

**GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO, JOHN  
FLORIO**

**THE  
DECAMERON  
(DAY 1 TO DAY  
5)**

Джованни Боккаччо

**The Decameron (Day 1 to Day 5)**

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# **Giovanni Boccaccio**

## **The Decameron (Day 1 to Day 5) /**

### **Containing an hundred pleasant Novels**

#### **The Epistle Dedicatory**

**TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE, Sir Phillip Herbert, Knight of the Bath at the Coronation of our Sovereigne Lord King James, Lord Baron of Sherland, Earle of Montgomery, and Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter, &c**

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

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

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

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

*For instance, let me heere insert one. A poore man, having a pike staffe on his shoulder, and travailing thorow a Countrey Village, a great Mastive Curre ran mainly at him, so that hardly he could defend himselfe from him. At the length, it was his chance to kill the Dogge: for which, the Owner*

*immediately apprehending him, and bringing him before the Judge, alledged, that he had slaine his servant, which defended his life, house, and goods, and therefore challenged satisfaction. The Judge leaning more in favour to the Plaintiffe, as being his friend, neighbour, and familiar, then to the justice and equity of the cause; reprooved the poore fellow somewhat sharpely, and peremptorily commanded him, to make satisfaction, or els he would commit him to prison. That were injustice replied the poore man, because I kilde the dogge in defence of mine owne life, which deserveth much better respect then a million of such Curses. Sirra, sirra, saide the Judge, then you should have turned the other end of your staffe, and not the pike, so the dogges life had beene saved, and your owne in no danger. True Sir (quoth the fellow) if the dog would have turn'd his taile, and bit mee with that, and not his teeth, then we both had parted quietly.*

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

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

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

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

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

And who can deny, but that it is much more convenient, to commiserate the distresse of Ladies and Gentlewomen, then the more able condition of men? They, as being naturally bashfull and timorous, have their soft and gentle soules, often enflamed with amorous afflictions, which lie there closely concealed, as they can best relate the power of them, that have bin subject to the greatest proove. Moreover, they being restrained from their wils and desires, by the severity of Fathers, Mothers, Bretheren, and Husbands, are shut up (most part of their time) in their Chambers, where constrainedly sitting idle, diversity of straunge cogitations wheele up and downe their braines, forging

as many severall imaginations, which cannot be alwayes pleasant and contenting. If melancholly, incited by some amorous or lovely apprehension, oppresse their weake and unresisting hearts: they must be glad to beare it patiently (till by better Fortune) such occasions happen, as may overcome so proud an usurpation.

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

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

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

## **THE DECAMERON, Containing, an Hundred pleasant Nouelles**

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

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

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

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

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

About the beginning of the yeare, it also began in very strange manner, as appeared by divers admirable effects; yet not as it had done in the East Countries, where Lord or Lady being touched therewith, manifest signes of inevitable death followed thereon, by bleeding at the nose. But here it began with yong children, male and female, either under the armpits, or in the groine by certaine

swellings, in some to the bignesse of an Apple, in others like an Egge, and so in divers greater or lesser, which (in their vulgar Language) they termed to be a Botch or Byle. In very short time after, those two infected parts were grown mortiferous, and would disperse abroad indifferently, to all parts of the body; whereupon, such was the qualitie of the disease, to shew it selfe by blacke or blew spottes, which would appeare on the armes of many, others on their thighes, and everie part else of the body: in some great and few, in others small and thicke.

Now as the Byle (at the beginning) was an assured signe of neere approaching death; so proved the spots likewise to such as had them: for the curing of which sicknesse it seemed, that the Physitians counsell, the vertue of Medicines, or any application else, could not yeeld any remedy: but rather it plainly appeared, that either the nature of the disease would not endure it, or ignorance in the Physitians could not comprehend, from whence the cause proceeded, and so by consequent, no resolution was to be determined. Moreover, beside the number of such as were skilfull in Art, many more both women and men, without ever having any knowledge in Physicke, became Physitians: so that not onely few were healed, but (well-neere) all dyed, within three dayes after the saide signes were seene; some sooner, and others later, commonly without either Feaver, or any other accident.

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

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

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

most part of the houses were become common, and all strangers, might doe the like (if they pleased to adventure it) even as boldly as the Lord or owner, without any let or contradiction.

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

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

Now albeit these persons in their diversity of opinions died not all, so undoubtedly they did not all escape; but many among them becomming sicke, and making a generall example of their flight and folly, among them that could not stirre out of their beds, they languished more perplexedly then the other did. Let us omit, that one Citizen fled after another, and one neighbour had not any care of another, Parents nor kinred never visiting them, but utterly they were forsaken on all sides: this tribulation pierced into the hearts of men, and with such a dreadfull terror, that one Brother forsooke another; the Unkle the Nephew, the Sister the Brother, and the Wife her Husband: nay, a matter much greater, and almost incredible; Fathers and Mothers fled away from their owne Children, even as if they had no way appertained to them. In regard whereof, it could be no otherwise, but that a countlesse multitude of men and women fell sicke; finding no charity among their friends, except a very few, and subjected to the avarice of servants, who attended them constrainedly, for great and unreasonable wages, yet few of those attendants to be found any where too. And they were men or women but of base condition, as also of groser understanding, who never before had served in any such necessities, nor indeed were any way else to be employed, but to give the sicke person such things as he called for, or to awaite the houre of his death; in the performance of which services, oftentimes for gaine, they lost their owne lives.

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

them that remained living) begat new behaviours, quite contrary to all which had beene in former times, and frequently used among the City Inhabitants.

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

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

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

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

Hallowed ground could not now suffice, for the great multitude of dead bodies, which were daily brought to every Church in the City, and every houre in the day; neither could the bodies have

proper place of buriall, according to our ancient custome: wherefore, after that the churches and Church-yards were filled, they were constrained to make use of great deepe ditches, wherein they were buried by hundreds at once, ranking dead bodies along in graves, as Merchandizes are laide along in ships, covering each after other with a small quantity of earth, & so they filled at last up the whole ditch to the brim.

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

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

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

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

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

deliberation formerly appointed, but meerely by accident, and sitting as it were in a round ring: after divers sighs severally delivered, they conferred on sundry matters answerable to the sad qualitie of the time, and within a while after, Madam *Pampinea* began in this manner.

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

Heere we meete and remaine (as it seemeth to mee) in no other manner, then as if we would or should be witnesses, to all the dead bodies at rest in their graves; or else to listen, when the religious Sisters here dwelling (whose number now are well-neere come to be none at all) sing Service at such houres as they ought to do; or else to acquaint all commers hither (by our mourning habites) with the quality and quantitie of our hearts miseries. And when we part hence, we meete with none but dead bodies; or sicke persons transported from one place to another; or else we see running thorow the City (in most offensive fury) such as (by authoritie of publike Lawes) were banished hence, onely for their bad and brutish behaviour in contempt of those Lawes, because now they know, that the executors of them are dead and sicke. And if not these, more lamentable spectacles present themselves to us, by the base rascality of the Citie; who being fatted with our blood, tearme themselves Grave-makers, and in meere contemptible mockerie of us, are mounted on horse-backe, gallopping everie where, reproaching us with our losses and misfortunes, with lewd and dishonest songs: so that we can hear nothing els but such and such are dead, and such and such lie a dying; heere hands wringing, and everie where most pittifull complaining.

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

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

If it be so, as manifestlie it maketh shew of it selfe; What do we here? What stay we for? And whereon do we dreame? Why are we more respectlesse of our health, then all the rest of the Citizens? Repute we our selves lesse precious then all the other? Or do we beleieve, that life is linked to our bodies with stronger chaines, then to others, and that therefore we should not feare any thing that hath power to offend us? Wee erre therein, and are deceived. What brutishnesse were it in us,

if wee should urge any such beleefe? So often as wee call to minde, what, and how many gallant yong men and women, have beene devoured by this cruell pestilence; wee may evidently observe a contrary argument.

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

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

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

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

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

Albeit faire Ladies, the case propounded by Madam *Pampinea* hath beene very wel delivered; yet (for all that) it is against reason for us to rush on, as we are over-ready to doe. Remember that we are all women, and no one among us is so childish, but may consider, that when wee shall be so assembled together, without providence or conduct of some man, we can hardly governe our selves. We are fraile, offensive, suspicious, weake spirited, and fearefull: in regard of which imperfections, I greatly doubt (if we have no better direction then our owne) this society will sooner dissolve it selfe, and (perchance) with lesse honour to us, then if we never had begunne it. And therefore it shall be expedient for us, to provide before wee proceede any further. Madam *Elissa* hereon thus replied.

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

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

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

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

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

This Pallace the company found fully fitted and prepared, the beddes in the Chambers made and daintily ordered, thickly strewed with variety of flowers, which could not but give them the greater contentment. *Dioneus*, who (above the other) was a pleasant young gallant, and full of infinite witty conceits, saide; Your wit (faire Ladies) hath better guided us hither, then our providence. I know not

how you have determined to dispose of your cares; as for mine owne, I left them at the City gate, when I came thence with you: and therefore let your resolution be, to spend the time here in smiles and singing (I meane, as may fittest agree with your dignity) or else give me leave to goe seeke my sorrowes againe, and so to remaine discontented in our desolate City. Madam *Pampinea* having in like manner shaken off her sorrowes, delivering a modest and bashfull smile, replied in this manner.

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

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

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

This jocund company having received licence from their Queene to disport themselves, the Gentlemen walked with the Ladies into a goodly Garden, making Chaplets and Nosegayes of divers flowers, and singing silently to themselves. When they had spent the time limitted by the Queene, they returned into the house, where they found that *Parmeno* had effectually executed his office. For, when they entred into the Hall, they saw the Tables covered with delicate white naperie, and

the Glasses looking like silver, they were so transparently cleare, all the roome beside streawed with floures of Juniper. When the Queene and all the rest had washed; according as *Parmeno* gave order, so every one was seated at the Table: the vyands (delicately drest) were served in, and excellent wines plentifully delivered, none attending but the three servants, and little or no loud table-talke passing among them.

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

You see (faire company) that the Sunne is highly mounted, the heate (else-where) too extreme for us, and therefore here is our fittest refuge, the aire being so coole, delicate, and acceptable, and our folly well worthie reprehension, if we should walke further, and speede worse. Heere are Tables, Cards, and Chesse, as your dispositions may be addicted. But if mine advice might passe for currant, I would admit none of those exercises, because they are too troublesome both to them that play, and such as looke on. I could rather wish, that some quaint discourse might passe among us, a tale or fable related by some one, to urge the attention of all the rest. And so wearing out the warmth of the day, one pretty Novell wil draw on another, until the Sun be lower declined, and the heates extremity more diminished, to solace our selves in some other place, as to our minds shal seeme convenient. If therefore what I have sayde be acceptable to you (I purposing to follow in the same course of pleasure) let it appeare by your immediate answer; for, till the Evening, I think we can devise no exercise more commodious for us.

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

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

## The first Novell

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

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

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

This master *Chappelet*, was of so good and commendable life; that, being a Notarie, he held it in high disdain, that any of his Contractes (although he made but few) should be found without falshood. And looke how many soever hee dealt withall, he would be urged and required thereto, offering them his paines and travaile for nothing, but to be requited otherwise then by money; which proved to bee his much larger recompensing, and returned to him the farre greater benefit. Hee tooke the onely pleasure of the world, to beare false witness, if hee were thereto entreated, and (oftentimes) when hee was not requested at all. Likewise, because in those times, great trust and beleefe was given to an oath, he making no care or conscience to be perjured: greatly advantaged himselfe by Law suites, in regard that many matters relied upon his oath, and delivering the truth according to his knowledge.

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

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

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

Having made their agreement together, and received from *Musciatto* his expresse procuration, as also the Kings gracious Letters; after that *Musciatto* was gone on his journey, Master *Chappelet* went to *Dijon*, [To Borgogna saith the Italian.] where he was unknowne (well neere) of any. And there (quite from his naturall disposition) he beganne benignely and graciously, in recovering the debts due; which course he tooke the rather, because they should have a further feeling of him in the ende. Being lodged in the house of two Florentine brethren, that lived on their monies usance; and (for *Monsieur Musciattoes* sake) using him with honour and respect: It fortunated that he fell sicke, and the two brethren sent for Physicians to attend him, allowing their servants to be diligent about him,

making no spare of any thing, which gave the best likelihood of restoring his health. But all their paines proved to no purpose, because he (honest man) being now growne aged, and having lived all his life time very disordredly, fell day by day (according to the Physicions judgement) from bad to worse, as no other way appeared but death, whereat the brethren greatly grieved.

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

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

Master *Chappelet*, who (as we have formerly saide) was lodged neere to the place where they thus conferred, having a subtile attention (as oftentimes we see sicke persons to bee possessed withall) heard all these speeches spoken of him, and causing them to be called unto him, thus hee spake.

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

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

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

I plainly perceive, seeing thou hast so often confessed thy selfe, that I shall take the lesse labour in urging questions to thee.

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

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

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

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

Sonne, Sonne, replied the Confessour, these sinnes are naturall, and very light, and therefore I would not have thee to charge thy conscience with them, more then is needfull. It happeneth to every man (how holy soever he be) that after he hath fasted over-long, feeding will be welcome to him, and drinking good drinke after his travaile. O Sir (said Maister *Chappelet*) never tell me this to comfort me, for well you know, and I am not ignorant therein, that such things as are done for the service of God, ought all to be performed purely, and without any blemish of the minde; what otherwise is done, savoureth of sinne. The Friar being well contented with his words, said: It is not amisse that thou understandest it in this manner, and thy conscience thus purely cleared, is no little comfort to me. But tell me now concerning Avarice, hast thou sinned therein? by desiring more then was reasonable, or withholding from others, such things as thou oughtst not to detaine? whereto Maister *Chappelet* answered. Good Father, I would not have you to imagine, because you see me lodged here in the house of two usurers, that therefore I am of any such disposition. No truly Sir, I came hither to no other end, but onely to chastise and admonish them in friendly manner, to cleanse their mindes from such abominable profit: And assuredly, I should have prevailed therein, had not this violently sicknesse hindered mine intention. But understand (holy Father) that my parents left me a rich man, and immediatly after my fathers death, the greater part of his goods I gave away for Gods sake, and then, to sustaine mine owne life, and to helpe the poore members of Jesus Christ, I betooke my selfe to a meane estate of Merchandise, desiring none other then honest gaine thereby, and evermore

whatsoever benefit came to me; I imparted halfe thereof to the poore, converting mine owne small portion about my necessary affaires, which that other part would scarcely serve to supply: yet alwayes God gave thereto such a mercifull blessing, that my businesse dayly thrived more and more, arising still from good to better.

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

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

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

In this manner he held on an houre and more, uttering the like transgressions as these; and at last began to sigh very passionately, and to shed a few teares, as one that was skilfull enough in such dissembling pranks; whereto the Confessour being much mooved, said: Alas Sonne, what aylest thou? Oh Father (quoth *Chappelet*) there remaineth yet one sinne more upon my conscience, whereof I never at any time made confession, so shamefull it appeareth to me to disclose it; and I am partly

perswaded, that God will never pardon me for that sinne. How now Sonne? said the Friar, never say so; for if all the sinnes that ever were committed by men, or shall be committed so long as the World endureth, were onely in one man, and he repenting them, and being so contrite for them, as I see thou art; the grace and mercy of God is so great, that upon penitent confession, he will freely pardon him, and therefore spare not to speak it boldly. Alas Father (said *Chappelet*, still in pretended weeping) this sinne of mine is so great, that I can hardly beleewe (if your earnest prayers doe not assist me) that ever I shall obtaine remission for it. Speake it Sonne, said the Friar, and feare not, I promise that I will pray to God for thee.

Master *Chappelet* still wept and sighed, and continued silent, notwithstanding all the Confessors comfortable perswasions; but after hee had helde him a long while in suspence, breathing forth a sighe, even as if his very heart would have broken, he saide; Holy Father, seeing you promise to pray to God for me, I will reveale it to you: Know then, that when I was a little boy, I did once curse my Mother; which he had no sooner spoken, but he wrung his hands, and greeved extraordinarily. Oh good Son, saide the Friar, doth that seeme so great a sinne to thee? Why, men doe daily blaspheme our Lord God, and yet neverthelesse, upon their hearty repentance, he is alwayes ready to forgive them; and wilt not thou beleewe to obtaine remission, for a sinne so ignorantly committed? Weepe no more deare Sonne, but comfort thy selfe, and rest resolved, that if thou wert one of them, who nayled our blessed Saviour to his Crosse; yet being so truly repentant, as I see thou art, he would freely forgive thee. Say you so Father? quoth *Chappelet*. What? mine owne deare Mother? that bare me in her wombe nine moneths, day and night, and afterwards fed me with her breasts a thousand times, can I be pardoned for cursing her? Oh no, it is too haynous a sinne, and except you pray to God very instantly for me, he will not forgive me.

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

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

After that *Chappelet* had received the Communion, and the other ceremonies appointed for him; weakenesse encreasing on him more and more, the very same day of his goodly confession, he died (not long after) towards the evening. Whereupon the two Brethren tooke order, that all needefull

things should be in a readinesse, to have him buried honourably; sending to acquaint the Fathers of the Convent therewith, that they might come to say their *Vigilles*, according to precedent custome, and then on the morrow to fetch the body. The honest Friar that had confessed him, hearing he was dead, went to the Prior of the Convent, and by sound of the house Bell, caused all the Brethren to assemble together, giving them credibly to understand, that Master *Chappelet* was a very holy man, as appeared by all the parts of his confession, and made no doubt, but that many miracles would be wrought by his sanctified body, perswading them to fetch it thither with all devoute solemnity and reverence; whereto the Prior, and all the credulous Brethren presently condescended very gladly.

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

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

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

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

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

## The Second Novell

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

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

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

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

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

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

When *Jehannot* heard these words, he became exceeding sorrowfull, saide within himselfe. I have lost all the paines, which I did thinke to be well employed, as hoping to have this man converted here: For, if he goe to the Court of Rome, and behold there the wickednes of the Priests lives; farewell

all hope in me, of ever seeing him to become a Christian. But rather, were he already a Christian, without all question, he would turne Jew: And so (going neerer to *Abraham*) he said. Alas my loving friend, why shouldst thou undertake such a tedious travell, and so great a charge, as thy journey from hence to Rome will cost thee? Consider, that to a rich man (as thou art) travaile by land or sea is full of infinite dangers. Doest thou not thinke, that here are Religious men enow, who will gladly bestowe Baptisme upon thee. To me therefore it plainly appeareth, that such a voyage is to no purpose. If thou standest upon any doubt or scruple, concerning the faith whereto I wish thee; where canst thou desire conference with greater Doctours, or men more learned in all respects, then this famous Citie doth affoord thee, to resolve thee in any questionable case? Thou must thinke, that the Prelates are such there, as here thou seest them to be, and yet they must needes be in much better condition at Rome, because they are neere to the principall Pastour. And therefore, if thou wilt credit my counsell, reserve this journey to some time more convenient, when the Jubilee of generall pardon happeneth, and then (perchance) I will beare thee company, and goe along with thee as in vowed pilgrimage.

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

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

These things, and many more (fitter for silence, then publication) were so deeply displeasing to the Jew, being a most sober and modest man; that he had soone seene enough, resolving on his returne to *Paris*, which very speedily he performed. And when *Jehannot* heard of his arrivall, crediting much rather other newes from him, then ever to see him a converted Christian; he went to welcome him, and kindly they feasted one another. After some fewe dayes of resting, *Jehannot* demaunded of him; what he thought of our holy father the Pope and his Cardinals, and generally of all the other Courtiers? Whereto the Jew readily answered; It is strange *Jehannot*, that God should give them so much as he doth. For I will truly tell thee, that if I had beene able to consider all those things, which there I have both heard and seene: I could then have resolved my selfe, never to have found in any Priest, either sanctity, devotion, good worke, example of honest life, or any good thing else beside. But if a man desire to see luxury, avarice, gluttony, and such wicked things, yea, worse, if worse may be, and held in generall estimation of all men; let him but goe to *Rome*, which I thinke rather to be

the forge of damnable actions, then any way leaning to grace or goodnesse. And, for ought I could perceive, me thinkes your chiefe Pastour, and (consequently) all the rest of his dependants, doe strive so much as they may (with all their engine arte and endeavour) to bring to nothing, or else to banish quite out of the world, Christian Religion, whereof they should be the support and foundation.

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

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

**Melchisedech a Jew, by recounting a Tale of three Rings, to the great Soldan,  
named Saladine, prevented a great danger which was prepared for him**

## The third Novell

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

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

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

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

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

My Lord, the question propounded by you, is faire and worthy, & to answer mine opinion truly thereof, doth necessarily require some time of consideration, if it might stand with your liking to allow it: but if not, let me first make entrance to my reply, with a pretty tale, and well worth the hearing. I have oftentimes heard it reported, that (long since) there was a very wealthy man, who (among other precious Jewels of his owne) had a goodly Ring of great vaw; the beauty and

estimation whereof, made him earnestly desirous to leave it as a perpetuall memory and honour to his successors. Whereupon, he willed and ordained, that he among his male children, with whom this Ring (being left by the Father) should be found in custody after his death; hee and none other was to bee reputed his heire, and to be honoured and revered by all the rest, as being the prime and worthiest person. That Sonne, to whom this Ring was left by him, kept the same course to his posterity, dealing (in all respects) as his predecessor had done; so that (in short time) the Ring (from hand to hand) had many owners by Legacie.

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

Lying upon his death-bed, and his Sonnes then plying him by their best opportunities, he gave to each of them a Ring. And they (after his death) presuming severally upon their right to the inheritance & honour, grew to great contradiction and square: each man producing then his Ring, which were so truly all alike in resemblance, as no one could know the right Ring from the other. And therefore, suite in Law, to distinguish the true heire to his Father; continued long time, and so it dooth yet to this very day. In like manner my good Lord, concerning those three Lawes given by God the Father, to three such people as you have propounded: each of them do imagine that they have the heritage of God, and his true Law, and also duely to performe his Commandements; but which of them do so indeede, the question (as of the three Ringes) is yet remaining.

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

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

## The fourth Novell

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

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

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

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

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

The Monke, though his delight with the Damosel was extraordinary, yet feare and suspicion followed upon it: for, in the very height of all his wantonnesse, he heard a soft treading about the doore. And prying thorow a small crevice in the same doore, perceived apparantly, that the Abbot himselfe stood listening there, and could not be ignorant, but that the Maide was with him in the Chamber. As after pleasure ensueth paine, so the venereal Monke knew well enough (though wanton heate would not let him heede it before) that most greevous punishment must be inflicted on him; which made him sad beyond all measure. Neverthesse, without disclosing his dismay to the young Maiden, he began to consider with himselfe on many meanes, whereby to find out one that might

best fit his turne. And suddenly conceited an apt stratagem, which sorted to such effect as he would have it: whereupon seeming satisfied for that season, hee tolde the Damosell, that (being carefull of her credit) as he had brought her in unseen of any, so he would free her from thence again, desiring her to tarrie there (without making any noyse at all) until such time as he returned to her.

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

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

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

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

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

Within some short while after, the Abbot knowing the Monke to be in the Convent, and supposing him to be lately returned with the wood, determined to reprove him sharpely, and to have him closely imprisoned, that the Damosell might remaine solie to himselfe. And causing him to be

called presently before him, with a very stearne and angry countenance giving him many harsh and bitter speeches, commanded, that he should be clapt in prison.

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

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

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

## The fift Novell

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

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

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

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

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

order (by their advise) for giving the King a gracious welcome. But concerning the dinner, and diet for service to his table; that remained onely at her owne disposing.

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

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

When the King heard this reply, he knew well enough the occasion of his Henne dinner, as also, what vertue lay couched under her answer; perceiving apparantly, that wanton words would prove but in vaine, and such a woman was not easily to be seduced; wherefore, as hee grew enamored on her inconsiderately, so he found it best fitting for his honour, to quench this heate with wisdomed discreetely. And so, without any more words, or further hope of speeding in so unkingly a purpose, dinner being ended, by a sudden departing, he smoothly shadowed the cause of his comming, and thanking her for the honour shee had done him, commended her to her chaste disposition, and posted away with speede to *Gennes*.

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

## The sixt Novell

### **Declaring, that in few, discreete, and well placed words, the covered craft of Church-men may be justly reproved, and their hypocrisie honestly discovered**

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

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

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

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

This soveraigne unction was of such vertue (though *Galen* speakes not a word thereof among all his chieftest medicines) and so farre prevailed; that the terrible threatening words of fire and fagot, became meerely frozen up, and gracious language blew a more gentle and calmer ayre; the Inquisitor delivering him an hallowed Crucifixe, creating him a Souldier of the Crosse (because he had payed Crosses good store for it) and even as if he were to travell under that Standard to the holy Land; so did hee appoint him a home-paying pennance, namely, to visit him thrice every weeke in his Chamber, and to annoint his hands with the selfe-same yellow unguent, and afterward, to heare a Masse of the

holy Crosse, visiting him also at dinner time, which being ended, to doe nothing all the rest of the day, but according as he directed him.

The simple man, yet not so simple, but seeing that this weekly greasing the Inquisitors hands, would (in time) graspe away all his gold; grew weary of this annointing, and beganne to consider with himselfe, how to stay the course of this chargeable penance: And comming one morning, (according to his injunction) to heare Masse, in the Gospell he observed these wordes; *You shall receive an hundred for one, and so possesse eternall life*; which saying he kept perfectly in his memory, and, as hee was commanded, at dinner time, he came to the Inquisitor, finding him (among his fellowes) seated at the Table. The Inquisitor presently demanded of him, whether he had heard Masse that morning, or no? Yes Sir, replied the man very readily. Hast thou heard any thing therein (quoth the Inquisitor) whereof thou art doubtfull, or desirest to be further informed? Surely Sir, answered the plaine meaning man, I make no doubt of any thing I have heard, but doe beleeeve all constantly; onely one thing troubleth me much, and maketh me very compassionate of you, and of all these holy Fathers your brethren, perceiving in what wofull and wretched estate you will be, when you shall come into another World. What words are these, quoth the Inquisitor? And why art thou moved to such compassion of us? O good Sir, saide the man, doe you remember the words in the Gospell this morning? you shall receive an hundred for one. That is very true, replied the Inquisitor, but what moveth thee to urge those words?

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

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

## The seaventh Novell

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

When these newes were carried to the Abbot, sodainly he brake forth and saide. What new kinde of needy tricke hath my braine begotte this day? Why do I grow disdainfull against any man

whatsoever? I have long time allowed my meate to be eaten by all commers that did please to visit me, without exception against any person, Gentleman, Yeoman, poore or rich, Marchant or Minstrill, honest man or knave, never refraining my presence in the Hall, by basely contemning one poore man. Beleeve me, covetousnesse of one mans meate, doth ill agree with mine estate and calling. What though he appeareth a wretched fellow to mee? He may be of greater merit then I can imagine, and deserve more honour then I am able to give him.

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

Master *Can de la Scala*, who was a man of good understanding, perceyved immediately (without any further interpretation) what *Bergamino* meant by this morall, and smiling on him, saide: *Bergamino*, thou hast honestly expressed thy vertue and necessities, and justly reprooved mine avarice, niggardnesse, and base folly. And trust me *Bergamino*, I never felt such a fit of covetousness come upon me, as this which I have dishonestly declared to thee: and which I will now banish from me, with the same correction as thou hast taught mee. So, having payed the Host all his charges, redeeming also his robes or garments, mounting him on a good Gelding, and putting plenty of Crownes in his purse, hee referd it to his owne choise to depart, or dwell there still with him.

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

## The eight Novell

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

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

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

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

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

But returning where I left (being led out of my way by a just and religious anger against such deformity) this Gentleman, Master *Guillaume Boursier*, was willingly seene, and gladly welcommed by all the best men in *Geneway*. Having remayned some few dayes in the City, & (among other matters) heard much talke of the miserable covetousnes of master *Herminio*, he grew verie desirous to have a sight of him. Master *Herminio* had already understood, that this Gentleman, Master *Guillaume*

*Boursier*, was vertuously disposed, and (how covetously soever he was inclined) having in him some sparkes of noble nature; gave him very good words, and gracious entertainment, discoursing with him on divers occasions.

In company of other *Genewayes* with him, he brought him to a new erected house of his, a building of great cost and beauty, where, after he had shewen him all the variable rarities, he beganne thus. Master *Guillaume*, no doubt but you have heard and seene many things, and you can instruct me in some quaint conceit or devise, to be fairely figured in painting, at the entrance into the great Hall of my House. Master *Guillaume* hearing him speake so simply, returned him this answer; Sir, I cannot advise you in any thing, so rare or unseen as you talke of: but how to sneeze (after a new manner) upon a full and overcloyed stomacke, to avoide base humours that stupifie the braine, or other matters of the like quality. But if you would be taught a good one indeede, and had a disposition to see it fairely effected; I could instruct you in an excellent Embleme, wherewith (as yet) you never came acquainted.

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

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

## The ninth Novell

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

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

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

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

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

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

## The tenth Novell

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

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

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

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

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

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

countenance of this lovely widdow. In regard whereof, his dayly passage was by her doore, one while on horsebacke, and then againe on foote; as best might declare his plaine purpose to see her.

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

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

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

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

The Sunne was now somewhat farre declined, and the heates extremity well worne away, when the Tales of the seaven Ladies and three Gentlemen were thus finished, whereupon their Queene pleasantly said. For this day (faire company) there remaineth nothing more to be done under my regiment, but onely to bestow a new Queene upon you, who (according to her judgement) must take her turne, and dispose what next is to be done, for continuing our time in honest pleasure. And although the day should endure till darke night, in regard, that when some time is taken before, the better preparation may be made for occasions to follow, to the end also, that whatsoever the new

Queene shall please to appoint, may be the better fitted for the morrow: I am of opinion, that at the same houre as we now cease, the following dayes shall severally begin. And therefore, in reverence to him that giveth life to all things, and in hope of comfort by our second day; Madame *Philomena*, a most wise young Lady, shall governe as Queene this our Kingdome.

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

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

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

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

The Queene, knowing him to be a man full of mirth and matter, began to consider very advisedly, that he would not have mooved this request, but onely to the end, that if the company grew wearied by any of the Tales re-counted, hee would shut uppe the dayes disport with some mirthfull accident. Wherefore willingly, and with consent of al the rest he had his suite granted. So, arising all, they walked to a Christall river, descending downe a little hill into a vally, graciously shaded with goodly Trees; where washing both their hands and feete, much pretty pleasure passed among them;

till supper time drawing nere, made them returne home to the Palace. When supper was ended, and bookes and instruments being laide before them, the Queene commanded a dance, & that Madam *Æmilia*, assisted by Madam *Lauretta* and *Dioneus*, shold sing a sweet ditty. At which command, *Lauretta* undertooke the dance, and led it, *Æmilia* singing this song ensuing.

### **The Song**

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

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

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

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

### **The End of the first Day**

## The Second Day

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

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

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

## The first Novell

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

Faire Ladies, it hath happened many times, that hee who striveth to scorne and floute other men, and especially in occasions deserving to be respected, proveth to mocke himselfe with the selfesame matter, yea, and to his no meane danger beside. As you shall perceive by a Tale, which I intend to tell you, obeying therein the command of our Queene, and according to the subject by her enjoyed. In which discourse, you may first observe, what great mischance happened to one of our Citizens; and yet afterward, how (beyond all hope) he happily escaped.

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

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

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

and humbly desiring (for Gods sake) of every one that they met, to grant them free passage, whereto they charitably condescended.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## The second Novell

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

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

Gracious Ladies, I am to speake of universall occasions, mingled with some misfortunes in part, and partly with matters leaning to love: as many times may happen to such people, that trace the dangerous pathes of amorous desires, or have not learned perfectly, to say S. *Julians pater noster*, having good beds of their owne, yet (casually) meete with worser lodging.

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

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

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

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

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

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

In this towne of *Chateau Guillaume*, lived a young Lady, who was a widdow, so beautifull and comely of her person, as sildome was seene a more lovely creature. The Marquesse *Azzo* most dearely affected her, and (as his choysiest Jewell of delight) gave her that house to live in, under the terrace whereof poore *Rinaldo* made his shelter. It chaunced the day before, that the Marquesse was come thither, according to his frequent custome, to weare away that night in her company, she having secretly prepared a Bath for him, and a costly supper beside. All things being ready, and nothing wanting but the Marquesse his presence: suddenly a Post brought him such Letters, which commanded him instantly to horsebacke, and word hee sent to the Lady, to spare him for that night, because urgent occasions called him thence, and hee rode away immediately.

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

hee came thither: most pittifully entreating her, that if shee could affoord him any helpe, not to suffer him starve there to death with colde.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## The third Novell

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

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

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

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

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

This advice prevailed with them; and so, without taking leave of any body, or other solemnity then closest secrecy, they departed from *Florence*, not tarrying in any place untill they were arrived in *England*. Comming to the City of London, and taking there a small house upon yearly rent, living

on so little charge as possible might be, they began to lend out money at use: wherein Fortune was so favourable to them, that (in few yeares) they had gathered a great summe of mony: by means whereof it came to passe, that one while one of them, and afterward another, returned backe againe to *Florence*: where, with those summes, a great part of their inheritances were redeemed, and many other bought beside. Linking themselves in marriage, and yet continuing their usances in England; they sent a Nephew of theirs thither, named *Alessandro*, a yong man, and of faire demeanor, to maintaine their stocke in employment: while they three remained still at *Florence*, and growing forgetful of their former misery, fell againe into as unreasonable expences as ever, never respecting their houshold charges, because they had good credite among the Merchants, and the monies still sent from *Alessandro*, supported their expences divers yeares.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As I travailed hither with this vertuous intention, our Lord, who onely knoweth perfectly, what is best fitting for all his creatures; presented mine eyes (no doubt in his meere mercy and goodnesse) with a man meete to be my husband, which (pointing to *Alessandro*) is this young Gentleman standing by me, whose honest, vertuous, and civill demeanour, deserveth a Lady of farre greater worth, although (perhaps) nobility in blood be denied him, and may make him seeme not so excellent, as one derived from Royall discent. Holy and religious vowes have past betweene us both, and the Ring on his finger, is the firme pledge of my faith and constancie; never to accept any other man in marriage, but him onely, although my Father, or any else doe dislike it. Wherefore (holy Father) the principall cause of my comming hither, being already effectually concluded on, I desire to compleat the rest of my pilgrimage, by visiting the sanctified places in this City, whereof there are great plenty; And also, that sacred marriage, being contracted in the presence of God onely, betweene *Alessandro* and my selfe, may by you be publicly confirmed, and in an open congregation. For, seeing God hath so appointed it, and our soules have so solemnly vowed it, that no disaster whatsoever can alter it:

you being Gods vicar here on earth, I hope will not gaine-say, but confirme it with your fatherly benediction, that wee may live in Gods feare, and dye in his favour.

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

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

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

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

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

## The fourth Novell

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

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

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

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

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

Continuing still in feare, of the losses he had sustained by traffique, & minding, never more to imploy his mony that way, but to keep this light vessel, which had holpen him to all his wealth: he commanded his men to put forth their Oares, and shape their course for his owne dwelling. Being aloft in the higher Seas, darke night over-taking them, and a mighty winde suddainly comming upon

them: it not onely was contrary to their course, but held on with such impetuous violence; that the small vessell, being unable to endure it, made to land-ward speedily, and in expectation of a more friendly wind, entred a little port of the Sea, directing up into a small Island, and there safely sheltred it selfe. Into the same port which *Landolpho* had thus taken for his refuge, entred (soone after) two great Carrackes of *Genewayes* lately come from *Constantinople*. When the men in them had espied the small Barke, and lockt uppe her passage from getting foorth; understanding the Owners name, and that report had famed him to be very rich, they determined (as men evermore addicted naturally, to covet after money and spoile) to make it their owne as a prize at Sea.

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

Now, notwithstanding the nights obscurity, and impetuous violence of the billowes; such as could swimme, made shift to save their lives by swimming. Others caught hold on such things, as by Fortunes favour floated neerest to them, among whom, distressed *Landolpho*, desirous to save his life, if possibly it might be, espied a Chest or Coffe before him, ordained (no doubt) to be the meanes of his safety from drowning. Now although the day before, he had wished for death infinite times, rather then to returne home in such wretched poverty; yet, seeing how other men strove for safety of their lives by any helpe, were it never so little, he tooke advantage of this favour offred him, and the rather in a necessitie so urgent. Keeping fast upon the Coffe so well as he could, and being driven by the winds & waves, one while this way, and anon quite contrarie, he made shift for himselfe till day appeared; when looking every way about him, seeing nothing but clouds, the seas and the Coffe, which one while shrunke from under him, and another while supported him, according as the windes and billowes carried it: all that day and night thus he floated up and downe, drinking more then willingly hee would, but almost hunger-starved thorow want of foode. The next morning, either by the appointment of heaven, or power of the Windes, *Landolpho* who was (well-neere) become a Spundge, holding his armes strongly about the Chest, as wee have seene some doe, who (dreading drowning) take hold on any the very smallest helpe; drew neere unto the shore of the Iland *Corfu*, where (by good fortune) a poore woman was scowring dishes with the salt water and sand, to make them (house-wife like) neate and cleane.

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

was led into the Towne, and there conveyed into a warme Stove, where quickly he recovered (by her pains) his strength benumbed with extreame cold.

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

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

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

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

## The fift Novell

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

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

As I have heard reported by many, there sometime lived in *Perouse* or *Perugia*, a young man, named *Andrea de Piero*, whose profession was to trade about Horses, in the nature of a Horse-courser, or Horse-master, who hearing of a good Faire or Market (for his purpose) at *Naples*, did put five hundred Crownes of gold in his purse, and journeyed thither in the company of other Horse-courers, arriving there on a Sunday in the evening. According to instructions given him by his Host, he went the next day into the Horse-market, where he saw very many Horses that he liked, cheapening their prices as he went up and downe, but could fall to no agreement; yet to manifest that he came purposely to buy, and not as a cheapener onely, often times (like a shalow-brainde trader in the world) he shewed his purse of gold before all passengers, never respecting who, or what they were that observed his follie.

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

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

Being come home to her owne house, away shee sent the olde Pandresse about other businesse, which might hold her time long enough of employment, and hinder her returning to *Andrea* according to promise, purposing, not to trust her in this serious piece of service. Calling a young crafty Girle to her, whom she had well tutoured in the like ambassages, when evening drew on, she sent her to

*Andreas* lodging, where (by good fortune) she found him sitting alone at the dore, and demanding of him, if he knew an honest Gentleman lodging there, whose name was *Signior Andrea de Piero*; he made her answer, that himselfe was the man. Then taking him aside, shee said. Sir, there is a worthy Gentlewoman of this Citie, that would gladly speake with you, if you pleased to vouchsafe her so much favour.

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

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

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

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

*Piero*, my Father and thine, dwelt long time (as thou canst not chuse but to have understood) in *Palermo*, where, through the bounty, and other gracious good parts remaining in him, he was much

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

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

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

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

*Andrea* still made her answer, confirming thereby his beliefe of her the more strongly, and crediting whatsoever shee saide, farre better then before.

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

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

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

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

Now for your better understanding the quality of the place, and what ensued thereupon, it is not unnecessary to describe it, according to a common use observed in those parts. There was a narrow passage or entrie, as often we see reserved betweene two houses, for eithers benefit to such a needfull

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

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

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

*Andrea* being somewhat pacified with these speeches, a shag-hairde swash-buckler, a grim-visagde Ruffian (as sildome bawdy houses are without such swaggering Champions) not seene or heard by *Andrea*, all the while of his being in the house rapping out two or three terrible oathes, opened a casement, and with a stearne dreadfull voyce, demaunded who durst keepe that noyse beneath? *Andrea* fearefully looking up, and (by a little glimmering of the Moone) seeing such a rough fellow, with a blacke beard, strowting like the quilles of a Porcupine, and patches on his face, for hurts received in no honest quarels, yawning also and stretching, as angry to have his sleepe

disturbed: trembling and quaking, answered; I am the Gentlewomans brother of the house. The Ruffian interrupting him, and speaking more fiercely then before; sealing his words with horrible oathes, said. Sirra, Rascall, I know not of whence or what thou art, but if I come downe to thee, I will so bombast thy prating coxcombe, as thou was never better beaten in all thy life, like a drunken slave and beast as thou art, that all this night wilt not let us sleepe; and so hee clapt to the window againe.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

answered, that hee could not finde it, and for their longer tarying with him, seemed as if he serched very carefully, but all appeared to no purpose.

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

As he continued in these strange afflictions of minde, sodainely hee heard a noise in the Church of divers men, who (as he imagined) came about the like businesse, as hee and his fellowes had undertaken before; wherein he was not a jot deceived, albeit his feare the more augmented. Having opened the Tombe, and supported the stone, they varied also among themselves for entrance, and an indiffrent while contended about it. At length, a Priest being one in the company, boldly said. Why how now you white-liver'd Rascals? What are you affraid of? Do you thinke he will eate you? Dead men cannot bite, and therefore I my selfe will go in. Having thus spoken, he prepared his entrance to the Tombe in such order, that he thrust in his feete before, for his easier descending downe into it.

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

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

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

## The sixt Novell

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

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

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

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

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

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

As the rest, so did Madam *Beritola* goe on shore in the Iland, where having found a separate and solitary place, fit for her silent and sad meditations, secretly by her selfe, shee sorrowed for the absence of her husband. Resorting daily to this her sad exercise, and continuing there her complaints, unseene by any of the Marriners, or whosoever else: there arrived suddenly a Galley of Pyrates, who seazing on the small Barke, carried it and all the rest in it away with them. When *Beritola* had finished her wofull complaints, as daily shee was accustomed to doe, shee returned backe to her children againe; but finding no person there remaining, whereat she wondered not a little: immediately (suspecting what had happened indeede) she lent her lookes on the Sea, and saw the Galley, which as yet had not gone farre, drawing the smaller vessell after her. Heereby plainly she perceyved, that now she

had lost her children, as formerly shee had done her husband; being left there poore, forsaken, and miserable, not knowing when, where, or how to finde any of them againe, and calling for her husband and children, shee fell downe in a swoound uppon the shore.

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

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

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

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

By this time, *Conrado* and his wife, who had followed closely after the hounds, was come thither, and seeing what had hapned, looking on the Lady, who was become blacke, swarthy, meager, and hairy, they wondered not a little at her, and she a great deale more at them. When (upon her request) *Conrado* had checkt back his hounds, they prevailed so much by earnest intreaties, to know what she was, and the reason of her living there; that she intirely related her quality, unfortunate accidents, and strange determination for living there. Which when the Gentleman had heard, who

very well knew her husband, compassion forced teares from his eyes, and earnestly he laboured by kinde perswasions, to alter so cruel a deliberation; making an honourable offer, for conducting her home to his owne dwelling, where shee should remaine with him in noble respect, as if she were his owne sister, without parting from him, till Fortune should smile as fairely on her, as ever she had done before.

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

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

Returne wee now to the Pyrates, which at *Ponzo* seized on the small Barke, wherein Madam *Beritola* was brought thither, and carried thence away, without any sight or knowledge of her. With such other spoiles as they had taken, they shaped their course for *Geneway*, and there (by consent of the Patrones of the Galley) made a division of their booties. It came to passe, that (among other things) the Nurse that attended on *Beritola*

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