

At this moment the old goatherd and his dogs came and drove away the goats from the hedge. The little dead woman followed them whilst Maurice and I advanced towards the old man, and requested he would continue to guard this little spot. The goatherd knew nothing of landscape effects or sketches; but he informed us, that he prevented his goats from eating the bushes and grass of the enclosure, because, at the foot of the cross, where the grass was thickest, a female had been buried about eighteen months before.

"Was she then murdered on that spot?" enquired Maurice.

"I believe not Sir, the goatherd replied.

"However, she lodged at the house where you are waiting. The people there can tell you all about her. I was not then in the country."

The moment we reached the house, Maurice interrogated our hostess, whom the other travellers were urging to hasten the breakfast. As she was laying the cloth, she informed us that a young girl arrived at her house one rainy night. She was weary and sad, and her eyes seemed inflamed with weeping. She retired to a private room, in which she shut herself up for nearly a month, paying her expenses each day; but these expenses were trifling, because she scarcely ate any thing. She used to roam about at night, and was often seen sitting upon the stones at the foot of the cross. One day she was found dead under one of the elms, to a branch of which she hanged herself with a silk handkerchief. The branch had given way, and in her fall her temple had come in contact with one of the stones, which, as the doctor said, was the cause of her death.

"The mayor came and scolded us," continued the hostess, "for having harboured a vagabond; for she had not a single paper with her to show who she was. The priest refused to bury her, or to allow her remains to be interred in consecrated ground; but I had pity upon her poor young corpse. I begged that it might be buried near the cross; for the ground there must be almost as good as consecrated ground. Besides she had gi-