people.
THE DECAMERON

NOVELL X

The Lady hearing these words (not without much paine and difficulty) restrayned her teares, quite contrary to the naturall inclination of women, and thus answered. Great Marquesse, I never was so empty of discretion, but did alwayes acknowledge, that my base and humble condition, could not in any manner sute with your high blood and Nobility, and my being with you, I ever acknowledged, to proceed from heaven and you, not any merit of mine, but onely as a favour lent me, which you being now pleased to recall backe againe, I ought to be pleased (and so am) that it bee restored. Here is the Ring, wherewith you Espoused me; here (in all humility) I deliver it to you. You command me, to carry home the marriage Dowry which I brought with me: there is no need of a Treasurer to repay it me, neither any new purse to carry it in, much lesse any Sumpter to be laden with it. For (Noble Lord) it was never out of my memory, that you tooke me starke naked, and if it shall seeme sightly to you, that this body which hath borne two children, and begotten by you, must againe be seene naked; willingly must I depart hence naked. But I humbly beg of your Excellency, in recom pense of my Virginity, which I brought you blamelesse, so much as in thought: that I may have but one of my wedding Smocks, onely to conceale the shame of nakednesse, and then I depart rich enough.

The Marquesse whose heart wept bloody teares, as his eyes would likewise gladly have yeelded their naturall tribute; covered all with a dissembled angry countenance, and starting up, said. Goe, give her a Smocke onely, and so send her gadding. All there present about him, entreated him to let her have a petticote, because it might not be said, that she who had been his Wife thirteene yeares and more, was sent away so poorely in her Smocke: but all their perswasions prevailed not with him. Naked in her Smocke, without hose or shoes, bareheaded, and not so much as a Cloth about her necke, to the great griefe and mourning of all that saw her, she went home to her old fathers house.

And he (good man) never beleeving, that the Marquesse
THE TENTH DAY

would long keepe his daughter as his Wife, but rather expected daily, what now had happened: safely laid up the garments, whereof the Marquesse despoyled her, the same morning when he espoused her. Wherefore he delivered them to her, and she fell to her fathers household businesse, according as formerly she had done; sustayning with a great and unconquerable spirit, all the cruell assaults of her enemy Fortune.

About such time after, as suted with his owne disposition, the Marquesse made publiquely knowne to his subjects, that he meant to joyne in marriage again, with the daughter to one of the Counts of Panago, and causing preparation to be made for a sumptuous wedding; he sent for Grizelda, and she being come, thus he spake to her. The Wife that I have made the new election of, is to arrive here within very few dayes, and at her first comming, I would have her to be most honourably entertained. Thou knowest I have no women in my house, that can decke up the Chambers, and set all requisite things in due order, besitting for so solemne a Feast: and therefore I sent for thee, who knowing (better then any other) all the partes, provision and goods in the house, set every thing in such order, as thou shalt thinke necessary.

Invite such Ladies and Gentlewomen as thou wilt, and give them welcome, even as if thou wert the Lady of the house: and when the marriage is ended, returne then home to thy father againe.

Although these words pierced like wonding daggers, the heart of poore (but Noble patient) Grizelda, as being unable to forget the unequal’d love she bare to the Marquesse, though the dignitie of her former fortune, more easily slipt out of her remembrance; yet nevertheless, thus she answered.

My Gracious Lord, I am glad I can doe you any service; wherein you shall find mee both willing and ready. In the same poore garments, as she came from her fathers house, (although shee was turned out in her Smocke) she began to sweep and make cleane the Chambers, rubbe the stooles and benches in the Hall, and ordered every in the Kitchin, as if she were the worst maide in all the house,
never ceasing or giving over, till all things were in due and decent order as best beseemed in such a case. After all which was done, the Marquesse, having invited all the Ladies of the Countrey, to be present at so great a Feast: when the marriage day came, Grizelda, in her gowne of Countrey gray, gave them welcome, in honourable manner, and graced them all with very cheerefull countenance.

Gualtiero the Marquesse, who had caused his two children to be nobly nourished at Bologna, with a neere kinswoman of his, who had married with one of the Counts of Panago, his daughter being now aged twelve yeares old, and somewhat more, as also the Son about sixe or seven. He sent a Gentleman expresly to his kindred, to have them come and visite him at Saluzza, bringing his daughter and Sonne with them, attended in very honourable manner, and publishing every where as they came along, that the young Virgin (knowne to none but himselfe and them) should be the Wife to the Marquesse, and that onely was the cause of her comming. The Gentleman was not slacke, in the execution of the trust reposed in him: but having made convenient preparation; with the kindred, Sonne, daughter, and a worthy company attending on them, arrived at Saluzza about dinner time, where wanted no resort, from all neighbouring parts round about, to see the comming of the Lord Marquesses new Spouse.

By the Lords and Ladies she was joyfully entertained, and comming into the great Hall, where the tables were readily covered: Grizelda, in her homely Country habite, humbled her selfe before her, saying. Gracious welcome, to the new elected Spouse of the Lord Marquesse.

All the Ladies there present, who had very earnestly importuned Gualtiero (but in vaine) that Grizelda, might better be shut up in some Chamber, or else to lend her the wearing of any other garments, which formerly had been her owne, because she should not be so poorely scene among strangers: being seated at the Tables, she waited on them very serviceably. The yong Virgin was observed by every one, who spared not to say; that the Marquesse had made an excellent change: but above them all, Grizelda did most
THE TENTH DAY

commend her, and so did her brother likewise, as young as he was, yet not knowing her to be his Sister.

Now was the Marquesse sufficiently satisfied in his soule, that he had seen so much as he desired, concerning the patience of his Wife, who in so many hart-grieving trials, was never noated so much as to alter her countenance. And being absolutely persuwaded, that this proceeded not from any want of understanding in her, because he knew her to be singularly wise: he thought it high time now, to free her from these aflicting oppressions, and give her such assurance as she ought to have. Wherefore, commanding her into his presence, openly before all his assembled friends, smiling on her, he said. What thinkst thou Grizelda of our new chosen Spouse? My Lord (quoth she) I like her exceeding well, and if she be so wise, as she is faire (which verely I thinke she is) I make no doubt but you shall live with her, as the onely happy man of the world. But I humbly entreat your Honor (if I have any power in me to prevale by) that you would not give her such cutting and unkind language, as you did to your other wife: for I cannot thinke her armed with such patience, as should (indeed) support them: as wel in regard she is much yonger, as also her more delicate breeding and education, whereas she who you had before, was brought up in continual toile and travaile.

When the Marquesse perceyved, that Grizelda beleeved verily, this yong daughter of hers should be his wife, and answered him in so honest and modest manner: he commanded her to sit downe by him, and saide. Grizelda, it is now more then fitte time, that thou shouldst taste the fruite of thy long admired patience, and that they who have thought me cruell, harsh and uncivill natured, should at length observe, that I have done nothing basely, or unadvisedly. For this was a worke premeditated before, for enstructing thee, what it is to be a married wife, and to let them know (whossoever they be) how to take and keepe a wife. Which hath begotten (to me) perpetuall joy and happinesse, so long as I have a day to live with thee: a matter whereof I stoode before greatly in feare,
and which (in marriage I thought) would never happen to me.

It is not unknown to thee, in how many kinds (for my first proofe) I gave thee harsh and unpleasing speeches, which drawing no discontentment from thee, either in lookes, words, or behaviour, but rather such comfort as my soule desired, and so in my other succeedings afterward: in one minute now, I purpose to give thee that consolation, which I bereft thee of in many tempestuous stormes, and make a sweet restauration, for all thy former sower sufferinges. My faire and dearly affected Grizelda, shee whom thou suppossest for my new elected Spouse, with a glad and cheerfull hart, imbrace for thine owne daughter, and this also her Brother, beeing both of them thy children and mine, in common opinion of the vulgar multitude, imagined to be (by my command) long since slaine. I am thy honourable Lord and Husband, who doth, and will love thee farre above all women else in the world; giving thee justly this deserved praise and commendation, That no man living hath the like Wife, as I have.

So, sweetly kissing her infinitely, and hugging her joyfully in his armes (the teares now streaming like new-let-loose Rivers, downe her faire face) which no disaster before could force from her) hee brought her, and seated her by her daughter, who was not a little amazed at so rare an alteration. Shee having (in zeale of affection) kissed and embraced them both, all else there present being clearely resolved from the former doubt which too long deluded them; the ladies arose jocondly from the tables, and attending on Grizelda to her Chamber, in signe of a more successfull augury to follow, tooke off her poor contemptible rags, and put on such costly robes, which (as Lady Marchionesse) she used to weare before.

Afterward, they waited on her into the Hall againe, being their true Soveraigne Lady and Mistresse, as she was no lesse in her poorest Garments; where all rejoicing for the new restored Mother, and happy recovery of so noble a son and daughter, the Festivall continued many months after. Now every one thought the Marquesse to be a noble and
wise Prince, though somewhat sharpe and unsufferable, in
the severe experiences made of his wife: but (above all) they
reputed Grizelda, to be a most wise, patient, and vertuous
Lady. The Count of Panago, within few daies after
returned backe to Bologna; and the Lord Marques, fetch-
ing home old Janiculo from his country drudgery, to live
with him (as his Father in law) in his Princely Palace, gave
him honorable maintenance, wherein hee long continued,
and ended his daies. Afterward, he matched his daughter
in a Noble marriage: he and Grizelda living a long time
together, in the highest honor that possibly could be.

What can now be saide to the contrary, but that poore
Country Cottages, may yeeld as divine and excellent spirits,
as the most stately and Royall mansions, which breed and
bring uppe some, more worthy to be Hog-rubbers, then
hold any soveraignty over men? Where is any other
(beside Grizelda) who not only without a wet eye, but
imboldned by a valiant and invincible courage: that can
suffer the sharpe rigors, and (never the like heard of proofes)
made by the Marquesse? Perhaps he might have met with
another, who would have quitted him in a contrary kinde,
and for thrusting her forth of doores in her smocke, could
have found better succor somewhere else, rather then walke
so nakedly in the cold streets.

Dioneus having thus ended his Novel, and the Ladies
delivering their severall judgements, according to their
owne fancies, some holding one conceite, others leaning to
the contrary; one blaming this thing, and another commend-
ing that, the King lifting his eyes to heaven, and seeing the
Sun began to fal low, by rising of the Evening Starre;
without arising from his seat, spake as followeth. Discreet
Ladies, I am perswaded you know sufficiently, that the
sense and understanding of us mortals, consisteth not onely
(as I think) by preserving in memory things past, or know-
ledge of them present; but such as both by the one and
other, know how to foresee future occasions, are worthily
thought wise, and of no common capacity.

It will be (to morrow) fifteene dayes, since we departed
from the City of Florence, to come hither for our pastime and comfort, the conservation of our lives, and support of our health, by avoyding those melanchollies, griefes and anguishes, which we beheld daylie in our City, since the pestilentiall visitation beganne there, wherein (by my judgement) we have done well and honestly. Albeit some light Novels, perhaps attractive to a little wantonnes, as some say, and our Joviall feasting with good cheare, singing and dancing, may seeme matters inciting to incivility, especially in weake and shallow understandings. But I have neither seene, heard, or knowne, any acte, word, or whatsoever else, either on your part or ours, justly deserving to be blamed: but all has bin honest, as in a sweete and hermonious concord, such as might well beseeme the communitie of Brethren and Sisters; which assuredly, as well in regard of you, as us, hath much contented me.

And therefore, least by over-long consuetude, something should take life, which might be converted to a bad construction, and by our country demourance for so many dayes, some captious conceit may wrest out an ill imagining; I am of the minde (if yours be the like) seeing each of us hath had the honor, which now remaineth still on me: that it is very fitting for us, to returne thither from whence we came. And so much the rather, because this sociable meeting of ours, which already hath wonne the knowledge of many dwellers here about us, should not grow to such an increase, as might make our purposed pastime offensive to us. In which respect (if you allow of my advise) I wil keepe the Crowne till our departing hence; the which I intend shalbe to morrow: but if you determine otherwise, I am the man ready to make my resignation.

Many imaginations passed amongst the Ladies, and likewise the men, but yet in the end, they reputed the Kings counsell to bee the best and wisest, concluding to do as he thought convenient. Wherupon, hee called the Master of the housholde, and conferred with him, of the businesse belonging to the next morning, and then gave the company leave to rise. The Ladies and the rest, when they were risen, fel some to one kinde of recreation, and others as
The Tenth Day

their fancies served them, even as (before) they had done. And when Supper time came, they dispatcht it in very loving manner. Then they began to play on instruments, sing and dance, and Madame Lauretta leading the dance: the King commaundd Madame Fiammetta to sing a song, which pleasantly she began in this manner.

The Song

The chorus sung by all the rest of the company

If Love were free from Jealousie,
No Lady living,
Had lesse heart-greeving,
Or liv'd so happily as I.

If gallant youth
In a faire friend, a woman could content,
If vertues prize, valour and hardiment,
Wit, carriage, purest eloquence,
Could free a woman from impatience:
Then I am she can vaunt (if I were wise)
All these in one faire flower,
Are in my power,
And yet I boast no more but trueth.
If Love were free from jealousie, etc.

But I behold
That other Women are as wise as I
Which kills me quite,
Fearing false sirquedrie.
For when my fire begins to flame
Others desires misguide my aim,
And so bereaves me of secure delight.
Onely through fond mistrust, he is unjust:
Thus are my comforts hourly hot and cold.
If Love were free, etc.

If in my friend,
I found like faith, as manly minde I know;
Mistrust were slaine.
But my fresh grieves still grow,
By sight of such as do allure,
So I can thinke none true, none sure,
But all would rob me of my golden gaine.
Loo thus I dye, in Jealousie,
For losse of him, on whom I most depend.
If Love were free, etc.
THE DECAMERON

Let me advise
Such Ladies as in Love are bravely bold,
   Not to wrong me, I scorne to be controld.
If any one I chance to finde,
By winkes, words, smiles, in crafty kinde,
   Seeking for that, which onely mine should be:
Then I protest, to do my best,
And make them know, that they are scarsly wise.

If Love were free from jealousie,
   I know no Lady living,
Could have lesse heart-greeving,
Or live so happily as I.

So soone as Madam Fiammetta had ended her Song; Dioneus, who sate by her, smiling said. Truly Madam, you may do us a great courtesie, to expresse your selfe more plainly to us all, least (thorow ignorance) the possession may be imposed on your selfe, and so you remaine the more offended. After the Song was past, divers other were sung beside, and it now drawing wel-neere midnight, by the Kings command, they all went to bed. And when new day appeared, and all the world awaked out of sleepe, the Master of the Houshold having sent away the carriages; they returned (under the conduct of their discreet King) to Florence, where the three Gentlemen left the seven Ladies at the Church of Santa Maria Novella, from whence they went with them at the first. And having parted with kinde salutations, the Gentlemen went whether themselves best pleased, and the Ladies repaired home to their houses.

THE END OF THE TENTH AND LAST DAY