





*LA PICARA JUSTINA*

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THE

SPANISH JILT

Translated from the Original Spanish

BY

CAPTAIN JOHN STEVENS



LONDON: 1707

(Reprinted 1889.)

LA RICA, 1821

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## PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

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THE Country Jilt, called in Spanish, La Picara Justina, is not a translation, but rather an extract of all that is diverting and good in the original, which is swelled up with so much cant and reflection, as really renders it tedious and unpleasant; for which reason all that unsavory part is omitted, and only so much rendered into English as may be diverting and instructing. Her pranks may, perhaps, to some, seem too vulgar, or mean, but they will do well to consider she is but a country girl, and acts as such. It was written by the licentiate Francisco de Ubeda, a native of Toledo.

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THE  
SPANISH JILT.

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CHAPTER I.

*She gives an Account of her Pedigree.*

**M**Y Father was born in a town they call Castillo de Luna, in the Earldom of Luna ; and my Mother at Zea ; but in case you know not where Zea is, I will inform you. Zea is near Sabagun, a town where there is a most magnificent Tun, not unlike that famous one of Heidelberg. This Tun being always empty, is very loud and noisy, and seems to cry for wheat and rye : for ever since it grew leaky it has never held any liquor, but those two sorts of grain. That last unfortunate year it was filled with new wine, and held as much as drove a mill, when it was let out ; a glorious sight. But if you do not know Zea by the neighbourhood of this curious vessel ; it is a place that resembles a wallet ; for at both ends of it there are several houses crowded together, and in the middle a bridge that join them together. But that I may not lose any part of my genealogy, I will

begin with my ancestors, both male and female, and then descend to my parents. The truth is, my father might as well have called me Mag, or Poll, for all my predecessors were of talkative, prating professings, but he thought fit to give me the name of Justina, because I was to support the justice of the Jilting-trade, and from him I took the worshipful surname of Diez.

My father was son to one that cried Wafers about the streets, and kept boys under him to ply in all parts ; all of them carrying packs of cards about them for the mob to play for Wafers ; and because he was the first that set this project on foot, they called him the Packer. He brought up the crying of Turn ouby for a Farthing ; but in his days the wafers were rolled up, and had several folds one within another, so that they had some substance ; whereas now they are but a single hollow shell. Thus we see there are cheats in all trades ; the more is the pity. This grandfather of mine allowed his emissaries to play with any gamesters at All-fours, but no other game, because the cards were marked and fitted for that sport, but would not so well serve at others. A blind man would have gone a mile to see him shuffle and pack the cards. He died at Barcelona, a watery death, though he never delighted in that element ; but the fault was in his tongue, for he happened to give a red haired fellow some uncourteous words, who, in return, tipped him over a narrow bridge, and the water he had so naturally abhorred whilst living, took revenge on him at his death. My father did not follow that trade, because he was too heavy and

pot-bellied, which made him live retired at home, sewing caps, and mending panniers for the Asturian carriers.

My great grand-father kept a puppet-show in Sevil, and it was reckoned the curiousest that ever had been seen in that city. He was so little, that the only difference between him and his puppets was, that they spoke through a trunk, and he without one. He made such speeches before his shows, that the audience could wish he had never done; for he had a tongue like a parrot, and a mouth like a sparrow, so big, that some fancied he could draw his whole body through it. All the apple-women, hawkers, and fish-women, were so charmed with his wit among his puppets, that they would run to hear him, without leaving any guard upon their goods but their straw-hats. Unfortunate man, being so like a cock-sparrow, he took to so many hens, that when they had devoured his money, clothes, mules, and puppets, they consumed his health, and left him like a naked baby in an hospital. When he thought to have died soberly he fell into a frenzy, to such a degree that one day he fancied he was a bull in the puppet-show; and was to encounter a stone cross that stood at the hospital door; and after several essays in his shirt he made at the same cross, crying, Now I have you. This said, he run his head so furiously against the cross, that he dropped down and said no more. The good hospital nurse, who was one of the family of the Innocents, seeing him die in that manner, cried, O the precious soul, he died at the foot of the cross, and directing his discourse to it.

My father's great grandfather lived in happy days, and was one of those that first brought the Art of Juggling and Legerdemain into Spain. He married a tumbler and vaulter, a woman excellently skilled in all sorts of vaulting, and would play her part with any man. She, though above fifty years of age, and troubled with the pty sick, died in the air: her husband would not marry again, to avoid seeing other women fly as she had done. He got so much money by his trade, that men of honour and preferment took notice of him; for a certain person, who had at least two handfuls of honour growing out above his head, and was afterwards preferred to the gallows, grew so very familiar with him one day that it might have cost him his life, and was thus: this my Great Grandfather being one day showing his sleight of hand, by way of jest, which he much delighted in, cried as the gipsies do, Ware pockets, and at the same time levelled at a purse, and the man, who was honourable by his wife, hearing him, thought there had been a real plot against the pence, and gave my juggler such a curious back stroke, that he beat out two grinders, which were all he had left of that sort, oversetting his hat, in which, at that time, half his implements were lodged. My poor predecessor was unfortunate in quarrels, for not long after, forgetting the past disaster, he would still be exercising his wit, at which a hasty stander-by was so displeased, that he showed him his fist in such an undecent manner, as made the fore teeth he had left drop out with fright, and so his gums were left quite destitute of company. The unhappy artist, perceiving that after the loss

of his teeth he mumbled his words so wretchedly, that no man understood him any more than if he had spoke Arabick, retired for mere shame to a country house near Guadalupe, where he took to drying of figs, and the sun finding him round and withered, mistook him for an overgrown fig, so parched him up, that his soul left him for want of moisture, and he lay three days after he was dead in the orchard, with the black birds about him singing his funeral dirges, for want of better chaplains.

I can give no farther account of my ancestors by my father's side, but that I suppose they were descended from Mount Thabor : because their name was Taborda ; but those who desire to know of them may search the Heralds Office, where they will find them with the ancient families of the Clodbeaters, who are lineally descended from Adam. My kindred on my mother's side, are so well known, that the very boys bear witness they are of the ancient race of Arabs, who lorded it in Spain above seven hundred years, and still speak broken Spanish after the manner of their relations in Barbary. Thus far have I gone in the talkating pedigree of Prateapace Justina, but I exceed them all, for they prated when their profession required it, whereas my clack is the perpetual motion, and never lies still.

But to come to my mother's genealogy, her father was a barber, who had spent many royals in scurvy cuts of monkeys and cats, old scutcheons, and painted paper, to paste about his shop, for want of hangings. His head was not overwell furnished, but for other necessaries as basons, blood-

ing dishes, and such utensils he did not want. He never trimmed a man but he had a story ready at his finger's ends. His morning exercise was a lesson on a guitar, and he would sometimes put by a good beard to trim his dapple. All his delight was in plays, and it cost him his life; for going to Malaga to act a scurvy part, a tile fell from the top of a house which put an end to his representations.

My Great Grandfather was by trade a Vizor-maker, and lived at Plasencia, where he got considerably by hiring out of masks, morrice-bells, and such like trumpery for Fairs and country Sports. But he made the most of his morrice-bells, which he lent out to country dancers, for the poor simple Clod-pates, being always in haste to carry away their clothes to make themselves fine, were apt to misreckon, and when they came back, being at leisure, they paid for all. His wife, at spare times, sold mead, which she happening to give him to drink too cold, when he was in a heat, his soul took pet to be so used, and withdrew into the other world.

My mother's great grandfather played upon a Tabor and Pipe at Malpartida, a town near Plasencia, and yet no more like that city than if it stood in China. Upon great festivals they thought themselves happy who could secure him; for he would make a tabor speak, though not all he knew, for that might have cost him dear. All the wenches strove to be in his favour, because under the colour of piping, he was an excellent match-maker. No part of him was idle, for whilst he played with his mouth, his eyes promoted matrimony, and in the turn of a hand he would spit out half a score

brides and bridegrooms. The truth is, there was not so much disturbance about weddings in those days as there is at present, when there is such abundance of impertinence requisite to marry to the purpose. To give him his due, this ancestor of mine might better have been called the beadle to weddings, than a taborer. This the good man did to get a living, and provide for his children, as he did ; for he left them a tabor full of farthings and half-pence, which in those days, was a considerable treasure ; and to secure it against all attacks, he hung it on a high pole, like an honourable trophy, telling everybody he did not take it down, because it was intailed on the family by his father, who had followed the same trade, and therefore he honoured it, and though old and patched would not take a hundred new ones for it. This good man died unfortunately ; for as he was walking in state on a great festival, at the head of above a hundred pipers, that then used to meet at Plasencia, playing on his tabor and pipe, an upstart gentleman, whom he had disappointed of an intrigue with a girl of about eighteen, in revenge, gave him such a blow on the end of his pipe, that he struck it into his throat, where it stuck till a vintner drew it out with all his might and main, but so that the poor taborer never piped more, but he died in his calling, which was much impaired by his loss, for there never was the fellow of him since in all that country.

## CHAPTER II.

### *Her Father and Mother's Excellent Qualities, and the Instructions they gave her.*

MY father and mother did not think fit to follow such stirring employments as their ancestors had done, because they were both tun-bellied, and therefore judged it better to get their living in a sedentary way. Accordingly they set up an inn at Mansilla, a town in the kingdom of Leon, on the road to, and near the city of that name. My father would not open his inn till his daughters were grown up lusty wenches, and fit for service, considering that the business of an inn is enough to break a woman's back, unless she has some to assist her. When he opened we were three sisters, like the three graces, clever girls, that understood business, well agreed in publick, but among ourselves every one drew her own way. They were no fools, and yet I was sharper than both of them. I saw into all their contrivances, but my tricks were mere legerdemain to them. My brothers went abroad to seek their fortunes, and took to the army; only little Nicky stayed at home, an ingenuous lad, who knew how to get sixpence clear when they sent him but for a groat's worth of wine; the case was, he would sell the



pitcher for twopence, and pretend he had broke it and spilt the wine. He was kept at home to water guest's horses and mules, and to run on errands at night, which we girls were not allowed to do, by reason there were country gallants in the town, who chiefly haunted the streets where the inns are, because the choice women belonged to them. I remember, I took a fancy one night to fetch wine from a tavern that was near the church-yard, and for my diligence my father measured my back with the pitcher I carried, and because I pleaded I had commission so to do from my mother, he took the length and breadth of her ribs with the same pot, leaving us both in such a condition, that we smelt strong of plaisters and searcloths for half a year after. However my good father made amends for all this severity, with his wholesome advice. I shall never forget the speech he made us the day he opened; the Lord bless him, wheresoever he is, for his ingenuity, I could almost weep to think of it, but that I am not now at leisure to shed tears, but I will give you his harrangue, which was as follows. Children, take heed that the License\* for keeping an inn, and the rate set upon provender, be always hung up very high and fast; let no chest, bench, chair, or joint-stool be near it, or any other thing to climb or rest on, lest any scoundrel presume to reckon without his host, and to examine by the set rate whether I exact for my goods, for by Jove, I did not get my money by roar-

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\* None can keep an inn in Spain without a license. All Provender is rated by the magistrates.

ing. Let no man examine my conscience and put me into a sweat. Never measure the barley\* in sight, but be sure to keep the bin in a close dark room, and she that measures the corn must always turn her back upon him that asks for it. Let the measures always lie in the bin, that you may have done measuring before they can turn them about : you need not keep the streak to strike the peck within the bin, for if you understand business, your hand will do the work. If you should happen to be in haste, or that the barley is dear, or else, through zeal for your father's profit, you shall think fit to measure at will, or to strike by the eye, you may freely do so, for your hands are better than a half peck, and your eyes worth a thousand streaks. Therefore I charge you always to keep the barley in an obscure place, and never to hold up the top of the bin with anything but your heads, that they may not have the opportunity of peeping into it ; for it is not fit than when an honest girl has the measure in her hand, any man should pry into her dimensions. Besides, that a half peck is not bound to be infallible, or ever to stand upright, for it will lie as well on its side as on the bottom. When barley happens to be dear, you know a little soaking makes it swell, and 'tis ne'er the worse, but rather the better for cattle that are troubled with the lampas ; and still the inn keeper thrives, if it passes, and he is not taken in the fact. When it is dear, or whether it be dear or cheap,

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\* The cattle there eat barley instead of oates.

is all one, do not fail to have some chaff at hand to mix with the barley ; for if they believe it, that is the flower, if not 'tis the husk of the barley, let them e'en blow and fan it as old women do on the threshing floors ; besides, if the beasts are good they eat all, and if they are bad the worst is too good for them. When a guest asks you, Landlady, what have you to eat ? I charge you on the duty of your employment, that you never say you have anything they ask for, though it be in the house, but make a difficulty of getting it, for every man sets a rate upon what he finds in the house. When you bring what they ask for, tell them you were forc'd to beg and pray for it at a neighbour's ; that the neighbour may be paid for the meat, and you for the sauce and kindness. Be witty with the guests, but do not use multiplicity of words ; I will not prescribe impossibilities, but whoever you talk with, keep your distance, for a woman is best afar off, being like a wax image, a picture not dry, a tinsel garment, puff paste, a dead body that has lain many ages, which as soon as you touch them are put out of shape, spoiled and fall to nothing. Show your wit and diligence, and break your jests before eating, for travellers draw all their bills upon the meal, and when the table is taken away, you may reckon the bank is broke. You must observe the first or second dish that is brought up, whether they send your mother any thing ; for if they do not, you may plead she is with child, and longs ; for any man, though never so hard of belief, seeing her belly, will believe it, and none will be so uncharitable as to refuse her, for fear of destroying an infant : do

not you fear they will question it, for everybody credits a likely girl ; nay, they will believe you, though you should tell them I am with child. But lest you should complain that all the advice I give is for my own ends, mind me, when you wait at table pull a hard crust out of your pocket and fall a mumbling of it, which will move them to invite you to something better ; yet if this trick should fail, because there are some at table only mind their knitting, call in a female neighbour, on pretence of selling something, that may move them to make you a present, whether you need it or not ; always, provided you and she are to go snacks, and every dog to have his day. When you have tried all your wiles, and nothing more is to be got, let the poor come in, but first those that do any service about the house, and if these do not succeed, you are allowed to plead for them. When anything is given you, do not wait for more, for it is looked upon as a small miracle to see liberality repeated. As soon as ever you have fleeced them withdraw, and do as the cat does, who, when she has caught a mouse, looks not immediately for another, till she has aired herself a while. Vanish that moment, do no let them think you are mercenary, or that you pay rent for what is given gratis. As soon as one is gone, let the next come in and use the same slights till all is over. She that uncovers the table must look very demure, lest they take her as an hostage for the other that fled. By my advice she that has received least must take away, and look very peevish and out of humour, which some will be-

lieve to proceed from jealousy, others from envy ; and if any thing of little value be given her, she must not take it, but say, pray, sir, leave it on the table, quickly, for I am in haste to be gone about my business, and will give it to some poor body; then let her wrap it up in the cloth, for all that is in it is her due. Snatch up all you find upon the cloth, lest some servant come and prevent you. For the better managing of this point, you must contrive to keep the servants employed in something that may please them, whilst you gather in your harvest, for whatever you convey out of sight is all your own.

When the cloth is taken away, generally guests use to break their jests, and make themselves merry at a poor wenches cost. This is the time of danger, fly girls from all wit upon a full stomach, as soon as the clacks begin to run loud take to your heels, and if you find them move hands or feet, talk loud, which is as good as calling for help; yet if that will not do, look out and cry Nicky, Nicky, and I shall be sure to hear, and come in, looking as demure as a whore at a christening. Fear nothing, for when they see me come in so grave, all will be hushed. My girls, if only one of you happens to be at home, she must act all the three parts ; before eating she must fawn like a lap-dog ; at dinner be as sharp as a grey-hound ; and when all is done, fly like a hare.

I charge you honour all things that come into the house, I do not mean the men, for you must dance as they pipe, and treat them as they deserve ; and everyone of them knows

how to commend and extol himself, but you must honour those things which cannot talk, and stand up for themselves. If you have a dead cat, honour it, saying it is a hare; call an old cock a capon, a young rook a pigeon, a trout a salmon, and a salmon a sturgeon. Never say the fruit grows about the town, for that is debasing of it; but that the trees came from Japan, and are kept up by art in the King's garden. Never grudge titles of honour, but call the clown worshipful, and the squire right honourable. When you make a pie, be sure it be large enough, that what you put into it may swell, and if it does not, still the shell represents the bulk of the content. Never say your linen is foul, for that is scandalous in Spain. Since it is the custom for guests to feel whether the sheets are stiff, to discover whether they are clean, as if it were the fashion to starch them; do you always take care to sprinkle and put them in the press, which will make them handle as if they came fresh from the laundress. I allow you by day to go fetch wine, and run of other errands to public places; but be not like a maid I had, who, when I sent her to the next pastry-cook, went to the farther end of the town, and if I chid her, answered, This is all the thanks I have for waiting to have the pasties piping hot out of the oven. I once gave her half a piece of eight to bring what she thought fit for dinner, and she laid out all the money in medlars; when I found fault, and asked her, how she could bring such trash for dinner. She answered, Did you not bid me bring what I thought fit? and this is what I liked best. Do you contrive better than

that silly wench. When any guest bids you fetch him wine, ask him aloud, how much he will have, for he will call for more than he wants, if he sees a great pot, or is afraid of being thought niggardly; and they are in the right, for if the wine is good there is no danger it should be lost, and if bad, it serves for sallads. They are in the right, I say, and God bless them for it, because whatever a man saves at home, serves to honour him abroad, and to content a poor wench that takes pains to please him. Be sure one of you always stand at the door very tight and neatly dressed, for a handsome maid at the door of an inn is the best call, especially in the evening by candle light. You must take particular care to be diligent when the guests talk of playing, for that is a certain revenue. An inn keeper, who was my friend, used to say, that cards, dice, and box-money, were the best friends to an inn. I have a pack by me that has been in play above forty times, and never came back without half a piece of eight. Though they be never so poor, who ask for cards, furnish them; let it not be said that you despise the poor. I must confess, I heard an ingenious fellow say, that the inventor of cards allowed but three coated ones in a suit, which are king, queen, and knave, to denote that none but princes, great ladies, and sharpers ought to play at them: But a stander-by replied, good Mr. Numskull, don't you observe there are diamonds, hearts, clubs and spades, in the suits? Why, those, let me tell you, denote all sorts of people, rich and poor, gentlemen and peasants. What do you think of the answer? It was I that made it. Do you

therefore deprive no man of his right ; let all men play with the same cards, till there be a proclamation to command all great men to pay a crown a pack for them, and the poor two royals.

By this you may guess what a master my father was at his trade, and since you have a specimen of him, it is fit you understand what a spouse he had. I don't question but you'll bless yourself when you hear what a mother I had : but how can I help it? I did not make her. To say the truth, she was more sparing of her tongue than her good husband ; we were to know everything she would have done by her looks, for her eyes were the perpetual motion and spoke for her. She was wonderful thoughty, and ever diving into our imaginations. I was obliged to her because she pretended to love me better than my sisters, and she had reason so to do, for I kept all her secrets, and some were of such a nature, that had my father known the least of them, he had broke her legs, and, perhaps, had done her no wrong ; but I was never a blab of my tongue, like others, who are so big with a secret that they can never rest till they are delivered of it. Her charity was so great that she would take the meat from her own mouth to give it to those she never saw before. The truth is, they paid dearly for it, because she did not stand for price, though it was never so high. She dealt much in pies, because it was impossible to know what was in them, scraps pass for gibbets, and jackdaws for pigeons, and yet no body could lay anything to her charge, or accuse her, as they did the country fellow who cut out his ass and sold it in



the shambles, and when the people went to his house for more meat, a young son he had, cried, The devil go with you, do you think my father has an ass to cut out every day? None had a better way of borrowing half a beast's provinder, and giving it a note to receive it at the next inn. As for the poor she took so much compassion on them, that she would not let one come into the house, because she not endure to see them starve for want of money; and to give her her due, she could have wished that all the guests who came into her house had been very rich, and able to show their generosity. She never dressed any meat without exacting a duty from it, or so much as roasted a fowl but she picked a taste out of it, though she were fain to scorch and daub over the place to disguise it. She promoted frigasies and hashed meats, because in them the defects would not be discovered, and all the scraps went to the making up of the dish. Nor was she over curious in dressing or seasoning them, alledging that the guests always took the will for the deed, and supposed it rather want of knowledge than affection. Then they eat the less, and cry, Here, pretty maid, take away, lay that by for your own dinner. My good mother advised us to look very demure and innocent, and assure them, We had spared no cost in seasoning of it, which, if a man was anything generous, could not but move him to drop a small piece. It would be endless to set down all her slights of hand, and the excellent instructions she gave us.

This was the inheritance I received from my father and mother. Such as I received, I deal out, and I teach what

I learnt. The eagles make their young ones look steadfastly on the sun, because their eyes are moist and weak, and the sun dries and strengthens them, so that they afterwards discover their prey from a prodigious height, and stooping, on a sudden fall down upon it like a thunderbolt. My mother did so by me, she cleared my tender eyes that I might discover my prey at a great distance, and seize it, though never so remote. The truth is, I was an apt scholar, and took everything off hand. There are many that starve themselves to have their children well taught at schools; but my parents had no other learning but griping and sharpening, and that they could teach us without cost, better than any other. I will tell you a tale to this purpose. One who had been a scurvy soldier, resolving to get his bread at an easier rate, put himself into a more sanctified habit, with a large greasy flapping hat, a little precise band, an antiquated coat, a threadbare waistcoat, a slovenly pair of breeches, and slouching shoes; he looked down, shrugged his shoulders, talked little and low, and moved by clock work. Under this disguise he crept in to be pedagogue and tutor to some lads, cheating them all of their learning. The person he choused most was a gentleman, who entrusted him with a son to breed up, telling him, he charged him to take special care of his child's education, because he was unruly; and to teach him all he knew that was good. The honest preceptor promised so to do, and was as good as his word, for the third day after he instructed his pupil after this manner. Mind me, my lad, do you take me for one of the

seven wise men of Greece † If you do, you are deceived. Do you think all is gold that glitters? If you do, you mistake. Do you think 'tis the habit that makes the monk? If you do, you are wrong. Do you think I am what I appear to be? If you do, you are out. By the Lord Harry, would I hang myself to inform you, I know nothing that is good, but only two tricks; the one peaceable, the other martial: the peaceable is to look out sharp, try all, pump the cully, and spare none; by the same token here's the pack of cards. The martial is of the same sort; take the sword, keep a stiff arm, look to your point, stand fast. The pupil made so great an improvement, that within a very few days, they both ran away together to Seville, living, along the road, on what they stole, and at Seville they stole what they lived on. Thus, reader, you may see, every man teaches what he knows, though every man does not know what he teaches.

### CHAPTER III.

*The strange Death of her Father and Mother ; their funerals ;  
and her first Ramble on a Pilgrimage.*

It is an old saying, that people die as they live ; bating that they live by breathing, and die for want of breath. I will not instance Jezzabel, and other stories of Holy Writ, because it is not fit to soar so high, for fear of falling. I can make bold with Diomedes, King of Thrace, who may serve turn, for he used to feed his horses with the flesh of conquered kings, and Hercules treated his dogs with his flesh. Herodias is also for my purpose, for she dancing and capering, ordered a head to be cut off, and sunk herself as she was dancing, and had her head cut off by the ice. My father always took special care to foist in a good proportion of chaff among the barley he measured out for the horses, as he had instructed us to do at the first opening of his Inn. One day he charged me to lade in the chaff more bountiful than usual, and I, like a dutiful child, was not at all sparing. It was an unlucky thought, for my father did not observe that we were over-heard by a sharp north-country gentleman, who stood by the door, and for whose horses the barley was to be so well powdered. They fell to words, and my father being out of countenance, threw the helve after the hatchet.

The gentleman being a person of honour, drew, not his sword, but a half-peck, for there were enough of them in the house, and gave him such a stroke with it on the pole, that his soul flew out into the measure, and the body dropped down for want of it. Thus you may see he lived by the half-peck and died by it. This I may say of him, that he died like a bird, and was so loth to be troublesome, or expensive, that all his sickness did not cost a groat. The gentleman, showed he was well bred, for as soon as my father was down, he begged his pardon, declaring he meant no harm, and giving him much more courtly language ; and had not my father been dead, he could never have justified not returning him his compliments. The gentleman was courteous and generous, and perceiving his mistake, to comfort us, gave every one in the family three pieces of eight, and twelve to my lady mother ; taking notice how patiently she bore that misfortune till she saw how he would behave himself towards her and us. His money, and my mother's commands obliged us to give out, that no body had hurt my father, or touched a hair of his head ; which was true, because he was bald, but that he had tumbled down the stairs, as he was wont to do at other times. This account prevented all farther enquiry, so we put him into his winding-sheet, which was so bad that his skin appeared through it in several places, and my mother and I had some words about it. We had thoughts of going into mourning, but forbore, because my mother being fat, thought it would not become her. All that afternoon she did not receive any compliments of con-

dolence, alleging, that her husband was in the house still, and she would not see company. So we shut up our doors, like true mourners, and though we had been inclinable to have watched by the dead body, we could not, because as soon as the north-country gentleman saw the doors shut, he invited us to a good supper; which my mother, considering we were by ourselves, accepted. The truth is, she said, Sir, we are many of us, you must either treat all or none. The gentleman was honourable, he consented; we all withdrew and left a little dog we had to watch my father. The devil of a cur smelling the roast meat, began to bark and howl to be let out, and finding nobody answered, went to complain to his master, who taking no notice, he thought fit to whisper in his ear, which being deaf he gnawed it off, and lest the other should complain nibbled it clear away, and some part of the face with it. To say the truth, when I came in and saw him so scarrified, it moved me to compassion, and I had thought my mother might be touched with some such feeling, but that I heard her say, A pox of so much mortality, where shall I find a needle and thread now to sew up this dead body. We patched up the shroud the best we could, but there was no mending of the flesh, and so we resolved to bury him peacably. My mother made no more disturbance than if she had been the dead corpse; and the gentleman told her, that if she offered to open her mouth, he would impeach her for having thrown her husband to the dogs. She knew what was best for her. What could we do? He was dead; the loss was not great; we all knew

what was to be done as well as he, and we could not well spare my mother ; the gentleman was civil, my father provoked him ; and had we prosecuted him for the murder it had only helped to enrich the lawyers, make ourselves poor, and loose the pieces of eight he gave us without any trouble. All that remained was to lay him under ground, desiring the earth, as it conceals so many gross faults, committed by doctors and apothecaries, to hide one small oversight of a gentleman, and a half-peck.

We cried but very little at the funeral, as being altogether unprovided for it ; besides that, my mother's eyes were naturally dry, and we could not weep unless Mammy began, and so it went on in course ; and though she had began, we might, perhaps, have failed keeping time with her, being busy looking that our long veils were not dagged, for it was winter then, and we had to restore the veils to the owners as soon as the show was over. In short, we carried the corpse to church faster than he would have gone himself if alive, and coming home, all things were right again. I believe my mother, concerned to see her husband overcome by death, had some thoughts of revenging him, but that merciless enemy was too hard, and stopped her breath, after this manner.

She was a great lover of broiled meat, especially of black puddings and steaks. One evening, spying some puddings half broiled, and a dish of steaks on the gridiron, she commanded them to come down, they pleaded they were not ready, and unfit for service ; which provoked her to use

violence, whilst they cried out for help in a doleful manner to their master, who was a fellow that dealt in bacon at Valladolid, and being then absent heard not their lamentation. My mother incensed at their obstinacy, took them down by main force, and committed a considerable part to her belly, the rest of them quaking for fear. By this time their master came to their assistance, and she, for fear of a discovery, crammed in half a yard of pudding, which being thrust down too hastily, stopped up the passage, so that there was no moving forwards or backwards, nor could she speak or breathe. The bacon-monger began to enquire after his provender, but she could return no answer ; and the best of it was, that a long piece of pudding hung out at her mouth, so that she looked like a bear in heraldry, armed and langued. We called out for help to remove the pudding, and the bacon-man's servants were for ramming it down with a spit, to revenge the wrong she had done them ; but he being of a milder disposition, thought better to open the passage with a long pointed horn. In fine, she was so tormented that her soul took flight ; and I could not but admire how it got out when the way so close stopped. It was a saying of a notorious house-breaker, that a thief's soul will not get out unless drawn with a rope ; and my mother, who had no small skill in that profession, dispatched hers by the help of a yard of pudding.

I bewailed my mother's death in moderation, for my eyes were stopped as well as her throat, and the tears would not out. It is likely that was a dry season, and the eyes had no



moisture, what few tears appeared being like heat drops. No wonder, I was sensible I could now make a shift without a mother, who at my father's funeral taught me to be sparing of money and tears. The smock I put her on had but one sleeve, to hide which defect, I thrust both her arms into it, nor was it too long lest it might entangle her feet. My sisters wept sparingly, because I being the eldest they all took example by me, and every one observed her turn. We kept time exactly, and as one came up the other went down, like buckets in a well. What troubled me most was, that the house smelt of black puddings a month after; and all the way they carried her to church, the people had nothing else in their noses. We took little care of praying for her soul, believing the poor parish-children we gave bread to would ease us of that duty; for we distributed a peck loaf among an hundred of them that came from all parts, concluding that was a sufficient discharge. As for the money there was in the house, we did not think fit to bestow one cross of it on the church, considering it was ill gotten, and therefore not fit to be bestowed on God, lest it should be said, that we stole the sheep, and gave him the skin.

The true lamentation began among us, when my brothers returned out of Italy all in rags, and without any shame took all the power out of our hands, and rifled the treasure, searching every corner of the house, as if they had been plundering of infidels, for fear anything might be concealed. We had no other defence but our tears, which then broke loose, having been stopped before, for being young beginners

we were not provided with bullies of our own ; had it happened at this time, I could have matched them with a dozen bravoës that would have spit fire ; but my sisters did not stand by me, and from that time we never set our horses together.

My father and mother being now dead, and my brothers in possession of what they had left, I laid hold of this opportunity to go about a saint-erring from one pilgrimage to another, on pretence of praying for the souls departed ; but in reality, in hopes of making my own advantage. The first I undertook, after my father's death, was to Arenillas, of which I will give a particular account, because of some remarkable passages in it. Arenillas is a town near Cisneros, which is a liberty within itself, where an arch knave said, he had asked the devil, whether he understood its privileges and immunities ? Who answered, he had spent a whole whole night in perusing them, and was never the wiser. I set out on this pilgrimage in the evening, and got to Arenillas the next day at noon, where I was well pleased to see the plain filled with country fellows in their clean shirts, which are the greatest gaiety in that country. The first thing I did, was to send my modesty a hundred miles on an errand ; and having cast an eye over all the company, began to fancy myself in another world. Having observed there was dancing at a distance, I could not contain myself, but began to tune my castanets before I got out of the cart, making them rattle, and giving half a score skips in my chariot. This was such a natural impulse, and so sudden and unthought

for, that when I came to myself, and reflected that the castanets had sounded, had I not seen they were in my hands, I durst have sworn they had played of themselves, as the famous bell of Belilla, in the kingdom of Aragon, is reported to ring itself without any help, before any extraordinary accidents. I had heard, that when two instruments are exactly tuned alike, the one being played on, the other will answer without being touched; and now found that my castanets being nicely tuned to answer any tabor, they flew out and rattled of their own accord; like the fool at Plasencia, who being hid under the bed by a lady, as soon as her gallant came in, started out, and cried, Here am I. A cousin of mine who drove the cart, and loved dancing as well as another, fearing the castanets might frighten his young mules, reprov'd me for playing; saying, I was little concerned for the death of my father and mother, that I could so merrily clatter my snappers. Had my modesty been about me at this time, I might have been out of countenance but having sent it on an errand, as I said before, I snapped him up very short, saying, I hope my father's soul is in heaven, and God keep him there, for he was such a prying busy-body, that I don't question but, if he might, he would come to observe every motion of ours as well as his nephew. What a noise is here about a stroke of a castanet, and all this while I believe you dream and fancy the ringing of the the bells to church are castanets. By my troth, quoth a master of the noble science of defence, who stood by, it is pleasant to talk of ringing to church at this time, when the priest is at his last prayer, and hurrying it over to be gone

to a wedding-dinner. For all his prating we went on to the church, where we took what was left ; and though it was but little, I prayed for the souls of my relations, for the church, the Royal Family, Peace and Unity of Christian Princes, &c. It is true, my prayer was short ; for I thought few words were best.

Coming out of the church, I walked through a lane of clowns, drawn up on both sides to admire me, for I was very fine, and made a great show. I had a large pair of coral beads, every one of them big enough for a tennis-ball ; my short waist-coat was open before, so that my shift appeared at my breast and round my waist, though not very fine, yet stitched with black, and looked gay ; my girdle glittered in the sun as it had been all silver ; my red coat was so gaudy, it drew the eyes of all the company ; and I fancying myself much admired, walked as stiff as if a stake had been drove through me, and as proud as a horse with bells. I beheld all my attendance with scorn ; for we women are like spaniels, the worse we are used, the more we love ; and the more we are courted, the more we slight. Among the rest, a fellow that sold bacon, and himself as fat as a hog, clung close to my side, without speaking a word for a long time, but every now and anon would cast a pair of great goggling eyes on me, and with every glance a belch. At length he broke silence, saying, Let us breakfast together, Mistress Justina, I have bread and wine, bacon and hung-beef. I answered, Hey, Ree, Woe. He replied, Who do you talk to, forsooth ? To my ass, said I, that is close by

me. He believed it. There was no getting him away ; nothing would remove him ; he clung as close as a bear ; and whatever I could say the fool would not leave me. Finding no way to shake him off, I said, Show yourself like a gentleman, walk about ; see what this place affords ; and buy me a curious jeat ring, and then you shall see what I will do for you. Thus I sent him a ring-hunting, whilst I hasted to hide myself from him for ever after. I never met with such a numskull lover ; he had not one word to express his passion ; all his courtship was nothing but belches, which might have turned the strongest stomach. I am quite ashamed that such a calf should take a liking to me, I had rather he should have slighted and found fault with me ; like a gentleman who quarrelled with a railing foul-mouthed fellow, saying to him, I have been told you find fault with all the honest men of this town, and talk ill of them, and that I alone am in your favour, and well spoken of by you. Now I vow to the Lord, that if ever you speak well of me again, I will make an example of you, for I am ashamed to be in favour with one that dislikes so many worthy persons. So that it troubles me to think that such an ignoramus should have had a kindness for me. In short, I made haste to abscond, and got under our cart, with the rest of my kindred.

#### CHAPTER IV.

*The Feast under the Cart. The Rape committed on Justina by the Scholars ; and how she worsted them all.*

HAVING shaken off my clodpate gallant, and being with my relations under the pavillion of our cart, we seated ourselves on the carpet of grass. I had a parcel of envious she cousins with me, who thought they could never be too kind to their he-cousins, and they treated them accordingly ; but I scorned them all, and made them respect me ; for I ever found women purchase that cheapest which they value least. However, I thought fit to let my clack run, and ply them with witticisms, though I was much in the wrong, for these are all lost among kindred and clowns. We fell upon the gammon of bacon, and legs of mutton stuffed with cloves and garlick, and washed them down, plentifully with wine ; for in my country the girls take it naturally, before they are well weaned. At first we were all hushed, like gossips at a christening ; but when the juice of the grape had warmed our skulls, we were all talkers and no hearers. The truth is, I struck up first, or else it had been a silent meeting, and put abundance of riddles to them. Among the rest I asked them, What eatable thing it was which was all flesh, and yet

the skin of it was cut before the flesh? They stood mute, and I told them it was a gizzard of a fowl, at which they stared as if they had been thunder-struck. Then I asked, What it was that when most loaded weighed least? They were all aground, till I told them it was a man's body, which when best fed is lighter than when hungry and starving. This was most surprising and wonderful to them, and they applauded every word I said, laying me upon the back. I put many more questions to them, which they could make no more of, than if I had talked Arabic, which heightened my pride, and raised their envy, till they foiled me with my own weapon; for thinking to come over two of the company, the one for eating, and the other for drinking, I shot a bolt that retorted upon me. I dare lay a wager, said I, you cannot tell me why Apelles painted a dog by Ceres, the goddess of corn, and an ape by Bacchus, the god of wine. One of my female cousins, who had heard me unriddle this before, being thus armed against me, to exercise her envy, answered, A mighty piece of wisdom, indeed, I cannot forbear any longer to stop your mouth, since you take such a liberty of prating, for we can talk as well as you, but we are wiser than to let our tongues run so fast. The dog and the ape are two creatures Nature framed for the diversion of man, and therefore they are allotted to Ceres the goddess of corn, and Bachus the god of wine, to denote that when people have eaten and drank they are fit to divert themselves, for as the poet says :—

Unless bread and wine invite us,  
Sports and women don't delight us.

I was quite dashed to be thus taken in my own snare, yet would have been well pleased had this disappointment come single, but it is a true saying, That crosses never come alone; for as soon as my kinswoman had thus mortified me, a kinsman took up the cudgels, and said, I perceive, Justina, you have a double meaning in your questions, and make a faint at the heels when you strike at the head, and therefore I must tell you, that if any one here is an ape it is yourself, for you have the bottle by your side that represents Bacchus; and you women have the qualities of that god, which are to turn our brains topsy-turvy, and us out of our senses. Besides that, there is never a man of us but would willingly be your lap-dog, and you females are mere apes, always skipping, dancing, and making faces. I was so confounded at these repartees, that for a long time I had not one word to say for myself, and then every fool that could not say *Bo to a goose*, had a fling at me, and laughed till they cackled. The noise was so great, that a mule which was tied to the cart, starting, had like to have put an end to their mirth for ever; but by good luck for us all, the rope that held her broke. My kinsmen run after to catch her, and I leaving my kinswomen, struck into a ring where there was dancing, and being taken out as soon as I appeared, made a shift to tire half a score of the ablest scholars who were come to the festival from a neighbouring college.

As night drew near, I discovered a gang of seven scholars in a ridiculous disguise, dancing and singing. These were well known all the country about for a parcel of the rankest



knaves, within many miles of them, and therefore called themselves the champions. The chief of them was a long thin fellow, whom they called the bishop, and his dress represented it in a comical manner, as the others did, those of arch-deacons and prebends. By the bishop's side was another scholar clad like a scoundrel strumpet. They had stole my kindmen's cart, and sometime rode on it; otherwhiles, stopping, come down, and danced some antick dances, singing all the while; and then pretending to carry away by force the scoundrel that represented the wench, he sang in a falset, and the burthen of his song was:—

I've gained the prize for dancing all this day,  
And now, alas, the scholars force me away.

Then the chorus repeated the same, in such dismal manner, as if a woman had really been ravished. This they had over so long till the company being tired, and night drawing on, every gang began to make homewards, but I, who had lost my cart and carters, and was no less wearied than the rest, stepped aside, and sat me down to rest on a bank of thyme, and other sweet herbs. The scholars, who wanted nothing else, made towards me, and getting me in the middle, put me on a ragged cassock, and a greasy cap, and so hurried me away into their cart, singing all the while, as they had done before:—

I've gained the prize of dancing all this day,  
And now, alas, the scholars force me away.

So that all who saw me concluded I was the same counterfeit wench they had seen before ; and though I cried out amain, none took any notice of me, for all the scholars raised their voices, and drove away the cart till we lost sight of the village and all the company. I knew I was not the first woman that a rape had been committed upon ; but those others had bullies of kinsmen, that revenged their quarrel ; and I was satisfied, that though the scholars had gone through stitch with their jest, my brothers would have put up the wrong for a bushel of oats. Thus the cart drove away with me, till we came into a small plain beyond a little wood, where the scholars alighted. Saluting their bishop and his lady with loud huzzas. And leaving me alone with him in the cart, to be instructed for his use, I began to quake for fear, and the scoundrel observed it, cried, What are you afraid of, Justina ? Am not I with you ? A special guard of eunuchs, thought I : But Necessity is the mother of Ingenuity : I set my wits to work, and you will see how they brought me off. Perceiving myself alone with him, and that he held me fast, I put on a bold countenance, and bespoke him thus : Hands off, good Mr. raking bishop, I thought you knew me better. Fair and softly goes far with me, you must not think to catch old birds with chaff. The knave observing I talked so big, was somewhat disturbed to be disappointed where he expected such an easy conquest ; and yet it pleased him that he had met with his match, and therefore changing his note, he said, Had I thought you have answered me in cant, I could have furnished your im-

puddence with matter till to morrow ; but since you discover such ability, I do engage you shall be bishopess of all the jilting crew. Sentence is past, and nothing now remains but execution. Finding he began to come to the point, I bristled up and answered, Not so neither, I appeal, stand off Mr. Scoundrel, do you think that my maidenhead, which has been kept so chearily these eighteen years is to be lost in a cart ? No, it shall not be thus disposed of without any ceremony ; but if you have a mind to it, call all your rakes about you, let us first drink to its good journey, and have a merry bout at parting ; and if you will not consent, believe me, we women have tallons as well as cats, which will defend what we don't care to part with ; besides that, there can be no pleasure where there is force. This calmed my bishop, who presently whistled like a highwayman, at which his gang came about him, crying, Long live the bishop and his clergy ; which I seconded with an Amen, and a peal of my castanets, the better to disguise my design.

My Paris thinking it did not become him to be a married bishop, not being a protestant, threw off his cassock, laid hold of a club for a sceptre, made a throne of their cloaks, and a back to it of a vast pair of horns ; then commanding silence he made a canting speech, ordering them to disperse into the neighbouring villages, and there to steal all the hens, geese, turkeys, wine, and bread, they could meet with, to celebrate the festival of the conquest he was like to gain over Justina, who, as yet, he declared was untouched as she came into the world. The words were no sooner out of his

mouth, but the sharpers vanished, leaving me again alone with their infernal monarch, who presently began to tickle and curry me, whilst I, to divert him, told abundance of country tales, and all the stories I had heard out of old romances, all which he applauded, but would fain have been at something else. By this time the sun began to show his fiery face, and in came all our thieving gang, some loaded with poultry, others with bread, wine, and wooden dishes, and all the implements fit for the nuptials of a whore and rogue. The provision was laid down and dressed in a trice, but all the while I took care to send the cup about, pretending to drink myself, and making my mock-bishop pledge me, though against his will. They sat down and fed like so many cormorants, and at every bit I plied them with a health, till I perceived my bishop lisped and clipped his words. At length, having eaten and drank, they all got up by command, and made towards the cart, not in a direct line, for they reeled and staggered that the broadest street would scarce have held them. My bishop had twenty falls before he got to it, and I took care to help him when he was going. With much difficulty they all mounted, and fell asleep as soon as laid, only I was left awake to make my advantage of their lethargy. Having thus secured my keepers, I laid hold of the carter's whip, who was no better than the rest, and knocking him off the mule, left him on the hard ground motionless. We were not then above half a league from my town of Mansilla, and I knew the way perfectly well, so that putting on the mules at a round rate,

we soon got thither, and I entered triumphant in my chariot, with all my captives about me. There I set up my throat and cried, Help, help, here are the thieves that stole the cart and mules at Arenillas. My shrieks waked them, and in the consternation they tumbled one after another out of the cart ; and set a running full speed, till reflecting that they left their cloaks, hats, and other implements behind them, they had the boldness to return for them. I stood my ground like an Amazon, and as every one came up saluted him with the whip so dexterously, that he never more cared for coming within my reach. By this time all the boys and mob of our town were got about me, who pursued them with shouts and hideous cries, till they were all dispersed about the corn-fields, in such sort that they did not come together again till twenty days after. They happened to meet on a market-day at Villada, where, in most solemn manner, they deposed their bishop with so much raillery, that for mere shame he run the country, and made clear away, as I suppose, to Geneva, where he might safely rail at all bishops, till he could get himself into a good fat see, and then prove as orthodox as another.

For my part, I was attended home by all the small fry and rabble of the town, and found a most loving reception ; for though my brethren were none of the kindest, they delighted in all that looked like sharpening. To secure my reputation, I related the whole adventure, and the fame of it spread through all the country. I was quite tired with visits and congratulations ; but when I had rested myself, I began to



turn over a new leaf, and carry myself after another manner than I had before done. The topping men of the town began now to take notice of me ; they gave me the title of mistress, and lowered their caps down to my toes ; but whatsoever was the matter I could never take a fancy to any of my townsmen. Our Court of Aldermen adjudged me all the booty, as gotten in lawful war, and ordered that the owner of the mule should give me a good reward for bringing her home ; besides, they declared that my honour was unspotted, and that none ought to presume to think or say otherwise of me. But who can stop ill tongues ? I have since heard some twit me with my pilgrimage to Arenillas, alleging, That if I was not burnt, at least I was blacked ; as when a candle is stuck against a wall, it cannot fire, but still it smoots, but worse if it be clapped to fat meat, which melts as fast as the candle. Let them even talk on, the case is now altered, and I am well improved. All the country then called me The tricking-maid of the inn ; or, The Jilting Country Wench. But enough of this, let us breathe and begin with fresh matter.

CHAPTER V.

*She goes to Leon, puts a Cheat upon a Sharper ; Chouses  
an Hypocrite ; takes another Ramble ; Steals an  
Ass ; begs to buy a Locket ; & puts a foul  
trick upon her kinsman.*

THERE is no doubt but success puffs up the mind and raises the thoughts ; my late triumph made me conceit great matters of myself ; I began to set up for a lady, and all that looked like the country seemed below me. Time was when I liked a bumpkin in a pair of leather breeches and clouted shoes, better than the nicest beau about the court ; and would rather have accepted a treat of sullibub, or a present of a straw-hat, than a silk-gown, or a gold-locket. The greatest present I then thought could be made to a person of my degree, was a silver ring, and if it was gilt, I looked upon it as the highest generosity. But the world is altered, and I grew so lofty, that I valued a scarlet petticoat no more than if they had to be taken off of every hedge. Being thus enriched with the booty, and grown vain

with success, I resolved to quit the country life, and take one loose in the city of Leon, which is but three leagues from Mansilla. It was in the month of August, when there is a great festival in that city, and therefore I ordered some kindred of mine to provide me a gentle she ass to serve me for a palfrey : they brought me one curiously accoutred with saddle and bridle, and I seeing her so fine, resolved to trick myself up, and daub my cheeks. I sent for white and red, and being little skilled in that art, laid it on as if it had been with a trowel on a wall. This done I put on a scarlet petticoat, a satin waistcoat, a sky-colour mantle, with a velvet welt about it, and a close hood, and a fine veil along with me in my sleeve. Thus dressed, I mounted my steed and set forwards, with a wallet under me, stuffed with cold meat, bread, cucumbers, and a bottle of wine. We had not gone far, before some country wenches, my companions, began to rally me, upon the plastering of my face, which I endeavoured to defend as if it had been natural ; but the cheat was too visible, for the sweat began to trickle, and with it the red streams down my face, so that being fully convicted, I lighted at a little brook, and washed my face and neck, which made the water run white and red for a considerable space.

Abundance of scholars passed along the road in their way to the festival at Leon, but none of them had a word to say to me, they were so scared at the trick I had put upon their brethren, and though I hated all their profession, yet it



vexed me to see they took no notice of me ; for it is the nature of a woman to be fondest when most slighted. However, though the scholars shunned me, all the other passengers had a fling at me, and I was even with them all, except only a sort of half scholar and half ruffian, who struck me dumb, and went off with flying colours. He drew near, and eyed me all over as if he would have stared me through, and perceiving I was ready to let fly, took off his hat, making me a low bow, and began to commend my shape and mien. What could a woman say when she heard herself praised. He went on crying up some gay toys I had about my neck, and then asked me, what those two things were that hung at my beads? I told him they were two Agnus Deis. I vow to the Lord, answered he, they are no such thing. What do call them then? said I. Those are the seals, quoth he, of your —— constituting your coadjutrix to such a prebend at Leon. And he named a very noted one, which said, he clapped spurs to his horse and rode away, without giving me time to answer, and leaving me full of shame and confussion. I vowed revenge, and he carried it not with him either to heaven or hell, as you will find in the sequel. This fellow was a nephew to a rich man in that country, and himself a great sharper at gaming, and was going to Leon to employ his talent, knowing there would be gamesters at the festival. I took good notice to know him again, for he was marked, and had one eye-lid turned out, and red. I passed over the bridge they call Del Castro,

which is a good piece of antiquity, of plain stone, ill built, but well commended by the people of that city, who extol it as if it were one of the seven wonders of the world ; and yet it looks more like the ridge of a house than a bridge. Next I passed through the suburb of St. Anne, I will not describe it, for, in a word, it is a dismal place; but at length I came to St. Lazarus's Chapel, where I thought to have gone in to pray, but I spied a parcel of small altars with some little images of saints, so scurvily dressed, that they took away my devotion, and a small matter would do it with me. I went thence to the place where the gallows stand, about which there is a parcel of little houses like cottages, and at the windows were many gay things tricked up, and looking whom they could devour, for they were all the wild game of the city, ladies of pleasure, and dealers in french commodities. At length I entered the city at St. Anne's Gate, and took up at an inn adjoining to it, because I was quite tired, and could there see all the people that resorted to the city. The inn was better furnished than mine, but the maids of it had never been cut for the simples : I was informed that the scoundrel who put the jest upon me on the road, had taken up his lodging there, which pleased me to the heart, because I had vowed revenge. Having taken my ramble about the town, I returned to the inn, where the Spark was, and went directly into his room, as if it had been accidentally ; having put an Agnus Dei I had set in silver gilt, into my sleeve, which was so like another that hung to my beads set in gold, that it was hard to distinguish between them. I looked very

demure, and blushed at every word he said to me, which took so powerfully with him, that he presently offered to serve me with all he was worth, and I observing he was taken in my snare, said to him : I have been told, sir, that you were about pawning a gold crucifix you have for some money, and I come to offer you all I have, which is about 50 royals, without any pawn, for I know your Uncle is a worthy gentleman, and will pay me, if it were a greater sum. He answered, you have infinitely obliged me with your kind offer, but as for pawning my crucifix it is a great mistake, for I have 500 royals to spare at your service, and do not question but I shall carry off 1000 more out of this city, from among some young cullies. It is true I have a gold crucifix, and showed it to the maid of the house, asking her in jest what she would give me for it. I believe you, sir, quoth I, and don't question but you have the crucifix about you. I have so, said he, and began to open his breast to show it me, at which I drew back, and he pressed forward, showing me the crucifix, which I viewed narrowly, commended it in the highest manner, hoping he might chance to say it was at my service, but he was hard and took no notice ; nor had he the wit to answer, as a certain sharper used to do when the women praised anything he had, which is the same as begging it ; for then would he answer, I shall even put the greater value on it because you like it. Being disappointed of my expectation that way, I made several essays, as if I would speak, and were ashamed ; which he observing, bid me speak freely, swearing he would grant whatsoever I

ask, though it were half his estate. With this encouragement I said, sir, I would willingly part with this Agnus Dei set in gold, and if you design to part with that crucifix, I will change with you, and pay whatever yours weighs more than mine; or if my money will not hold out I will give my silk veil, and these strings of coral, or pawn them: Besides, sir, I believe you will trust me, as I was willing to trust you, for I am responsible. Scarce were the words out of my mouth before it took off the crucifix from about his neck, and put it into my hands: I made many grimaces, protesting I would not take it without giving the value. After much strife a goldsmith was sent for to price both the pieces, and he being well instructed by the sharper, valued mine at only 16 royals less than his, I took out the money and gave it to him but he forced it back, putting it into my sleeve. This led me to the second part of my cheat, which was that I told him, it was not fit for young maids to receive obligations which they could not requite, and therefore he must give me leave to make him a present. With that I asked him for the Agnus Dei he had of me in exchange, which he readily delivered, and I, turning about as if it had been for shame, clapped it into my sleeve, and pulled out the purse with the silver Agnus Dei gilt in it, which I showed him, and delivering it said, The purse cost four ducats, and was given me by one that was to have been my husband. He took it, and at the same time clapped four ducats into my hand for the purse, which was as much as that and the Agnus Dei in it

were worth, so that I saved my own money and carried off the crucifix clear.

The next day after this exploit, being in the Inn, I spied a cheating hypocritical hermit, who had lived near my town of Mansilla, where being found out, he was taken by the Mayor for his knavery, but had made his escape. I knew him, but he knew not me, so that I drew near, and he began to preach, but I told him I was in haste, and in great distress, being come to the festival from a remote part of Spain, and my purse had been picked out of my pocket, wherefore I entreated him, since such men as he had an interest among people of quality, that he would make me a gathering, lest necessity should oblige me to commit some sin. He made me a long sermon without head or tail, advising me, either to starve for the sake of chastity, or if I must needs fall to let it be with him, who would keep my secret. I told him if I must be naught, I had rather take up with some lewd young fellows, where the sin would be less, than with a man of his coat ; and besides, they were more likely to supply all my wants : That a gentleman belonging to the Admiral, who was also Mayor of a town called Mansilla, three leagues from Leon, had a months mind to me, and was come after me, and made it his business to debauch me. This put him into a great consternation for fear the Mayor was come to seek him out ; but he pretended his concern was mere zeal and uneasiness that a magistrate should be so lewd ; and therefore asked whether the mayor knew where I was ? I told him he did, and would be there presently, but

if I had a little money I would be gone and leave him in the lurch. This put him quite beside himself, and after another short exhortation, he started as if something were newly come into his head, and told me, that a friend of his had left a little money with him, which he would make bold with; and pulling out six ducats, put them into my hand. We neither of us spoke one word more, he was in such haste for fear of the mayor; so that he changed his habit and was gone immediately. I took my ass and set out too, and never saw my hermit, nor my crucifix-merchant any more from that day to this.

That very evening, for fear of being called to account for my pranks, I ordered my boy to saddle my ass, and lead it out to the meadows without the city. Thither I followed, and met with a herd of young wenches, all bound on a pilgrimage to a chappel of the Blessed Virgin, about a league from Leon. I struck in with them, but never minded reckoning with my hostess, for she was a hasty woman, and I thought better to save words than fall out about what was due. The journey being performed by night, I nodded all the way, and coming to the chappel, found it well adorned, abundance of people in the plain about it, and great store of fruit, provisions, and all necessaries. I fettered my ass by moon-light, and laid me down on the ground to sleep by a parcel of women that lay snoring, bidding my boy stand centinel, giving him a hard crust to keep him awake; and having slept about an hour and a half, started up as fresh as if I had been the

whole night in bed; when observing that all the women slept, I took a needle and thread, and sewed all the tails of their smocks fast to one another, and then withdrew at a distance to view the effects of my frolick; and it was comical enough to see how they tugged, scolded, flirted about, and showed much more than was proper to be seen, whilst I and many more rejoiced at their vexation. As the day appeared the sports began, there was gaming, fencing, and dancing, but I was now grown a little too stately to put in among the dancers, though my feet quivered to be at it, yet I overcame the temptation, and was satisfied with looking on. In the mean while my ass grazed about under the guardianship of my boy, but he stepping aside to wash down the dry crust I gave him, I suppose some gipsy took the poor beast into custody, and metamorphosed it, for it never after appeared. I looked all about, and missing my own beast met with another so like it, as asses generally are like one another, that there was scarce discerning any difference, and biding the boy clap my saddle and bridle on it, took possession, and secured it as my own proper goods.

A runner of the city of Leon whisked about among all the people, offering a gold locket to sell, and I being fond of such toys, presently bit at it, and struck up a bargain for eight ducats, without considering that my pocket fell sixteen royals short of that sum; besides, that nothing remained to defray my charges home. I presently contrived how to make up this defect, and meeting with an old woman that had a tattered woollen veil, desired her to lend it me to step to the

next town for fear of the rain, promising to content her at my return, and to leave her my silk veil in pawn for it. She consented, and having put on hers, I took a turn or two about the church, that she might loose sight of me, and that done, sat me down on my legs at the church door, with a white handkerchief on my knees to beg, like one that was ashamed to be seen in that posture. The people took great compassion, and dropt their brass like hail, so that I had in a very short time, gathered above the sixteen royals I wanted, besides a whole piece of eight a good clergyman clapped into my hand, who, I do not question, is gone to heaven for his charity. When any gay youths came by, the more to move them, I would put out a hand, which was pretty white, under pretence of righting my veil, and sometimes, as it were by accident, would discover one cheek, by which contrivance, I observed some went half a score times in and out of the church, only to have an opportunity of dropping me something as they passed. Having gathered as much as I thought fit, I packed up my treasure, covered my face close and made away to a by-place till all had lost sight of me. There I took off my veil, and put on a little mantle I had in my sleeve, folding the veil, and concealing it, and so returned towards the church, as if I had only been to discharge some of those necessities nature puts upon all persons. I found the old woman who lent me the veil almost out of patience, because I had staid above two hours, and all the while I was gone she was plagued with the young beaus, who seeing the fine silk thin veil, concluded there had been some



girl of fifteen under it, and never ceased haunting her to see her face, till in a fret she discovered it, and with that sight put them all to flight, as if some ghost had appeared to them. I qualified her anger with a couple of melons I gave her; but the boy, in my absence, having told her all my life and conversation, she very piously reprov'd me for stealing the ass, advising to restore it to the owner: I very silyly, and with a sanctified look, told her, I had only jested with the boy, to try whether he knew my ass again after he had lost it; that I would not for the world be thought to keep any bodies beast but my own, and she might be sure I would not have left it in such a public place, if any body could claim it. With this she was so well satisfied, that she begged my pardon for having entertained such a thought of me, and went her way, blaming the boy for having told the truth. This done, I found out the woman with the locket, to whom I had given earnest before, for fear of losing it, and paying the rest of the money, set myself off with that jewel I had so impudently mumped for at the church door.

Being rid of my old woman, I fell in among some of my own gang, and went to another little chapple hard by, where I spent my time in prating rather than praying; and coming back to the church made half a hundred bows to the altar, in full for all my devotions. When I had thus discharged the duty of the day, my guts began to cry cupboard, and I thrust in among some of my towns-people, with whom I spunged a dinner, which relished much the better because it cost nothing, resolving to return immediately to Leon, to take a full

view of that city ; I would willingly have gone alone that I might reckon how much money I had carried off clear after all my adventures, but it is hard for a young wench to get away from everybody. A barber of our town, who could let his skull unfurnished, would needs bear me company, and I was not sorry for it, because he took care of my ass, though he, poor wretch, got little by my company. This fellow took upon him to be witty, as he thought, on the road ; and instead of jests, blundered out so much nonsense and scurrility, that he could not have missed of a broken head, had not the passengers spared him in respect of me. Among the rest a Franciscan Fryar he would have affronted retorted his own jest upon him, as might have struck him dumb, had he not wanted sense to be out of countenance. The Fryar rode on a colt, and my spark wisely said to him, Father, in St. Francis's days the fryars did not ride. The reason of it is, answered the Fryar, because there were not so many asses then as there are now. I was so weary of his intolerable clack, that I contrived to get rid of him, and in order to it, said to him, Cousin, you will do me a great kindness if you will put on before me, and go to the inn where I lay the other day, for now I remember I left behind me a basket of honey-combs, I had to present the lawyer that used to look after my mother's affairs, and is now to take charge of mine. Go directly into the inn, as if you went upon some other business, and take it away without saying anything to the landlady, and if she happen to meet with you, and press for the reckoning I left to pay, pass your word for me, which

will be no great matter. Make haste, you see it concerns me, let not the hatchet-faced jade make her advantage of it. The blockhead thought I had done him much honour in employing him in my service, not thinking what a piece of service it was. He flew to the inn, came all in a heat, panting, and out of breath, with as much haughtiness as if he had all the king's authority to back him, and crying, Come, landlady, let me know what is become of the honey-combs my cousin left here. The hostess seeing him in that disorder, imagined there was some matter of moment left behind, and told him, she knew nothing of the matter he spoke of, but that his precious cousin went her way without paying the reckoning, and if it were lost she must take it for her pains; but if it could be found she would not part with it till she was paid the utmost cross. She must not think to put upon people that get their bread by the sweat of their brow; for, no doubt by her way of living, she has got more money this night than all that comes to. My rattle-brained kinsman had not one word to say for me, but went up stairs to rights, and into every room, searching about for the basket of honey combs, which he did not rightly understand. The case was that I being hard pressed with the supper I had eaten, made use of a basket of the land-ladies I found, which did me good service at that time. The landlady perceiving he found nothing, took hold of his cloak, and never parted with him till he paid her three royals the reckoning amounted to; bidding him look for his honey with a vengeance. He at last crept upon all four under the bed where I had lain, and

meeting with the basket I told him of, came out again very joyfully, crying, God be praised I have found the basket and the honey ; the hostess, knowing the basket to be her own, caught hold of it very eagerly, as it was covered with a little wool I borrowed from her quilts. My kinsman meaning to defend his basket, in struggling over-turned all the contents upon his nose, clothes, and hands, and found that the honey combs were none of the sweetest. Yet this had been tolerable, but that the landlady seeing her basket was spoiled, came behind and snatched off his hat ; he would willingly have closed with her, that she might take share of his winnings, but she laid hold of a good cudgel, and drove him out into the street in that stinking filthy condition. The boys coming about him, he intreated the landlady to give him admittance, and hoping he had mollified her, presumed to draw near, but she rung such a second peal upon his back with the cudgel, that he was obliged to take to his heels, cursing the hostess and his cousin who employed him ; and thus well attended by the mob, he ran clear out at the city gate, and meeting with a pond went in to wash himself. When he was clean the hostess admitted him, and upon paying for the basket, restored him his hat she had seized in pawn, giving him a sharp lecture at the same time ; which he received bare-headed, and in suppliant manner, as if he had been before his godfathers.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Fustina returns to Leon ; describes her Entrance ; Wheedles the Landlady at the Inn ; Works a Wonderful Cure, and goes off Scott-free and well Presented.*

I GUESSED how affairs went at this time at the Inn, being no stranger to my cousin's capacity, and knowing the hostess had more of the bear than of the spaniel. The barber thus shamed flew away like lightning to find me out ; but before I tell you our greeting, I must inform you what I did the meanwhile. Considering the alarm the Inn was under at that time, I would not enter St. Anne's Gate, which is next to it, but over St. Mark's bridge, so called from a famous monastery of the friars of the order of Santiago, close to whose wall it stands. The best habitation there is in the seats of the choir, which are very noble, and such I suppose the friars' cells will be, when they are built. The church is sumptuous, spacious, lofty, beautiful, light and curious ; only I am of opinion that it ought to be turned the inside outwards, because the most nice and costly workmanship, and curious imagery in stone is on the outside, and exposed to the weather, and the plainest within. Near this

church is an hospital for the entertainment and cure of such as have got French colds, runnings, or aches in their bones. Two natural rivers enclose the city of Leon, I rode along the pleasant banks of one of them, till I came into a broad street, on both sides of which there are delightful orchards and gardens, and at the end of it a monastery, which is the entrance into the city. I had some thoughts of going into the church, but observing how very little the gate was, I forebore my devotion, disdaining to creep in such a contemptible way. I now met again with my cousin the barber, who after some short expostulation about the honey, was glad to put up the wrong ; and asked me if I would not see the King's Garden ? Which I readily consented to, expecting to behold some notable piece of curiosity ; but when I came to it, there was no other flowers but horns ; no beds but of mire ; and no fountains but of the blood of beasts ; for that which goes by so fair a name, is only the slaughtering place of all the cattle eaten in the city. In short, we went on to an inn, which is behind the Bishop's palace, where we found a whale of an hostess, so monstrous was her bulk ; she had a bunch of keys by her side, and her purse before, and in her face two hairy moles, like whiskers. As soon as I spy'd this figure, I began to contrive what trick I might put upon her, whilst my barber went abroad to buy him some cupping-glasses he wanted. I sat me down by her, in a very humble posture, and began to charm her with fine words, calling her lovely creature, and extolling every thing she said, whilst she, in that rapture, told me all her life and conversa-

tion, and at last, that she had been obliged to hide some fitches of bacon she had, and a parcel of eggs and honey, for fear of some knavish scholars who lately lodged in her house. She desired I would light her to remove that provision out of a dark larder to a cupboard, which I really did, there being no soul in the house besides myself and her, for the maid was newly gone away with a carrier ; but she took care to lock all fast. The labour of removing the goods and setting things to rights, she being so monstrous fat, left her so tired and unfit for anything, that she was forced to betake herself to her bed, and being so long undressing, and in a sweat, she caught cold, which turned to such a fit of the gripes and looseness, that I thought she would have voided her greasy soul. All my hope was, that being in that plight she would have forget the key of the cupboard, but she hung it again about her neck before she got into bed ; like the Morisco, who being to receive the sacrament on his death-bed, held his hands together to as if it had been out of devotion, but in reality to secure his purse he had between them. I concluded, had she died intestate, that my barber and I should come in for heirs at law ; however since she thought fit to hold fast, I resolved to make amends out of her cupboard. In order to it, I told the hostess, that the man who came with me was the physician of our town, and an able man in his profession ; and sent my boy to hasten him home, but he met him at the door with his cupping-glasses, and weeping bitterly, because, stopping to gaze at a Merry-Andrew, he had broke one of them, and dreaded being

called to an account for it by his wife, who was a rampant Amazon, and kept him under hatches, so that he swore, he had rather see the devil than her in a passion. I soon comforted him, advising to tell her, he had bought but seven glasses, and that the money was spent upon his mule, which he had been forced to ride hard to make haste home. I acquainted him of my project, and bid him to go in and feel the hostess's pulse, and then withdraw with me to consult about the cure, for he was so rank a dunce that I durst not trust him with the prescription. He went in and did as I directed, tumbled her in the bed to feel her stomach and other parts, which encreased her cold, and made us see strange sights. We withdrew, and our consultation was as learned and effectual as many we daily see among doctors of the highest rank. He said after me in such a tone as the hostess might hear the best part; and when he had concluded, I went in and repeated the whole receipt, telling her, she must take some of the fat of bacon, which is most interlarded among the lean, and melt it, wherewith she must anoint and chafe her belly, as also her cheeks and jaws, to prevent the distemper flying into her head, and turning to a palsie; that then her body must be rubbed all over with grated bread; and after all there must be a sort of a poultice made with fourteen whites of eggs, without any yolks, well spread over with honey, to be laid all over her bowels; which done, she must lie close covered over head and ears, without stirring, for an hour and a half. This I told her, if she thought fit, I would do for her, believing she was generous



enough to requite me for my pains. She rejoiced that she had all the materials in the house, and gave me the key of the cupboard to prepare the medicine, with many promises of a requital. I lighted a fire, cut off all the choice of a flitch of bacon, and fried it with a dozen of eggs; then taking the fat out of the pan, and a few whites of eggs, I anointed my hostess all over, with a good layer of honey, and over all wrapped her well in flax, covering her over head and ears, where she sweated and stewed in her grease; and the distemper being nothing but weariness and cold, felt immediate ease. Having left her in this condition, I returned to my companions, where we feasted upon her bacon and eggs, and honey, with a leather bottle of good wine my barber had. After supper I returned to my patient, who had never done thanking me for the cure, and promising me great matters; but I wanted to make her pay for the wine we had drank, and therefore, to prevent any ill consequence, the doctor clapt two cupping-glasses to her cheeks, and we covered her close over again, till I had dived into her purse, which hung at the bed's head, and took out as much as I thought might answer our charge.

My wants were now supplied, and my body required rest, so I went freely to bed without regarding my cousin the barber, as supposing him to be no such man of metal, that I might fear anything from him, but I find love reigns over the fools as well as the wise men of the world; and asses have their amours as well as gallants. After midnight I heard a small rumbling noise near my bed, and guessing that it was

my cousin, whom Cupid had roused, I whispered to him thus: Hark you, kinsman, after you went to bed there came in abundance of guests, and one of them lies just by you, who says he knew my father ; he looks like an unruly fellow, and should he know I was abroad with any but a relation, would certainly murder us both. Tread softly lest he happens to hear you, and if you want a looking glass, you'll find it at the foot of your bed, and get you to sleep again. This put him into such a fright, as he afterwards confessed, that he quaked, and was not far from falling into the hostess's distemper. As soon as it was day I got up, and went directly to the landlady's bedside, pretending it was the care of her health that brought me, but in reality to secure myself. When the barber rose, and found he had been put upon, he was so out of countenance, that he slunk away without paying his shot, or taking leave, but for mere haste he left behind him four of his cupping glasses, and a silk binder he had bought to let the lady's blood with, for which he suffered persecution at home from his masculine wife, and durst never after look me in the face. I took leave of my landlady, who enquired after the doctor, extolling his skill. I answered, He went away early, because he had many patients at Mansilla. I am sorry, said she, he went away without taking his leave, for I would have made him a good present. I laid hold of that opportunity, and told her, she might send what she thought fit by me, for he was my cousin. After a short consultation what would be most acceptable, I advised her to send a good pot of honey she had in her cupboard, which she could not tell how to

refuse me, I had such a knack of wheedling and flattering her. When I had it in my possession, I asked what I had done, that all my labour in serving her might not deserve some reward; and she as generously presented me with a good piece of hung beef, a beugle-necklace, and a curious pair of jet-beads, giving me the key of her closet to take them out, whence at the same time, I filched a good pocket looking glass, and thought I did her a kindness in it, lest if she should happen to see her face in it, she might hang herself. The reckoning was not so much as mentioned; but I embraced my landlady, mounted my ass, and making the best of my way, returned that morning to my own town of Mansilla.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Her journey to Rioseco ; the Law Suit ; Cheats in carrying Wool ; Inherits her Landlady ; and returns to Mansilla.*

BEING at home again, I began to lead an uneasy life, because my brothers took upon them to reprove me, rather because I demanded my share of my father's inheritance, than out of any real zeal ; and as for my sisters, they blowed the coals, out of spite, because they saw me of an aspiring temper, and aiming at something above our rank. To complete my misfortune, our suit coming to a trial before the magistrates of our town, I was adjudged to have forfeited my share of the inheritance, and to pay the costs. This made me resolve to leave the town and be gone to Rioseco, and remove my cause thither by appeal. In order to it, about twenty days before my departure, I broke open a chest we had in the house, and took out of it several small jewels of some value, as rings, lockets, pendants, &c., besides some pieces of plate ; and lest any suspicion should fall upon me, ordered a young spark, who courted me, to run by my door about four in the morning, and if pursued, to make his escape with a vizer on, which he might pull off as soon as he saw an opportunity, and run among the rest, crying, Stop thief, stop thief. He ran by as I had appointed, and I being

on the watch cried out, Thieves, thieves, there is a rogue has broken open our chest, and runs away with all that we have. My brothers started up in their shirts, and all the neighbours after them, but before they could reach the spark, he had taken off his mask at the turning of a street, and made one among them. I had dropped two small pieces of plate out at the window, and as they came back panting and out of breath, I bid them take up that plate the thief had dropped as he ran away. Thus I persuaded them that the house had been robbed, and every night after contrived such noises in it, as if it had been haunted, telling my brothers in the morning, that these were judgments on them for their injustice towards me; till one morning, when I was sure they all heard me, I knelt down before an image, and made a solemn vow, I would not lie in the house that night for fear it should fall upon me. This said, I got up, took my bundle of equipage, which my brothers never suspected, and went my way. They thought I had gone to some neighbour's house, but I was provided of a fellow that carried trout about the country, who took me upon one of his mules, and conveyed me that morning to Rioseco.

I went directly to a solicitor I had employed there, who told me, Business would require time, but that he had an expedient which would make it ride as much in a day as a good galloping horse would with a spur. I told him my cause should not ride; but, that fast or slow, it must walk a foot. He insisted much upon riding, and that was all the way he had of expressing himself to sound my temper, but I

cut him off, protesting my cause should rather go on crutches than be rid, though it were never so slow. Thus we parted, and he promised dispatch, yet the affair was tedious enough; though I plied the court myself, and always with money in hand, which music made the lawyers dance after me; but I could never prevail with the writing-clerk to set his lines closer together, which looked as if they had been afraid of one another; nor would he ever take his fees before witnesses, which at first I wondered at, though it was not long before my purse told me the reason of it, for I found it soon empty, and my affairs at a stand. This made me consider whether I should part with any of my fine jewels and toys, which are the surest friends at a dead lift, but they were entailed upon my affections, and would not part with me, and therefore some other method must be found. I lodged with an old woman that spun woollen, and was resolved to make the best of that trade, and in order to it I laid up all my gay clothes and trinkets, dressing myself like a plain country girl. There were two other old spinsters near my landlady, all of them of a gang. I went with them to the carders for wool to spin, where every one had something to say to me, and the master told me, I should never want employment. A few days after, I advised the old women to send me for their wool, and to carry it back when spun, and they should all allow me a small matter for my labour, because they were lame, and lost more time in fetching and carrying than three times my pay amounted to. They consented, and ordered it so with the carder, who was well pleased to have me resort

to him instead of those frightful pieces of antiquity. Now my profit lay not in what they allowed me for fetching and carrying, but that the fellows being busy in toying with me, and for fear of disobliging me, did not mind what they weighed out, and I always carried off good advantage ; the same was done when I returned it, for the weight I took care should still fall scant and short, so that between what was over on the one hand, and returned on the other, I made four or five royals every day ; besides that I always kept the wool in a damp place and that increased the weight considerably. By these means I gathered no small parcel of money, kept up my reputation, and gained the affection of my landlady. This old woman was of the Moorish race ; had some skill in witchcraft, and no less in bawding ; and understood the Alcoran better than the Lord's Prayer. Her devotions were more like blasphemies than prayers ; I never saw her at church but once, and then, instead of kneeling, she lay along and coughed all the while she stayed, though she had no more occasion than to hang herself. She was frightened at any public devotion, and all her delight was to see criminals go to be hanged, for though lame before, she would then skip like a young girl for three days. The first day she went to steal some of their teeth, the next she got a piece of the halter, and the third she spent in spells and charms under the gallows. I might easily have learned the trade of her, which she was very willing to teach me ; but I don't love employments that are performed asleep, for witches only dream, and the devil persuades them that what they

then see is real. In short, my landlady and I were hand and glove, but still she kept her purse close, and that was the only thing she reserved from me. At length, one Tuesday night, there arose a mighty storm of thunder and lightning, my old hag retired to her room, I thought she had gone to bed, but not being able to sleep myself for fear, I went to her chamber, where I found her stretched out upon her back, giving up the ghost. This sight took off the fright of the thunder and lightning, for I concluded it was only the devils rejoicing and firing off guns to welcome her to their dominions. I presently looked upon all the house as my own, laid her out immediately, binding her feet together for fear she should get up again, and then searched her room, where, in a chest, I found fifty quadruple-pistoles, which I clapped into a girdle next my skin, and by virtue of the gold, being so near my heart, never thought of eating or drinking till I had laid her in the church-yard. The funeral cost me five ducats, but in reality it cost me nothing, for I pleaded so much poverty, that the whole sum was given for charity in the neighbourhood. The sexton had a month's mind to me, and he told me as much by way of circumlocution, pestering me for two or three days on sleeveless errands, till I sent him away with a flea in his ear. The money I had got made the suit go well on my side, judgment was given for me, and I set out for my town of Mansilla, on an ass of my own, and with 300 ducats in my purse. My brethren received me civilly, rather out of fear than love; and I made choice of an old acquaintance of mine, a sort of bully-ruffian,



to be my guardian, and look after my affairs. This man lived not only in the town of Mansilla, but in our own house, and I had a sort of kindness for him, because he took care of me without seeking any advantage. However, I thought fit to alter my condition, and look out for a husband that might make my affairs his own. I remember some of my acquaintance advised me to several superstitious practices for promoting of my matrimony, which I did not like; but one among the rest bid me rise as soon as it was light on midsummer-day, and the first thing I saw go by would be the resemblance of my husband. I did so, and the first thing I spied was an ass. I waited a little longer, and the next was an eunuch; excellent omens of matrimony. I altered my course, and went long pilgrimages for a husband, because some are of opinion the farther they are brought the better; till at last I met with such a one as I deserved.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *The Suitors described ; the Choice made ; and the Wedding.*

THERE was no want of suitors, for in country towns a young wench is like an open honey pot in summer. The first of them was a dapper shabby fellow, a great cudgel player, well enough shaped, but that his head was too little, and looked like the head of a cane ; and his face so scarify with the small pox, as if it had been harrowed. This spark believing that Happy is the wooing that is not long a doing ; attacked me without any ceremony, saying, Mrs. Justina, if you think fit to take me for better for worse, to claw you where it itches, to ease you of your burdens, to help dress you, and serve you upon all necessary occasions ; here I am at your service. Believe me, I am no way extravagant, but in love, and that is all yours ; and my design is to make you my whither-d'ye go. I could not but smile at the fellow's plain-dealing, yet would not quite dismiss him till I was better provided, for fear I might be served as the goddess Delia was. She being courted by Apollo, slighted him because he was ill clad, he took her at her word, and went his way ; but when she perceived that the whole host of heaven followed at his retinue, she repented, and made a vow she would ever after, at certain times, lament her indiscretion ;

whence proceeded the eclipses of the moon. As soon as I had got a set of fresh gallants, I gave him his answer to this effect, Good Mr. Shabrag, I understand you are a turner by trade, which is an employment will always keep you at home ; and, I must tell you, I have no occasion for a perpetual overseer : besides that, you will want horns to turn, and I shall not be able at all times to supply you, unless when you go abroad, which will be but seldom. Therefore, I advise you, for the future never to set your foot within my door, or come within the smell of it, lest I happen to comb your head with a joint-stool. He fled as if he had been pursued by an army ; and no wonder, for a woman's words are as dreadful as the smoke of gunpowder. The next that accosted me was a laundress's son, such an idle companion, that he scorned to follow any employ, and altogether played the gentleman, spending all the poor woman could rake together by her labour. She waited on him at table, and in full satisfaction, he would be two hours, telling her, his pedigree by his father, alleging, he ought to have been tax-free, as being a gentleman, but that the king had wronged the family for above 200 years. These chimeras pleased the old fool so well, that she thought she could never do enough for him. The fellow took a fancy to marry me, but was so tattered and ragged that he knew not how to look me in the face. At length, after many projects, he resolved to attack me in the habit of a morrice-dancer, and to that purpose, instead of a shirt, which he wanted, wrapped himself handsomely in a fine holland sheet of mine, his mother had to wash, and

robbed half the cart horses in the town of their bells. In this equipage he came along the streets, skipping like a colt, with all the boys of the parish at his heels. The jingling of the bells, and the noise of the rabble, drew me to the window, where he spying me, began to exercise his talent, leaping with all his might, which could not but make me smile and cry out, Spare yourself a little, for the labour is too violent, and may chance to wear out your shoes. He thought my heart was moved with compassion, and finding the door open, without further ceremony, ran up stairs into the room where I was, and I had enough to do to avoid a salute, asking him, Friend, who are you? What brings you hither, or what would you be at? Lady, said he, as to what I am, I am a perfect phoenix in love; what brings me hither is to know whether you have any service to command me; and what I would be at, is to marry you. Good Mr. Morrice Dancer, quoth I, I pitied your battering of your heels against the stone, but now I cannot but lament your want of brains; and since you have divided your speech into three parts, I must answer to them, telling you, that since you are a phoenix, you cannot die till you are burnt, and I would not have my sheet share in your fate. As for commanding you any service, I have none fit for a Morrice-Dancer, unless it be to hang himself; and as for marrying me, I have often heard that a man may take a woman in her smock, but never that a woman should take a husband without a shirt. Shake your bells, and be gone, for I will not spoil the children's sport in the street. With this answer he faced about, and tumbled

down the stairs faster than he came up. At the same time I made a sign to the wench that was washing the dishes, who understood the least beck of mine, and as my gallant came into the street, she saluted him with a kettle-full of dish water in good temper. He was well washed, though the water was not over clean, and the boys sharing with him, grew into a passion, and fell a pelting him with dirt, till they drove him out of the town, where he was never seen again.

It would be endless to give an account of all the pretenders to me, they were so numerous. Some finding me haughty, endeavoured to look big, and walked as stiff as if stakes had been drove through them. Others imagined that gay clothes would carry me, and dressed themselves like merry-Andrews, or monkeys at a bear-baiting. Some thought to win me by dint of love, and these spent their time in gazing at my windows, sighing, making dismal faces, and expressing wonderful transports if ever I happened to cast a careless glance towards them. Others concluded none could take me but a downright bully-ruffian, and therefore walked my street with long swords by day, and made the stones strike fire with them by night, as if they had been engaged in quarrels. I remember one of these spying me at the door, turned up his whiskers, cocked his hat, and laying his hand on his sword, said to me, My sovereign lady, has any one offended you? If he has, by the Lord he shall not live till to morrow. I answered, If you were to kill him that offends me, you ought to make your will this moment; but I had rather you should live to make sport for the ladies.

Observe here the folly of men to make themselves a merit of their absurdities, believing that looking big, tawdry dress, whining, or ranting, are ingredients to win a woman's heart ; but this is the fault of the women who encourage them, for want of distinguishing between worth and grimace. Thus you see one fool is gained by a formal starched countenance, another by a gaudy dress and flittering wig, a third by sighing and weeping, and a fourth by ranting and swearing. But enough of these fops, for I am ashamed to mention a parcel of numskulls, who came with a full resolution to enamour me with fine speeches, and when we met had not a word to say for themselves ; or to speak of the numberless billets-doux, which for a long time furnished the pastry-cook and grocer of our town ; or mention the many songs sung under my window ; or reckon up the bumpkin pretenders that flocked from all the country about. None of these moved me, for now-a-days love is bought and sold, and the fairest bidder carries the prize ; it is money makes the mare to go, and an ass loaded with gold is more acceptable than the noblest creature without that ornament. A certain scholar I remember, told me, that in love there were two cases, the dative first, and then followed the genitive. In short, it is money that carries all before it, money covers all defects, money gives all perfections, and without money nothing is good and tolerable in this world.

In fine I wanted a husband, and one that would stand up for my right, and defend my patrimony, which made me pitch upon a man of metal, whom I had before chosen for

my protector and guardian. Would you understand how he gained me? He looked at me, and I looked at him; and thus by degrees we gazed upon one another, as if we had been both enchanted. I was wont to chatter to him like a magpie, and could wind him about my finger, but as soon as ever love began to take place, I was struck dumb, and had not a word more to say for myself. He squeezed out a few words, as if they had been pressed out of his soul, to express his inclinations, and I gave my consent in as few. It now remains that I inform you what a bridegroom I chose. He was very conceited, and so much a gentleman that he never kept a cross in his pocket, or ever paid a debt; so tall, that having asked leave of some ladies to visit them, they granted it upon condition, he would take a tuck in his body to reduce it to measure. His head was somewhat bald, which showed he could not be over amorous; his eyes little and sharp, to denote he had wit and good intentions towards women; a sharp nose, a little mouth, and forehead full of wrinkles, expressing much judgment; he was short and thick necked, denoting a narrow soul; and broad backed, which implies a jealous temper; he was not worth one farthing, which was a scurvy sign of poverty, and that produces knavery. He had two faults, which would have made no woman in love with him. The first, he loved gaming, and would have lost his posteriors if they had been loose; but I could have dispensed with that had he lost nothing else. The other was, that he was apt to run at mutton, yet I

hoped I should tame him. But what need I talk of his faults? I took him for better for worse. You will say, How came Justina, the sly jilt, to be taken in the snare? I had interest in it, as wanting one to protect and support me; pride played its part, for he was a gentleman, and I wanted one that would raise me from the dunghill I was born on; and importunity concluded the conquest, for he commended me, and never gave over, and what could a woman do that heard herself praised. Besides he loved me, and what could I do less than love him again? We said nothing of our design to my brothers, for it is a true saying, That they never prosper who can't keep their own counsel; and I knew they would never have consented, because it is the nature of peasants to hate the gentry, and they would not endure to let me rise above them. We all went to church on Sunday, where the banns were bid, and my brothers fixed their eyes on me, as if they would have stared me through; I took heart, and though in the church, asked them, what they gazed at, whether they did not know me? The curate rebuked me, and went on, and my kind brothers perceiving under whose protection I was, disgorged all that belonged to me to the utmost farthing.

The wedding-day came, and my neighbours flocked to dress me, what one did the other undid, till they fell out and scolded, but at length were pacified, every one had her way, and I was set out to their heart's content. When the bridesmaid appeared, she took all to pieces, and began the talk



again, and there had like to have ensued a fray about it. I was all this while in little ease, for she was in a fair way to have held on her work till the next morning, but that the mayor's wife relieved me, alledging, it was but reasonable I should please myself; so they all left me, and I had my will, which was no small satisfaction to my neighbours, who thought themselves sufficiently revenged of the bridesmaid. My spouse set his helping hand to assist me, and they said my dress became me. It is true, I did not like it, because all was in such form, that I looked like a jointed baby, and could scarce move either head or hands, a sufficient torment to me, who was used to let no joint of me lie idle. The dinner was plentiful, and as well eaten, and I could not but take notice of some sharpers, who not satisfied with what they could carry in their maws, sent home all they could lay their hands on, with the bare compliment of *By your leave, Mrs. Bride*. The wine was so good, that in three or four rounds it made some of the guests stammer, and others speak more languages than ever were at the tower of Babel. I had ordered, to make sport, some fritters stuffed with tow instead of apples, and it was pleasant enough to see all the company fall aboard, and what work they had to unravel their teeth. The bride-maid lifted her hand to her head so often, that she fell fast asleep, whilst the Mayor and Mayoress, and the little fry of young mayors and mayoresses danced, as did the clerk and the sexton, and all the flower of the parish. In short, all that were able shook their heels, and those that

could not tumbled about the room till they made it crack. The scholars of the town acted a play, which was The History of Queen Dick, and the Parliament of Women. The music was good, but they sung the song of Patient Grizzel, which was very ominous at a wedding. The sport ended, the guests were lighted home with links ; and my spouse and I were left to ourselves. I was at some loss this first night, because other maids, when they are married, have generally their mothers, aunts, or other women to keep them in countenance, and bring them on when they keep back, and pretend to be ashamed. I would fain have acted the Coy one, and been carried to bed by force ; but looking about me, found nobody I could trust with that intrigue. My sisters excused themselves, as being maids, though it was rather envy than modesty that withheld them. What to do I could not tell, to run to bed did not look well, and to lose the opportunity was worse ; for there were guests in the inn who invited the bridegroom to play, and he was so good natured that a small matter would have set in his hand all night. Having weighed all circumstances, I concluded the best way was to change the usual method, and court him ; as I did, and perceived he had no small kindness for me, since he left his dear cards for my sake. I had tricks enough to impose upon ignoramuses, and sell cracked ware for whole ; but there was no need of it ; I only hint at this, that men may take heed of being too credulous ; and lightly believing every token they find. But no matter, my

spouse saved himself all that trouble, and when I expected the greatest satisfaction, I was fain to compose myself to sleep; and do not question but the reader is by this time grown weary of my maiden state, and will therefore leave him to rest. Farewell.

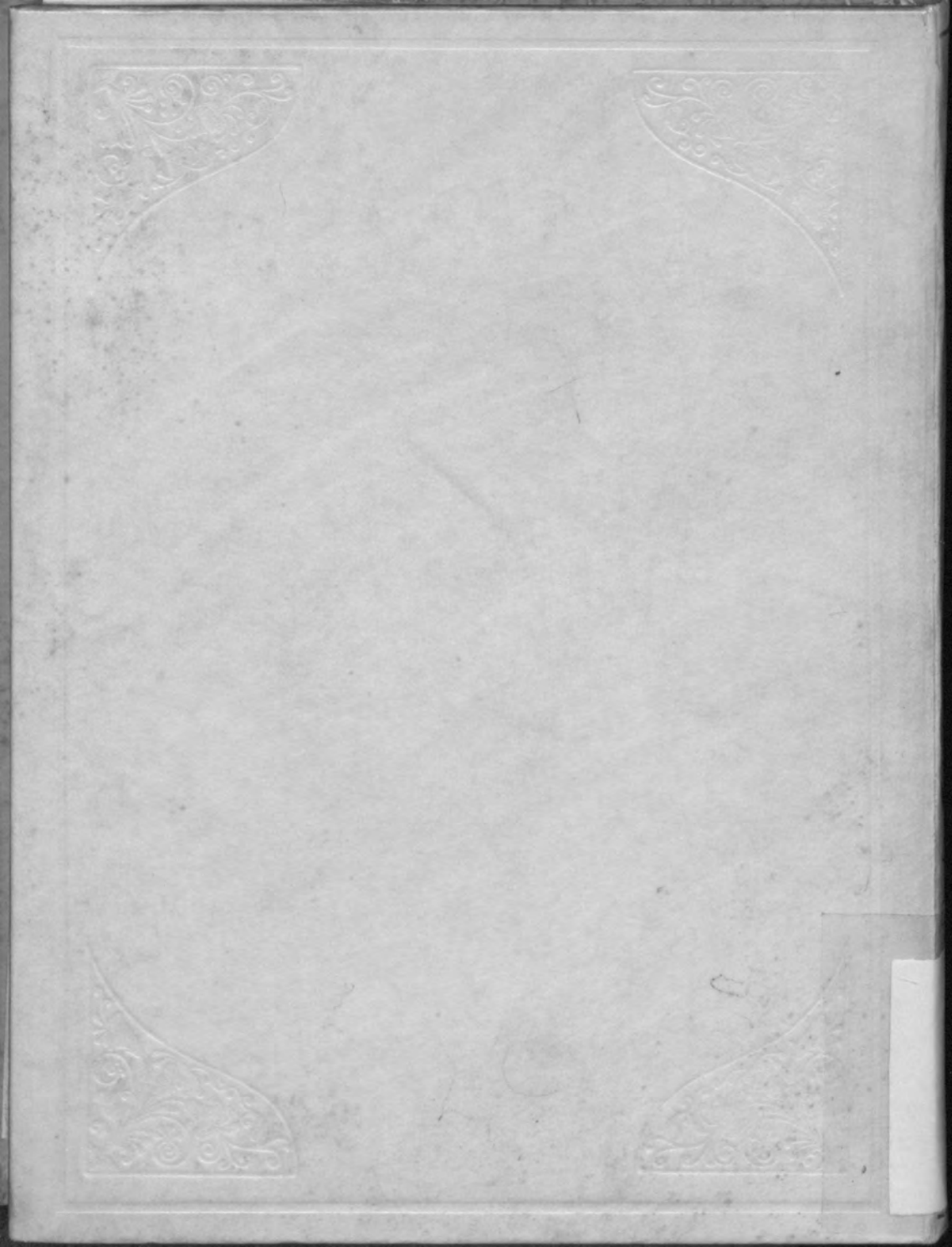








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