

Mr Abbot was the only son of a baronet, whose antient family and large fortune created in him a sense of dignity which his actions never disgraced, and who educated his son with such principles of honour as he thought would secure him from ever committing a mean action, or behaving unworthy of his situation and expectations ; — but, he had not sufficiently adverted to that tie upon the actions of men, so necessary to establish true honour and those principles which the world and its temptations cannot totally subvert.

Mr Abbot would have shrunk from falsifying his word to *men* ; — he detested inebriety ; — he abhorred gaming ; — he had humanity too ; — he was charitable, generous, and good tempered ; — but, Mr Abbot, with all these merits, could act the part of a *villain* ; — he wanted those principles implanted by religion — by the belief of being in future to account for his actions, and which would have taught him to check the passions that reigned too powerfully in his disposition.

Near his father's seat in Devonshire there lived, among many of his tenants, a widow, a very worthy woman, whose husband had been purser to a ship : — she had two daughters — the name of one was Emma : — her godmother, a friend of the family, was a lady of fortune, and had taken much notice of her. — Indeed, the superior beauty of this young woman interested all who saw her, and her disposition was equally captivating ;

tivating;— she had from time to time acquired more manners and accomplishments at Mrs Benville's, her godmother's, than her situation would have entitled her to, or could otherwise have procured for her. Miss Benville had taught her to sing, and Emma sung most delightfully:— at Mrs Benville's she acquired dancing, and Emma danced most charmingly;— her heart was the most tender of human hearts— it was alive to every species of distress— and she was a proof that, with a strong inclination to do good, it does not require great riches in order to be charitable and useful.— No man could see Emma with indifference:— Mr Abbot saw her with the highest approbation and admiration;— but it was some time before he could gain admission to her house;— at last, however, he did obtain it:— the circumstance of Miss Benville's being to pass a day with Emma introduced him, and, once introduced, he easily contrived to make ex-

cuses for frequently going there. — The worthy mother of Emma, ignorant of the world, and flattered by the seeming attachment of Mr Abbot to her daughter, and with the highest opinion of her prudence, rather encouraged than checked his frequent visits.

Mr Abbot was formed to please the nicest of our sex, and he spared no pains to gain the affections of the guileless unsuspecting Emma; — believing him in all respects worthy to be loved, she by degrees became most fervently attached to him. — Yet, Emma had not the weaknesses so often attendant upon the excess of that passion — she would have shrunk from vice and every idea of vice — and her conduct and behaviour to Mr. Abbot were still consistent with her principles.

Early in the Autumn after they became acquainted, Sir James Abbot had business in London where he and Lady Abbot went, but Mr Abbot remained in the country

try under a pretence of sporting. He had now much greater opportunity of being with Emma, for, while his family were in the country, he was obliged to be very cautious lest his visits to her should come to their knowledge, a circumstance he dreaded. Part of the winter passed away without Mr Abbot's daring to disclose his wishes. — He had at first led Emma to believe that his father and mother would give their consent to his marrying her when they found that his happiness so entirely depended upon it. — He went twice to London — and, after his last return, told her that he found they must marry privately, for he had discovered that his father and mother had other views for him, upon which at present they seemed fixed. — “But,” he added, “when we are married they will most certainly forgive us.” — Emma burst into tears, and said that nothing should prevail upon her to consent to the disgracing him — and, perhaps, bringing upon

upon him the eternal displeasure of his parents.

At this time the mother of Emma was sent for to a sick sister, about twenty miles off; her elder daughter accompanied her, and poor Emma was left to the dangers of a tender heart, a strong attachment, and an artful man; — after many refusals on her part, many arguments, and many tears on his, Mr Abbot prevailed, by the artifice of obliging her to decide, whether she would determine to make him wretched for ever, or would consent to accompany him to London, where he assured her that he would immediately marry her: — at first she refused to leave her home, and suffered him to go away, having, as she thought, gained a complete victory over herself; — but, when she really believed him gone, repentance succeeded her delusive triumph — tears and regret followed — she never slept a moment during the night, and argued herself into a belief that she had
done

done wrong in rejecting the man she adored; — she questioned the justice of her late resolutions, and saw no real reason why a man of his fortune should not marry to make himself happy. — She had been well educated, and her family were not so very mean, though doubtless inferior to his: — thus self-deluded, she became miserable past endurance, in consequence of the part she had acted.

At length she determined to see if he were indeed gone; — it was possible, she thought, that he might not set off so very early; she put on her hat and cloak, then hesitated again — but at last bent her steps to Abbot-Park; — she passed and repassed the lodge, and the last time, as she was close to the door, meaning to inquire, of a child she saw there, if a post-chaise had just left it — Mr Abbot appeared: — he started — she was rivetted to the spot: — “My Emma, my own Emma,” he exclaimed — the joy of conquest sparkling in
in

in his eyes, while he flew to save her trembling limbs from falling to the ground. — “Oh!” she faintly said, “you are not gone then — why? — how?” — “No,” returned Mr Abbot, “I was just upon the point of setting off, but was going to take one farewell look at the house which contained every thing the most dear to me. — Oh! Emma, relent, and let us be happy instead of so very miserable; do not be the cause, my Emma, of my being so very wretched.” — Poor Emma burst into tears, “Oh! Mr. Abbot — it would be so wrong — so very wrong — surely it would — how can I suffer myself to do what may involve you in your parents everlasting displeasure.” He combated her arguments with too much art and success, and in short prevailed upon her to go with him to London.

When they arrived there, he procured lodgings in Bloomsbury, that part of the town being out of the way of his father.

Emma

Emma was far from happy — the step she had taken, though she conceived that she could give a great many good reasons in its justification, sometimes arose to her mind in very dark colours; — but she was not sophist enough to foresee all its possible consequences — and she thought, and chose to think, that there could be no great harm in uniting herself to the man whom she so ardently loved, and who was far too worthy to be rendered unhappy by her means, and that too for the sake of gratifying the wishes of his unreasonable parents. — She had written to her mother, and obtained her forgiveness for the step she had taken: — in fact, that good woman was delighted with the thoughts of her daughter's exaltation.

Mr Abbot really loved her; — he was possessed of merit, but too falsely proud to reconcile himself to the idea of marrying so far beneath him; not considering that his vile designs, if executed, would
degrade

degrade him far below the object of them. — False principles actuated him, and, instead of exalting himself by determining not to debase the woman he loved, but to struggle against his inclinations and conquer them, if they ought to be conquered — he basely resolved on pursuing a different conduct, and deliberately determined to be a *villain*.

Emma's faculties were almost absorbed in different attractions — Mr Abbot was one of the most infatuating of mankind — he was continually with her — the most tender and most respectful of lovers — frequently talked of their marriage, but found reasons for postponing it; — she, the most innocent, but the most ignorant of beings as to the ways of the world and its customs, had not the smallest distrust of Mr Abbot; she implicitly confided in him.

The new scenes in which she was engaged excited her wonder and admiration — the houses — the carriages — the multitude of
people

people—astonished her. It may be thought extraordinary, that she had not any scruple of going every where with Mr Abbot; but it must be considered that she was perfectly unacquainted with etiquettes of every kind—she knew that her marriage was to be secret, believed it necessary for her residence to be kept so at present, and was easily led to believe whatever Mr Abbot pleased.

Some weeks past, during which time Mr Abbot had endeavoured to bring about his designs, but Emma had shewn the most determined propriety of conduct.— One evening, after having been absent from her for some days, and having greatly alarmed her by an idea of his being ill, he unexpectedly returned:—her joy at seeing him was excessive, it overcame her—and she fainted away.—Mr Abbot immediately ran for a restorative, in which, to answer his villainous purpose, he infused a stupifying potion:—Emma swallowed

lowed it — and the poor, the virtuous, Emma fell a victim, an almost innocent victim, to libertinism and art. — No words can describe her subsequent misery and remorse — her sufferings brought on a severe fever which lasted for many weeks, and it was several months before her mind acquired any degree of tranquillity.

Mr Abbot was wretched; she refused to see him for a considerable time after her amendment — at last he gained admittance, and assured her that, as soon as she was recovered, they should be privately married: — but Mr Abbot had now other views — yet he was unhappy and condemned himself; devoid, however, of all true principle, he suffered his pride to overcome his better judgement, and gave way to the wishes of his father, who had proposed an alliance with the daughter of the Earl of Belmont: — her fortune was very great, and the consequence of her family flattered alike the pride of Sir
James

James and his son ; — yet Mr Abbot could not have submitted to the thoughts of giving up Emma, but he hoped to retain her ; — and, without having fully investigated his real feelings, or considered the possible consequences of his base conduct, he yielded to the solicitations of his family — and to the over-ruling pride of his own heart.

The poor Emma was hardly recovered from her illness, before she was again a prey to complicated unhappiness, and the most bitter sensations. — The very frequent absence of Mr Abbot alarmed her, and added to her wretchedness : — yet, when he was with her, his tenderness seemed unimpaired, and he found such excuses for his absence as appeared unanswerable, though they did not in reality satisfy her.

ONE morning as Emma was ruminating upon her situation, and the sigh of anguish, from a variety of sensations, heaving her bosom — the servant said, that an elderly gentleman desired to speak to her; — he was immediately admitted: — he seemed struck with her appearance, and sat down some minutes without saying any thing beyond a slight observation upon the weather. — Emma was perplexed and began to think his visit to her was some mistake — when he asked her, if she were not acquainted with Mr Abbot? — Emma, colour-
ed

ed deeply, and with a faltering voice answered, "Yes." — "Your appearance Madam," continued the gentleman, "is almost of itself a contradiction to the story I have heard, yet it comes to me from such good authority that I — I cannot doubt it; — pray, Madam, forgive me — but I am deeply interested in the business — has Mr Abbot? — are you? — has he ever made professions of a tender nature to you?" Emma's heart sank within her — she sighed — she hesitated — she scorned to declare a falsehood: — but she recollected that this man, however respectable his appearance, was a total stranger, unauthorized to interrogate her upon such a subject, and she replied, "I know not, Sir, what right you have to make such an inquiry." — "I will soon, Madam," replied the gentleman, "satisfy you in that respect — if Mr Abbot, which I suspect to be the case, at this time makes professions of attachment to you — he is a

villain — for he is engaged to marry another lady, to whom he is to be united in a few days.” — “I cannot believe it,” replied the trembling Emma, in a voice scarcely audible. “I grieve,” continued the gentleman, “to wound your feelings, but I am compelled to tell you the truth, whatever the effect may be; — he is engaged to my daughter — to Lady Jane Belmont: — now, Madam, I trust, you will confide in me — tell me if, and in what manner, I can serve you: — has he acted unworthily by you? — is it possible? — if he has, he *must* be a villain — he cannot, surely he cannot, have deceived you.” — Emma, with a countenance of horror, just replied, “Oh! yes, yes!” her agitation was extreme, and for a few minutes she appeared lost in thought, but in a degree recovering herself, some more conversation passed between them, that convinced her of the wretched truth; — she said that she felt very ill and must retire:

— Lord

— Lord Belmont said he would see her again and took his leave.

What horrors now crowded upon the lost Emma!— for some hours she was unable to collect her wandering senses, and the next day was extremely ill — but collected firmness enough to consider how she ought to act in her deplorable situation.

Mr Abbot was gone with a party into the country for a week;—two days more elapsed; — Emma used every effort to preserve her composure, and almost persuaded herself to doubt of the strangers assertions; — but an accident proved that the gentleman who had visited her was really Lord Belmont — her servant mentioned his having lived in his Lordship's family, and knew his daughter. Agony and despair now took possession of her mind, she determined to see Mr Abbot no more, but to return to her mother immediately. She wrote him a letter, and left it where she was certain he would find it, and on the third day,

X 3

leaving

leaving every thing she had received from him, she took a hackney-coach to where the stage set off, and with a heart almost bursting with grief quitted her house:— she told her servant that she should soon return.

She was to sleep three nights on the road, but was so ill on the morning of the third day, that it was impossible for her to proceed.— The fourth day, however, scarcely collected in her reason, she resolved to pursue her journey; she learnt that a return post-chaise was going within a mile of her house, and she determined to go in it;— she was hardly able to stand when she got in, and within about a mile and a half of her house, an empty wagon which was driving furiously along, overturned and broke the chaise:— Emma did not appear considerably hurt, and resolved to walk home— she gave all the remaining money she had to the post-boy, and crept slowly forward— but had scarcely

scarcely got half-a-mile, when, from great weakness and illness, she nearly fainted away, but, having sat down on a bank by the road side, she in some degree recovered and crawled on nearly half-a-mile farther, but there ended her endeavours to proceed: — her head grew giddy, and, insensibility coming on, she fell prostrate on the side of a ditch.

About a quarter of an hour afterwards, a labouring man was going by with a spaniel — as the dog ran a little out of the road, in passing poor Emma it stopped, barked, wagged its tail, and gave signs of joy, for it had been her own dog, and had followed this labourer, who often did little jobs for Emma's mother; — the poor man's notice was attracted, and he crossed over to see who it was that laid there. — He soon saw that it was a woman decently dressed, and either dead or in a fit — her hat had fallen over her face: — when he had removed it, he screamed out —

X 4

“ Heaven

“Heaven save us! — Miss Emma — lack-a-day! — what can be the meaning of all this?” — While, in his first terrified state, he was considering what to do — some people with a cart came by and they put her into it; the motion somewhat revived her again and she was conveyed home. — Her mother’s agony was beyond description, but she received her most tenderly and put her to bed. — Emma’s unhappy situation was then apparent; a premature labour came on — but she was not sufficiently sensible to be able to relate her miserable history to her mother, who, whatever it might be, pitied and forgave her.

The next day she became quite incoherent — and the following evening, calling on the name of Mr Abbot, expired: — her child though prematurely born was alive.

The day after her death, Mr Abbot, with the appearance of phrenzy, rushed into the room where the mother and sister of Emma were sitting: — “Where!” exclaimed

claimed he, "is my Emma?" — The poor mother fell into strong hysterics — the sister upbraided him with his cruelty — but he flew from them up stairs into the room where the child was: — "Whose child is that?" cried he; — "It is, it is," faltered the poor woman who had it on her lap, "It is, Miss Emma's." — "Oh! heaven!" said Mr Abbot, "where is Emma?" — "In the next room," replied the woman. — He rushed into the next room, where his eyes met the corpse of his poor Emma extended upon the bed: — he sank senseless at the bottom of it, and lay in that state some time — when he recovered, with a wildness in his looks and manner, he went to the side of the bed, and took her in his arms in spite of the efforts of the woman — nor could they disengage him from the horrid situation, till they procured additional help; — he then again sank into torpor for some time; when, suddenly rising from it, he hastily returned to the room
where

where the child was — took it in his arms, and ran out of the house, notwithstanding every effort to detain him.

He got home and went most impetuously into the room where his father and mother were — and instantly dropped down — they caught the child — a violent delirium came on immediately in which he remained for many months — and then recovered only a short time before his death.

This then was the miserable end of a young man who in reality possessed sincere affections, tenderness, and amiable dispositions, and who, had the principles of religion and morality been added to his other good qualities, could not have failed to have lived with honour to himself, and to have commanded the respect of the world. — For want of those principles to govern his inordinate passions he did an act which deprived him of his reason, and brought him to a premature death with all
the

the horrors of guilt on his head, and brought misery and affliction on his own parents, and wretchedness on the innocent family of the poor victim of his guilt.

I might finish the story here, but, as it may have excited some curiosity, and I hope better feelings, in your breast, I will go back to what passed previous to the last scene.

When Mr Abbot returned from the country, where he had been in a party with Lady Jane Belmont, he immediately went to visit Emma. — He was far from happy, though he was grasping at riches, beauty, and splendor.

When he knocked at the door it was opened by Robert, a servant he had placed with Emma. — Robert was a worthy man and very partial to her, though he had lived with her so short a time. “Where is your mistress?” interrogated Mr Abbot, observing something particular in Robert’s countenance — “Is she not with you, Sir?”
— “With

— “With me? what do you mean?” —
 “Why, Sir, she has not been at home these three days.” — “Not at home, with whom did she go out?” — “Sir, she went out in a hackney-coach, and has never returned; we were much puzzled, but, after thinking about it a great while, concluded she was with you.” — “What, then you do not know any thing of her? — nor where she is? — nor what is become of her?” — No, indeed, Sir.” Mr Abbot, having asked a hundred questions, without giving time to have a quarter of them answered, fell into a paroxysm of rage and sorrow that almost deprived him of sense.

When his agitation had a little subsided, he went up stairs, and the idea of a letter struck him — he immediately searched for and soon found one, a copy of which I send you.

“If my trembling hand will enable me to write — if my wretched heart do not
 break

break in the attempt, before it can even give vent to its grief—I will unfold — oh! once so much loved! — now — now — cruel wicked Mr Abbot — my misery — my wretchedness. — Oh! why for a transient passion was I, unhappy I, so cruelly sacrificed? — did you not, did you not, deceive me? — lead me by your falsehood to this extreme wretchedness? — Heaven, that knows my sufferings, knows you did. — Oh! I was — but what am I now? — but never will I, knowing what I do know, see you again — never — never. — A great heitress, it seems, has seduced you away from me: — seduced you, do I say! — perhaps, you never loved me as you said you did — as you so often, so very often, swore you did: — yet I think that you once did — before I was — Oh! wretched, wretched, Emma! — but I go — I will leave you — yes, I will — I ought — I will, return to my poor mother. — Alas! alas! what will become of me, the sincerest of penitents,
that

that I have long been——What will become of — of — you know what I mean — but, oh! we shall both die — it will be best : — oh! that it were not a crime to — but it is ; — yet we shall never meet again — may you repent, and then may you be forgiven — Oh! once-loved — once-adored, Mr Abbot! this, this, is the last time — you will ever hear — these the last words you will ever receive, from — the poor injured

“EMMA.”

MR Abbot's agitation upon reading the above surpassed all description, he was unable to move for above an hour; he then, half wild, went home, where he found his father and Lord Belmont. He exclaimed, " Lord Belmont, I am a villain, I have deceived Lady Jane — never can I ratify my engagements with her." — " Never do I mean you should," returned Lord Belmont: " I have this moment informed Sir James of my resolution." Mr Abbot with precipitation left the room, and flew to his own apartment, ordering his servant to have
his

his chaise at the door as soon as possible. Sir James went to him beseeching him in the mildest terms, for he perceived that his mind was greatly disturbed, to acquaint him with some of the particulars of these extraordinary and melancholy events. Lord Belmont had in some respects opened Sir James Abbot's eyes to the truth, but the prospect was so sad, that he shrunk from it.

“ I am going,” said Mr Abbot, “ into the country, I am going after the most injured, the most beloved, of women—I am going into Devonshire.” “ I will likewise go,” said Sir James, “ But not with me, Sir, nothing shall induce me to delay an instant.” “ Can I say any thing, James, that will calm your troubled mind, and in any degree compose your spirits?” — “ Yes,” replied Mr Abbot, “ promise to receive Emma as your daughter.” — “ Emma as my daughter!” returned Sir James, “ what do you mean?” — “ That I am a villain,” replied Mr Abbot, “ but if Emma is lost
to

to me, all will soon be over." "I am afraid I understand you too well," said Sir James.—"Oh! my Son!"—"Sir," replied Mr Abbot, bursting into tears, "forbear reproof and reproaches—I know that I deserve them, but oh! for pity's, for mercy's, sake—I am distracted—I must leave you—I must go this moment, or I may be too late, and then all will be lost."

Sir James stood almost petrified;—Mr Abbot rushed out of the room, and paced up and down another for a few minutes—when the chaise arrived, he immediately got into it, and went post to Devonshire, travelling night and day, though his carriage breaking down with him he was detained for some hours till he could get another. The moment he arrived he flew to the house where the mother of Emma lived, and the wretched scene I have described ensued.—Sir James and Lady Abbot followed him as fast as it was possible, and had not arrived many minutes when he rushed into the

Y room

room to them, and fell down with the child in his arms. — He remained some time apparently senseless; they put him to bed, when the delirium came on, as I mentioned before. — He called for Emma in the most piteous manner, and from his self-accusations, though in wild and incoherent terms, Sir James and Lady Abbot learnt for the first time the whole of the fatal truth. Too late for remedy, they had now only to deplore, that in his education they had only attended to what was requisite to make him *shine* in the world, and that religion, the only durable ground-work of good principles, had been neglected.

The child did not appear to have been hurt by his violence. He continued in the most dreadful state, sometimes raving, sometimes stupified, for several months, when, most unexpectedly, he recovered his senses. Sir James and Lady Abbot were raised from despair to joy, hoping that their be-
loved

loved son would now be restored to them ; but very short was the appearance of this ray of comfort : — soon after rationality appeared Mr Abbot insisted upon knowing what had passed ; as gently as possible, they related some of the particulars ; he had recollection enough not easily to be deceived. “ I know,” said he, “ that Emma is gone for ever — she is lost to me in this world — but, Oh ! may my sufferings and my repentance obtain for me a reunion with her in another — pass but a few short hours, and the trial will be made.” He did not appear to recollect his child, and despair seemed to have taken such possession of his mind, that it was thought proper to try to rouse him from it by naming the child : — Lady Abbot did so — he was in the greatest agitation, “ Oh ! where, where, is she ?” exclaimed he, “ keep her not a moment from me.” The child was brought, he extended his arms to receive it, fixed his eyes upon it, but spoke not

a word; an alarming wildness appeared in his countenance; after surveying it steadily, for some time, he burst into tears — he took it into his bed, it remained quiet, he strained it to his heart, sobbing with agony.

“ I am going, my injured baby,” he faintly said, “ to your much-injured mother, but I die for the horrid deed — may my sufferings, my death, make some atonement for my vile transgressions.” — “ Madam,” he continued, turning to his weeping mother, “ to you I commit this treasure — take her, love her as you have loved your unworthy son — I hope she will prove more worthy of your affection; — but, whatever you do, instil the love of virtue and justice, founded upon true principles, in her heart, and let the pride of family yield to those superior considerations. — The disappointment I have occasioned to you and my father in your fondest hopes would set heavy upon my mind, had I
not

not a still heavier burthen weighing down my soul — a burthen of complicated sin, which may follow me to another world and render me even more miserable there than I am here — yet, may not my sincere repentance hold out to me a *hope* of forgiveness? — as you have loved your wretched son, love and preserve his unfortunate child — promise me, solemnly promise me, at this awful moment!” he looked earnestly upon his father and mother, who stood mute and motionless with grief: — “speak!” said Mr Abbot, “speak that comfort to my soul. — Oh! my darling!” continued he, sobbing over his child that lay in his arms, “repay my dear father and mother their kindness to thee — be a substitute for their unhappy son — be a better comfort to them —” here he faltered, a deadly paleness came over his countenance, he faintly continued, “may heaven hear my prayers and pardon my —” The unfinished sentence died on his

faultering lips — he fell back — and with a convulsion ended his wretched life.