
ALMEDA AND FLAVIA.

FLAVIA.

WHILE dusky shades eclipse the solar
ray,
And fanning zephyrs 'mong the branches
play,
Where varied beauties deck the verdant
groves,
Let us recount the story of our loves.
Say, dear Almeda, why this pensive mood,
Which does thy wonted cheerfulness exclude?

ALMEDA.

The cause of this to Flavia I'll reveal:
It is a youth whose power I can't conceal.
'Tis Strephon, who long since obtain'd my
heart,
When artful Cupid gave the killing dart.

When Strephon's near, no anxious cares molest,
Nor access find to my enraptur'd breast;
But when he's gone, his absence still I mourn,
And spend my hours in sighs till he return.

FLAVIA.

You kindle into rapture at his name;
Be wise in time, and guard against a flame,
Which cherish'd, hopeless, will your charms
efface,
And rob your features of each blooming
grace.

The dear Castalia taught my heart to prove
The soft'ning charms and pleasing art of
love.

Witness ye rural walks and verdant vales,
How charm'd I've listen'd to his melting
tales;

While he, unskill'd in flatt'ry, did impart,
In flowing strains, the dictates of his heart.
Blind was my passion, long it bore the sway,
Suppress'd at last by the enliv'ning ray

Of Reason wak'd, by some celestial pow'r,
 To my relief, in an auspicious hour,
 With open'd eyes I did the charmer view;
 Deaf to his accents, from his presence flew.
 Observe, my precepts are with prudence
 fraught,
 What heart so stubborn would remain un-
 taught?

ALMEDA.

Command the briny waves no more to flow,
 Bid southern breezes ever cease to blow;
 Say to the flowers, no more your fragrance
 yield,
 Nor Ceres crown with joy the fertile field;
 Bid Phœbus cease to gild the op'ning morn,
 And Cynthia be of all her beauty shorn:
 Would these obedient as thy vassals prove?
 No more can I, dear Flavia, cease to love.
 A youth possess'd of ev'ry moving art,
 Quick access gains to the securest heart.
 When he appears, to cheer the drooping plain,
 Each nymph enamour'd spends her sighs in
 vain:

And when in softest strains he tunes his lay,
 Each shepherd, envious, throws his lute away.
 In him all radiant virtues are combin'd,
 True greatness centers in a humble mind;
 Truth, candour, justice, in his gen'rous
 breast,
 Firm fortitude and soft compassion rest.
 Nor can the gods on mortals more bestow,
 A bright example of their works below.
 Young Strephon's charms, no tongue could
 e'er express;
 I may be silent, but can't love him less,

FLAVIA.

Enough is said, Almeda dear, to prove
 No fault is seen in those we truly love.
 The son of Venus, by a magic art,
 Deceives the sight, soon as he wounds the
 heart.
 Blind as himself does all his vot'ries make,
 Extremely happy in their own mistake.
 In all his charms I have young Strephon seen,
 Yet never by the youth have wounded been.

Yet were he, as you paint him, thus complete,
 And fond to lay his garlands at your feet,
 Sure young men's minds still subject are to
 change,

Though from our plains he were not doom'd
 to range,

A change of-scenes may, with distorted brows,
 Pour swift contempt on all your former vows.
 But let indiff'rence lodge within your breast,
 Nor Strephon's absence e'er your mind mo-
 lest;

The more his charms, the surer he'll succeed
 'Mong pow'rful rivals, whom you now may
 dread.

A L M E D A.

I know his charms the gentlest dame might
 move,

But he'll admit no rival in his love:

My image still remains within his breast,

True to that hour I first my love confest.

This pleasing hope will soothe my anxious
 soul,

Nor let stern care its peaceful sway controul,

Diffuse into my heart its soft relief,
 Dispel my fears and dissipate my grief.
 I'll say the youth, for me by heaven design'd,
 Is good, as lovely, constant, as he's kind ;
 So smoothly shall the seasons glide along,
 Till Strephon's presence animate my song,
 Then shall my pleasure as my love abound,
 'Till Hymen's rites with purest joys be
 crown'd.

FLAVIA.

So may you sing, and sigh your years away,
 With flatt'ring hope, perch'd on the feeble
 spray
 Of Strephon's faith, the efforts rend'ring vain
 Of such as would essay your love to gain,
 Till his own choice, or some disaster show,
 Your promis'd pleasures vanish'd like the
 snow.
 Your charms are fled, no lover then in view,
 The paths of discontent you will pursue.
 That you despis'd Philander then you'll
 mourn,
 Nor gave Lothario's suit a just return;

Or for Alonzo fight when 'tis too late,
And with reluctance meet your destin'd fate.
This will your slighted lovers laugh to see
Almeda then a maiden old will be.

ALMEDA.

The paths you paint I will not tread alone,
While Flavia lives I shall be sure of one.
Then hand in hand we'll smooth the rugged
way,
And fight for fight shall bear our griefs away.

FLAVIA.

Why should we fight? In smiles we will con-
tend,
And laugh at what we have no power to
mend.
Should fate deprive me of my darling swain,
Some braver youth perhaps may grace the
plain,
And make me happy by the nuptial band,
When cheerfully he gives his heart and hand,
Or if despis'd and unadmir'd I rest,
I'll call my own sad destiny the best.

I'll blifs the fate I oft have fought to fhun,
And fcorn the fool who would to wedlock
run.

See Nature now in contrast with thy grief;
The warbling fongfters feem to chant relief;
Their notes are cheerful, nor with fighs de-
prefs'd;
In concert join and foothe your cares to reft.

ALM E D A.

Nor warblers can give me delight,
How mournful and penfive their ftain;
Nought fweet can appear to my fight,
Since Strephon's forfaken the plain.

With joy I thefe banks did furvey,
With pleasure I've por'd on the ftream:
Young Strephon then with me did ftay,
And of nought but delight I could dream.

While he by my fide did recline,
The flowers feem'd to brighten their bloom;
The fun with more luftre did fhine,
And fragrance the fields did perfume.

Still pleas'd with his whispers of love,
Still charm'd with his amorous tale;
Now beauty's forsaken the grove,
And his absence I'll ever bewail.

How gloomy and dismal the shade,
Where Strephon was wont to appear,
Where oft his addressees he made,
And his accents delighted my ear.

Those paths I revisit in pain;
Yet love them without knowing why.
When fortune no favour will deign,
I deem it a pleasure to sigh.

In vain have my visitants strove
My woes to divert by a smile;
Though I seem'd of their jest to approve,
My heart was with Strephon the while.

Society, spoil'd of each charm,
Without him no pleasure can give;
In solitude cares will alarm,
In his absence 'tis painful to live.

When Sol, from the watery main,
Ascends to illumine the sky,
My thoughts to the loveliest swain,
More swift than the lightning can fly.

I muse on his charms all the day;
The theme seems enchantingly sweet,
Nor ends with bright Phœbus's ray;
In dreams I my wishes repeat.

Ye angels that succour the brave,
Prove guardians to the sweet youth;
Still may he with honour behave,
Integrity, wisdom and truth.

While through distant climes he may rove,
His image is fix'd in my view;
Let Strephon be constant in love,
And Almeda will ever be true.