

of our hero was not now in a condition to receive new impressions of love. No; the image of his injured Maria entirely occupied his soul; and affection had no room for any other object. But he felt for the lovely Anna all the tenderness which (short of love) can be excited in the feeling mind.

He resolved to learn the story of her misfortunes, and extend the assistance of his friendship till he had established her in some situation which (compared with the expectations her education might have entitled her to form) should leave her no cause to complain of the final revolutions of fortune.

But as he saw the embarrassment he had occasioned her, by detaining her so long, he forbore further to wound her sensibility by his enquiries, and, breathing a fervent benediction, bade her farewell.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

*A generous mind readily pardons those offences which are occasioned by the zeal of friendship or virtue.*

THE seeming departure of Courland was, however, only a generous deception: for he followed the lovely Anna at a distance, and saw her enter the gate of the Fleet prison. As soon as she entered, she flew with a heart full of joy to her languishing mother, who, except on the day of Courland's generosity, had never before, for a long time, beheld a countenance with a smile, or heard a voice that did not tremulate with anguish.

Courland made some enquiries of the turnkey about the beautiful visitant; but could get no further information from that quarter than, that 'The wench came to see her mother, who was in confinement for a debt she owed her landlord.'

This was not sufficient for the enquirer. Therefore, having, as he looked through the gate after her, observed a young man take particular notice of her, as she passed, he entered the prison, in hopes that he could give some account of the object of his enquiry.

'Sir,' said the youth, very warmly—eyeing him at the same time with a suspicious glance, 'if you are one of those who hunt friendless beauty into the toils of misery, to make it the prey of unprincipled passion, you had better retire, and spare your time and trouble. The charming Anna, though unfortunate, is virtuous; and will not purchase relief from her afflictions at the expense of her innocence.'

'Young man!' replied the generous

Courland, 'I admire your warmth. It proves the goodness of your own heart, while it interests me still further in the situation of the fair object of your panegyric. But be assured you are mistaken in me. I would be the preserver of the distressed; not the destroyer of the virtuous. Nor am I base enough to commit the vilest injury under the mask of generosity, or to make the miseries of my fellow-creatures the unwilling panders of my ungenerous passions.'

'Pardon me, Sir,' rejoined the youth, 'but the spoilers of innocence are so many, and the votaries of pure benevolence so few, that you cannot wonder that the ardour of your enquiries should awake suspicion.'

Courland assured him he was not in the least offended, as, he promised him, he should have occasion to be convinced. He then intreated him to give all the information in his power about the young lady who was the object of his enquiries.

#### CHAPTER IX.

*Human nature never appears in a more amiable point of view, than when relative afflictions struggle to sustain its tenderest connections under the heavy lead of unmerited misfortunes.*

'THAT amiable female,' continued the youth, 'is the only child of a woman beloved and worthy as herself.'

'The world you know, Sir, is censorious, and I have heard that the mother never was married. Be this as it may, she is the love and pity of every one in the house; and, if the report be true, is a striking proof that man can be base to those who merit nothing but love and admiration.'

'True, true,' said Courland, with a sigh, 'I know he can. But proceed.'

'About two months ago the mother was dragged here by a merciless landlord, who had sued her to execution for a trifle of rent.'

'She and her daughter had long struggled to maintain themselves by the needle. But, alas! our tradesmen have invaded the professions of our industrious females; the lower orders of whom are too often destitute of the means to support themselves: for the greater part of these occupations which ought to be the exclusive right of women are in the possession of those who are able to maintain themselves by more active and laborious exertions; and the few that still remain to the oppressed and flattered sex, are so wretchedly rewarded, as scarcely to afford, with the most assiduous