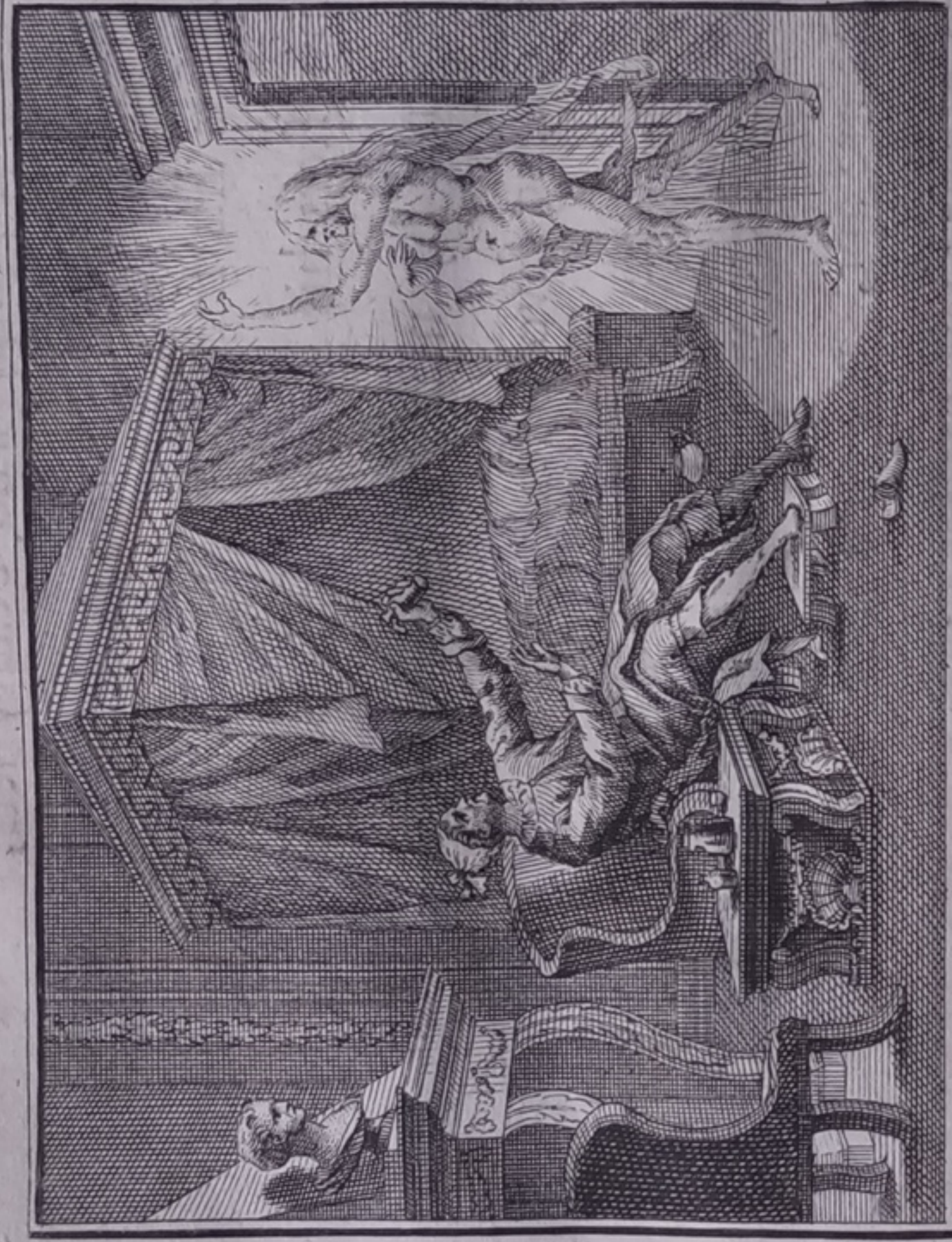




FABLE XXXI.

The Universal Apparition.

A Rake, by ev'ry passion rul'd,
 With ev'ry vice his youth had cool'd;
 Disease his tainted blood assails,
 His spirits droop, his vigor fails,
 With secret ills at home he pines,
 And, like infirm old-age, declines.

As

As, twing'd with pain, he pensive sits,
And raves, and prays, and swears by fits,
A ghastly phantome, lean and wan,
Before him rose, and thus began.

My name perhaps hath reach'd your ear;
Attend, and be advis'd by Care.
Nor love, nor honour, wealth nor power
Can give the heart a cheerful hour,
When health is lost. Be timely wife:
With health all taste of pleasure flies.

Thus said, the phantome disappears.
The wary counsel wak'd his fears;
He now from all excess abstains,
With physick purifies his veins;
And to procure a sober life
Resolves to venture on a wife.

But now again the sprite ascends,
Where'er he walks his ear attends,
Insinuates that beauty's frail,
That perseverance must prevail,

With

With jealousies his brain inflames,

And whispers all her lovers names;

In other hours she represents

His household charge, his annual rents,

Encreasing debts, perplexing duns,

And nothing for his younger sons.

Strait all his thought to gain he turns,

And with the thirst of lucre burns;

But when posselt of fortune's store,

The spectre haunts him more and more,

Sets want and misery in view,

Bold thieves and all the murd'ring crew,

Alarms him with eternal frights,

Infests his dream, or wakes his nights.

How shall he chase this hideous guest?

Power may perhaps protect his rest;

To pow'r he rose. Again the sprite

Befets him morning, noon and night,

Talks of ambition's tott'ring seat,

How envy persecutes the great,

Of

Of rival hate, of treach'rous friends,
And what disgrace his fall attends.

The court he quits to fly from Care,
And seeks the peace of rural air;
His groves, his fields amus'd his hours,
He prun'd his trees, he rais'd his flowers;
But Care again his steps pursues,
Warns him of blasts, of blighting dews,
Of plund'ring insects, snails and rains,
And drougths that starve the labour'd plains.
Abroad, at home, the spectre's there:

In vain we seek to fly from Care.

At length he thus the ghost address,
Since thou must be my constant guest,
Be kind, and follow me no more,
For Care by right should go before.



Q

F A B L E