

THE King of the Country was a very powerful King; and he had but one Son whose Name was FLORIO; for which reason his Father was impatient to have him married. The young Prince could never bear the mentioning any of the Princesses of the neighboring Nations; because a Fairy had told him, that he should find a Shepherdess, more beautiful and more accomplished, than any Princess in the World. Therefore the King gave Orders to assemble all the Village-Nymphs of his Realm, who were under the Age of Eighteen, to make a Choice of Her, who should appear most worthy of so great an Honour. In pursuance of the Order, when they came to be sorted, a vast number of Virgins, whose Beauty was not very extraordinary, were refused Admittance; and only Thirty picked out, who infinitely surpassed all the Others. These Thirty Virgins were ranged in a great Hall, in the Figure of a Half-Moon, that the King and his Son might have a distinct View of

together. FLORELLA (our young Damsel) appeared in the midst of her Competitors like a Lilly among many-Golds, or as an Orange-Tree in Blossom shews among the Mountain Shrubs. The King immediately declared aloud, that she deserved his Crown, and FLORIO thought himself Happy in the Possession of FLORELLA.

OUR Shepherdess was instantly desired to cast off her Country Dress and to accept a Habit richly embroidered with Gold. In a few Minutes she saw her self covered with Pearls and Dimonds; and a Troop of Ladies was appointed to serve her. Every one was attentive to prevent

Desires, before she spoke; and she was lodged within the Palace, in a magnificent Apartment; where instead of a Mirror there were large Pannels of Looking-Glass from floor to the Ceiling, that she might have the Pleasure of seeing her Beauty multiplied on all Sides, and that the Prince might admire her where-ever he cast his Eyes. FLORIO in a few Days quitted the Chase, and all the manly Exercises in which before he delighted, that he might be perpetually with his Mistress. The Nuptials were concluded: And soon after the old King died. Thereupon FLORELLA becoming Queen, all the Counsels and the Affairs of State were directed by her Wisdom.

THE Queen-Mother (whose Name was INVIDESSA) grew jealous of her Daughter-in-Law. She was an artful, perverse, cruel Woman: And Age had so much aggravated her natural Deformity, that she seemed a Fury. The Youth and Beauty of FLORELLA made her appear yet more beautiful; She could not bear the sight of so fine a Creature. She likewise dreaded her Wit and Understanding; and gave her self up to all the Rage of Envy. You want not a Prince (would she often say to her Son) or could not have married this mean Cottager. How can I be so Abject as to make an Idol of Her? Then, she is worthy, as if she had been born in the Palace, where she is. You should have followed the Example of the old King: When he thought of taking a Wife, he chose the best that was to be had. I was the Daughter of a Monarch, and you have married a Cottager. Send away this insignificant Shepherdess to her Hamlet; and take to your Bed and Throne some other Princess whose Birth is answerable to your own.

FLORIO continued deaf to the Instances of his Mother: But one Morning, INVIDESSA got a Billet into her Hands which FLORELLA had wrote to the King: She gave it to a young Courtier; who by her Instructions carried it to the King, pretending to have received a Letter from the Queen, with such Marks of Affection as were due to her Majesty. FLORIO, blinded by his Jealousy, and the malignant Insinuations of his Mother, immediately ordered FLORELLA to be imprison'd for Life in a high Tower on the Point of a Rock that stood in the Sea.

She wept Night and Day; not knowing for what Crime she was so severely treated by the King, who she so dearly and so innocently loved her. She was permitted to see an old Woman, to whom INVIDESSA had given her Charge, whose Business it was to insult her

and called to Mind the Village, the rural Pleasures she had enjoyed, and she lay in a pensive posture over her self, and accused the Folly of her self, to have her a beautiful and contented Shepherdess: A Gentleman, her Mentor, came to tell her, that she was to be taken off her Head; FLORELLA replied

that she was ready to receive the Stroke. Accordingly the Executioner, sent by the King's Order, at the Perswasions of INVIDESSA, appeared with a drawn Sabre in his Hand, ready to perform his Commission; when a Woman stepped in, who said she came from the Queen-Mother to speak a Word or Two in Private to FLORELLA, before she was put to Death. The old Woman imagining her to be one of the Ladies of the Court, suffered her to deliver her Message: But it was the Fairy, who had foretold the Misfortunes of FLORELLA at her Birth, that had assumed the Likeness of One of INVIDESSA'S Attendants.

SHE desired the Company to retire a while; and then spoke thus to FLORELLA in secret: Are you willing to renounce that Beauty which has been so fatal to you? Are you willing to quit the Title of a Queen, to put on your former Habit, and to return to your Village? FLORELLA was transported at the Offer. Thereupon the Fairy apply'd an enchanted Masque to her Face: Her Features instantly became deformed; all their Symmetry vanished; and she was now as disagreeable as she had been handsome. Under this Change was not possible to know her; and she passed without difficulty through the Company who came to see her Execution. In vain did they search the Tower; FLORELLA was not to be found. The News of this Escape was soon brought to the King, and to INVIDESSA; who commanded diligent Search to be made after her throughout the Kingdom, but to no Purpose.

THE Fairy, by this Time, had restored FLORELLA to her Mother; who would never have been able to collect her altered Looks, had she not been let into the Circumstances of her Story. Our Shepherdess was now contented to live an ugly, poor, unknown Creature at her Village where she tended Sheep. She frequently heard People lament, and lament over her Adventures: Songs were made upon them, which drew Tears from all Eyes: She took a Pleasure in singing those Songs with her Companion, and would often weep with the rest: But still she thought her self happy with her little Flock; and was never tempted to discover her self to any of her Acquaintance.

If this Tale takes up more Room in your Paper, than any other Piece I have sent you; 'tis to be hoped your Readers have too much Gallantry to be displeas'd with me for inserting a Piece which is designed for the Entertainment of the FAIR-SEX; though It should usurp the Place of an Article or Two of Foreign News.

I am Yours,

THE PLAIN-DEAL

N^o. 4. †

FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Petersburgh, May 31.

THE Prosecution of Prince Menziko now carrying on with the utmost vigour; and if he does not speedily proceed with himself to discover where he has concealed the vast Treasure which his Enemies pretend to prove he has amassed, he will be made to undergo the third Degree of Knout, which is the highest of all, and generally endangers Life itself.

Breslaw, May 31. They write from 4 Leagues from hence, that in pursuance of the Emperor's Orders, they were about building a large Edifice for spinning and making Cloth; and as his Imperial Majesty has granted them, among other Privileges, That of holding every Year two Fairs for Woollen Manufactures, the first will be the 20th Instant, with good Success, Satis