

There reside a few shepherds, and it frequently happens that their cattle, erring through the interstices of these elevated rocks, are precipitated on the roofs of the houses of Amalfi or their public squares.

Towards the end of the year 1828, profiting by a leave of absence given me by the French Ambassador, I left Naples for Amalfi, where it was my intention to remain a week. On arriving there, I enquired for the Capuchin Inn, so called from its having been built upon the ruins of a convent of that order, but I was scarcely installed, when I was gallantly carried off by order of the consular agent of France, who had the kindness to introduce me to his uncle Monsignor L....o, Bishop of S...., and I could not refuse the hospitality so obligingly offered by this estimable family. I became very intimate with a young ecclesiastick secretary to the bishop, he was perfectly acquainted with the localities and inhabitants, and served as guide in my frequent excursions.

One day, that we happened to be at the top of the mountain that commands the western part of Amalfi, we lay down on our stomachs to drag ourselves along the edge of the immense rock which overhangs the town like a natural spout, and, from thence our eyes plunged, not without dazzling, into the depth of this vast precipice. We looked on small atoms of divers colours as they passed and re-passed under us, and which by their motions we knew to be living creatures. From time to time, Don Ignazio (that is the name of my companion) cried: There is our boatman passing with his son! here is the sacristan of the cathedral! oh! I see the wife of Giovanino.

In such a situation, the least interruption becomes a serious cause of terror, and this occurred to us. A harsh but plaintive voice arose suddenly behind us, and caused us to shudder. Instantly, and without seeking to learn the cause, we hastened to retire backwards, until, arrived at a broader and safer place, Don Ignazio and myself could rise on our feet. During this short space, I had felt my heart palpitate with violence and my