

I am in. I have lost my gun, in scrambling through the mountain ravines. My dogs have followed upon the track of a deer, and have not returned; and, to add to my distress, I have mistaken my way, and have not broken bread since sun-rise.

"This is a long list of misfortunes," returned the goatherd, 'but not at all uncommon to young hunters. My goats often lead me a dance, which sends me home cold and hungry at night. But, young gentleman, my cabin is hard by; if you will step in, a draught of goat's milk and a brown cake may refresh you, and my eldest boy, who is about your own age, shall endeavour to shew you into the path you have lost.'

"Starving with hunger, I gladly accepted the invitation, and never did the most sumptuous viands afford such real satisfaction, as I felt whilst devouring a burnt cake of the black Norwegian bread, and drinking large draughts of milk from a coarse wooden bowl. The good wife looked rather feelingly at the rapid consumption of her mountain dainties; and muttered something about the scantiness of the children's suppers that night. But feeling certain that God would provide for them, while I knew not where a guilty wretch like me might get another meal, I ate away without paying the least regard to her hints.

"In the meanwhile, the night had closed rapidly in, and the kind, hospitable host, told me that it was too late to proceed on my way that night; and if I would share his son's bed in the corner, he would be ready early in the morning to put me into the right road.

"This was just what I wanted. I had been measuring his son Johan's height, with my eyes, and I saw that his garments would just fit me, and I determined to rise before day, and make the exchange, and would be some way upon my road to Drontheim, before my comrade discovered his loss—or rather his gain—the goatherd's clothes being of the coarsest description of cloth, manufactured from the refuse wool of their sheep.

"I need not tell you how dexterously I managed this little affair, and slipped undiscovered from the house, and with several adventures not worth recording, arrived safely at the sea-port, hoping to get on board some vessel sailing to the East or West Indies, for I concluded that there was no safety for me, whilst I continued in Norway.

"I took up my lodging at a little inn just without the town; after frankly informing the landlord that I had nothing to pay, that I was a poor lad, who had a great craze for the sea, and I was willing to chop wood for him, if he would supply me with food until some situation offered. Pleased with my appearance, old Peter Rovin, for so the master of the house was called, cheerfully

complied with my request; and after chopping a goodly pile of wood, though at the risk of chopping off my toes, I came in at night for a share of the warm stove, and the hot supper. Whilst assisting the old dame to lift from the fire, a large pot of boiled pulse and milk, I was addressed by a mechanic in the corner.

"Well my lad," said he, 'you are a stranger in Drontheim; what part of the world are you from?'

"I was born among the Dorfrine hills. My father keeps a large flock of goats, and he wished to bring me up to the same occupation; but I had such a wish to be a sailor, that he told me to go and seek my own living, for never a farthing should I get from him.'

"Very paternal, that," said the man, laughing. 'But, my lad, as you come from the hills, perhaps you can tell us something of the terrible story that reached us yesterday, of what has befallen the son of the good Count Christenstien.'

"Dame Rovin was just pouring out the porridge into a deep wooden bowl, which I held before her. My hand trembled so violently, that down went the bowl upon the dirty rough floor, and half the mess was spilled.

"Rat! the foolish, awkward, clown!" cried the indignant housewife, giving me several severe raps over the crown, with the hot ladle; 'he has spilt all the supper.'

"Not all," said I, wiping the porridge from my head with the back of my sleeve. 'Indeed, good dame, it was the steam scalded my hand. I will be more careful the next time.'

"Devil trust you!" said the angry old woman. 'There—you may have what's upon the ground for your portion. Hungry dogs, they say, will eat dirty puddling.'

"Come, come, dame," said Peter, 'the poor lad could not help it. He shall have a share with me of what remains. He is tired and hungry, and has earned his supper. Here—what do you call yourself? Come and sit by me.'

"Strange, I had never thought of a name, and was just upon the point of risking my own, when the madness of the thing struck me. Colouring up to the eyes, I stammered out, that I was called 'Peter Zartin.'

"Peter! that's my name," quoth the good man. 'But come tell us all you know of this murder, or accident, for it appears doubtful which it is, which has happened at S—.'

"Indeed, I know nothing about it. It must have occurred since I left.'

"Did you know the parties?'

"You must tell me who they are first," said I. 'I have seen the Count, and his nephew and son. Has any thing happened to them?'