

sent day comfortable, you forget that we have yet many more days of wretchedness to come.

'Do not, my love, exhaust every thing for me. Take more care of yourself.— You are young, and innocent, and unfriended: it is hard you should suffer for my misfortunes.

'Alas! why do I live to rob you of all the comforts and blessings of life? The laws of nature seem inverted, while I thus prey on the vitals of my child. You owe to me no support, no nutriment:—alas! I owe it to you. But when I am no more, perhaps the consolation of having for a little time protracted my wretched span by your filial tenderness, may in some measure repay your kindness: and heaven will surely reward your virtues.

'Yet do not, my dear child! pray do not let your care for me leave yourself entirely destitute.'

The heart of the lovely Anna was too full to suffer her to interrupt this tender harrangue. But as soon as she had given vent to a shower of tears, 'My dear mother!' said she, smiling with sweet benignity, like the cheering sunbeams through an April shower, 'dismiss these melancholy thoughts, kind heaven forbids that you should perish thus. You shall live, and we shall again be happy. Not my labours, but the generosity of a stranger has provided for our future comfort.'

'What does my child mean!' exclaims the wondering mother.

'That you shall sleep in this miserable dungeon no more. See, see, my dear mother!' continued she, producing the purse, which contained some notes as well as money, 'see what a kind stranger has done for us!'

'Alas! said the mother, trembling, 'Heaven forbid that my child should have purchased this relief too dear.

'Alas the passions, not the feelings of the other sex, render them generous to indigent and youthful beauty.

'Oh, if any blandishments of temptation—any puncture of distress, have induced my Anna to believe fortune more desirable than innocence, she is the most cruel, the most bitter of my enemies; and my inhuman creditor is generous when compared to her.'

'Oh, doubt me not,' said the blushing Anna. 'You know not how severely I have already been tried, or you would know how impossible it is for your Anna to make such a sacrifice.'

The heart of the fond mother was soothed to peace. But she turned away her head, with a sigh, and wiped off the starting tear.

Anna then proceeded to relate the circumstances of Courland's generosity; not without tears of commiseration as she described the melancholy distraction of his mind.

But the narrative had a very different effect from what she expected on the generous mind of her mother.

'And can you think, my dear Anna!' said she, 'that we should be justified in making use of the money which the momentary impulse of insanity, rather than the deliberate intentions of a benevolent mind, has put into our possession? Shall our distresses, pressing as they are, tempt us to dishonesty? To take advantage of the unconscious profusion of delicious sorrow, and appropriate to ourselves that property which another not knowing what he did gave us the opportunity of seizing.'

'The largeness of the gift is of itself sufficient to convince us, that had the unfortunate giver been in his senses, he could never thus have bestowed it on an absolute stranger.

'Nay, perhaps it was not justly his to bestow. He may have some deserving wife or relatives; some child, for whom it is his duty to provide, and who may feel the loss of what he is thus unconsciously lavishing on those who have no claim of nature on his bounty.

'It cannot be my child! that so large a sum of money could knowingly have been given to a stranger. You must go to the place where you met with him, and try if you can find him again. If not, we must advertise the circumstance in the papers; that the money may be restored to the right owners. It is better to be content with whatever little reward they may think due to our integrity, than to have our distresses relieved by an action, which, though the law would excuse it, our consciences must tell us is neither honourable nor just.'

The tender Anna, whose eagerness to relieve the distresses of her mother had prevented her from reflecting on these circumstances, had yet a soul perfectly susceptible of delicacy and of the justice of her mother's scruples. She therefore obeyed without a murmur; and tho' the golden prospect of approaching happiness had vanished, she consoled herself with the assurance that virtue, in the end, is its own certain reward; and that the persons to whom they acted with such conscientious honesty could not fail to emancipate them from distresses, which they thus proved to be incapable of seducing them from the path of duty.

*(To be continued.)*