
MUSINOT and MANNOA.**A*****French* NOVEL.**

A Friar of the Order of St. *Dominic*, named *Musinot*, had for many Years executed with Zeal the pious Office of a Director. *Vienne* in *Dauphine*, was the Place where he exercised his holy Ministry; under the deceitful Mask of the most extraordinary Piety, he had so firmly established a good Reputation, that there was not a Person in the whole City who had not been the Dupe of his Hypocrisy.

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There was not a Devotee but would have rejoiced to have this holy Father for a Director. He was every where revered as a Saint, and consulted as an Oracle. But this pious Hypocrite was not born with an Heart insensible of the Attractions of Pleasure.

A young Girl, named *Mannoa*, became his favourite Devotee. As he perfectly knew the gentle Innocence of this young Female, he was afraid to terrify her with bold Propositions at first. *Mannoa* was sensible and virtuous, and a mere Trifle would suffice to alarm her inherent Modesty. Her Director was therefore extremely careful to conceal the criminal Designs he had conceived against her Virtue. He at first contented himself with being often in her Company, and conversing with her; in which Conversations he frequently declared that for

Persons to expose themselves to Scandal was exquisitely criminal, and that a Fault committed in private carries half its Pardon along with it.

His young Devotee did not at first comprehend the Sense of this Moral; but when her Director thought he had worked her up to a proper Pitch, he did not hesitate to express himself in less obscure Terms.

He complimented her on her Beauty, and even declared to her the Impressions it had made on him. How, said he, could I defend myself from loving you? Are not you the Workmanship of the Hands of God? Those Charms which he has so profusely given you ought certainly to be admired. But you know, my dear Child, added he, that Ingratitude is a most odious Vice. Tell me, may I flatter myself

self that my Love will meet with some Return? What Return can you expect from me? replied she; you are not insensible that the Labour of my Hands is the only Provision for myself and my Mother? True, resumed the Friar. I know the Narrowness of your Circumstances, and I promise you that I will be generous and assist you; if you, in return will only promise to love me. Oh! that I will with all my Heart, replied this innocent *Agnes*, if you will but give me Instructions; for how should I that am but fourteen Years of Age, know how it is to love?

Well, well, my dear Child, resumed the pious Friar, it shall be my Business to teach you; and provided that you are but docile, I will engage that you shall make a great Progress in a very little Time: I will this very Day make you a Visit; but, tell me, is not your Mother

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ther sometimes from Home? Hardly ever, replied she; but, what does it signify whether she is, or is not; you cannot surely be unwilling that she should hearken to your Instructions; for I am well assured that your Reverence would not think of giving me any but what was very wholesome.

I hope you do not doubt it, resumed he; but I have, nevertheless, some particular Reasons why I rather choose to instruct you in private: But we will talk of that another Time. Adieu, my dear Child; if I can spare Time I will make you a Visit presently, which shall be preceded by a Present which I intend to send you.

He was as good as his Word; he caused a Purchase to be made of some Linnen and other Cloaths, which was remitted to his young Devotee the same Day. But her Mother,

Mother, who knew the Danger of receiving Presents from Friars, would not suffer her Daughter to accept of it.

The innocent *Mannoa*, who knew very little of the World, could not obey her Mother without muttering. The Present was however returned by the Bearer, to the Person who sent it. He had the Assurance to come and ask the Reason of their Refusal; *Mannoa's* Mother made the following Reply.

My Child, holy Father, is greatly obliged to you for the Present you have had the Bounty to send her; but you know how slanderous, how censorious the World is. If *Mannoa* should appear in an Habit above her Condition, every body will be wondering how she came by it; should it be alledged that her Director gave it her; the Reply will be, Is it customary for Direc-

tors to make temporal Presents to their Devotees? And I will leave you to judge what a deal of Babbling and Tittle-tattle will ensue.

You judge right, replied the Director, and I confess you cannot be too much commended for your Disinterestedness; but I know many Persons, extremely delicate in point of Honour, who differ widely from you in their Sentiments. I do not, replied *Mannoa's* Mother, endeavour to convince you, that I am in the Right; but nevertheless such is my Method of thinking; which I do insist my Daughter shall conform to.

Depend on it, replied the Friar, chagrin'd at the ill Success of his first Bait, I shall not endeavour to persuade your Daughter to act the Part of a disobedient Child.

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As this was a Language not very agreeable to the Director, he made but a very short Visit : After some Minutes Conversation on different Subjects, he departed very dissatisfied with the Reception they had given him. But he was too expert in Affairs of Gallantry to be ignorant of other Methods proper to reduce to Practice. He had frequent Opportunities of conversing with the young *Mannoa* ; and he knew very well how to make her forget the wise Lessons her Mother had taught her.

He was so well versed in the Art of Gallantry, that he found it no very difficult Matter to make her fall in the Snare which he had laid for her Innocence. And what contributed to his Success was, that her Mother departed this Life at the very Time when her Advice and
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Instructions were the most necessary.

Being her own Mistress, she was at full Liberty to act as she thought proper. Presently after she became the innocent Victim of a ravenous Wolf. After her Mother's Death, she proposed to go to Service, to wait on a Lady ; but her Director dissuaded her from it, promised to hire a Chamber for her, and that he would make her frequent Visits.

Oh! he was a very religious Man, followed the Dictates of his Zeal, and over-flowing with Charity for a poor distressed Orphan, went himself to do her those tender Offices which she sometimes stood in need of.

But in a few Months Time *Man-noa* beheld herself laden with the shameful Tokens of a criminal Commerce with her Director. She acquainted

quainted him with it; but instead of seeming afflicted at it, he gave her Joy of her Conception, telling her that she ought to think herself extremely fortunate, because it would encrease his Esteem for her. He advised her however to confine herself at Home as much as she could. She followed his Advice; but if she did not make any Visits, she received some which she had very little Reason to expect.

Her Director was indiscrete enough to acquaint one of his Brethren with his Intrigue. This Brother of his wanted to partake of the fair *Mannoa's* Favours; he therefore went to see her, and acquainted her that he was not a Stranger to the Happiness his Brother enjoyed in her Company. It was in vain for *Mannoa* to attempt to deny this Allegation. This cunning Friar was so well versed in the Art of Intrigue, that he presently obtained the whole
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Secret. But she earnestly requested him not to destroy her Reputation : He promised her the utmost Secrecy ; but this Promise was not to be had without a valuable Consideration. She therefore thought herself obliged to comply with his Terms ; and such Compliance produced deplorable Effects.

This second Friar, whom she had obliged by Prostitution, was not contented with a single Visit ; he wanted to enjoy the same Privileges that his Brother did ; but to prevent any Quarrelling or Uneasiness, he thought proper to keep it a Secret. He therefore took particular Care to conceal the Visits he made his young Mistress ; but all his Precautions were of no Effect. The enraged Director was informed of his Devotee's Infidelity. His Anger was at first so violent, that he resolved to sacrifice her to his jealous Fury ; but afterwards his own Security inspired

spired him with a more moderate Design ; therefore, without any shew of Vengeance, he was determined to inflict a very severe Punishment on the inconstant *Mannoa* ; and he thought no Method so effectual as to abandon her to her hard Fate.

Eight Days elapsed without his condescending to pay her a single Visit, in order to make his Absence the more insupportable. This so greatly affected her, that it was not in the Power of any Person to afford her the least Consolation. He spoke to his Brother Friar, his secret Rival, and confessed to him that the Motive which engaged him to deprive himself of *Mannoa's* Company was, that she was in a Condition which would presently discover itself. In short he told him that this young Girl was greatly advanced in her Pregnancy, and would quickly become a Mother ; that he should be construed the Father of the Child,
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if he continued his assiduous Visits. The Friar, whom he thus made his Confidant, thought it necessary to follow his Brother's Example, for the very same Reasons; by this means the miserable *Mannoa* was unfortunately abandoned to Despair; at that very Time, when she had the greatest Occasion of Assistance, there was not a single Person about her to alleviate her Misery. Overwhelmed with the most poignant Grief, Tears gushed continually from her Eyes. At length she received a Letter from cruel *Musnot*, which added to the Horror of her Condition. The Letter was as follows.

“ I would have continued to
 “ shower my Benefits on you, had
 “ you continued to deserve it. But
 “ do not flatter yourself that my
 “ Compassion shall ever interest it-
 “ self again in your Favour. I can-
 “ not but reproach myself for hav-
 “ ing

“ ing been so long the Dupe of
 “ your vile Artifices. Henceforth
 “ I shall take a Pleasure in your
 “ Tears. Adieu, endeavour to for-
 “ get me ; I shall no longer think
 “ of you, but as a Person highly
 “ deserving my Hatred and Indig-
 “ nation.”

This was the barbarous Letter which the unfortunate *Mannoa* received from her Director. By striking Tokens of the most sincere Repentance she strove to disarm him of his Anger. She wrote him several Letters in the most tender and affectionate Terms ; but he never vouchsafed to answer any of them. The inexorable *Musnot* continued obstinate in his Resentment, while the unfortunate *Mannoa*, who had been the Sacrifice of his brutal Passion, was almost perishing, without so much as a single Person to lend her any helping Hand ; and what augmented her Misfortune was, that she

she could not conceal the shameful Marks of her Infamy. Exasperated with the Cruelty of him who had seduced her, she wrote him the following Letter.

“ It is not your Love that I de-
 “ fire to plead in my Behalf ; I
 “ will even confess that I am un-
 “ worthy of it ; and yet it is your
 “ Indiscretion alone that has made
 “ me guilty of those Crimes with
 “ which you reproach me ; for
 “ why did you not conceal from
 “ your Friend, the Compliances
 “ you had seduced me to : But,
 “ supposing me to be unworthy of
 “ your Affection, at least permit me
 “ to implore your Compassion. Do
 “ you forget the Proof I bear about
 “ me of your tender Passion : You
 “ are not ignorant of my Condi-
 “ tion, and therefore know how
 “ much I stand in need of your
 “ Assistance. Do not refuse it me,
 “ and abandon me wholly to De-
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“ ipair : You are sensible that it is
 “ in my Power to ruin you ; do
 “ not force me then to do you an
 “ Injury which I am far from de-
 “ signing. If you regard your own
 “ Interest, you will not slight the
 “ Advice which flows from my
 “ Tenderneſs, but conſider what
 “ you muſt ſuffer from my juſt Re-
 “ ſentment, if you do not exerciſe
 “ the Affection of a Father towards
 “ the dear Infant I am about to
 “ bring into the World.”

Mannoa did not doubt but that
 this Letter would have a happy
 Succeſs; for ſhe knew that this Hip-
 pocrite who had ſeduced her, had
 nothing ſo much at Heart as the
 Care of his Reputation, which he
 preſerved by external Shews of the
 moſt unexampled Piety. He was
 indeed intimidated with the mena-
 cing Letter, but his Fear inſpired
 him with the moſt barbarous In-
 tent. He returned an Answer to
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Mannoa's Letter, full of the most convincing Marks of unaffected Tendernefs.

He told her that his Anger could not defend itself against the Affurances ſhe had given him of a ſincere Repentance; that ſhe had again found an Entrance into his Heart; and that ſhe ſhould preſently find the Effects of it. He concluded his Letter with affuring her, that if he could find a leiſure Hour in the Day, he would embrace it to come and reconcile Matters betwixt them.

He went, 'tis true, but only with Intent to enſure the Succeſs of the inhuman Vengeance he meditated. The tender Reception of *Mannoa* was not capable of ſoftening the Barbarity of his Heart. As ſoon as he entered her Chamber, ſhe threw herſelf at his Feet, and bathed them with her Tears.

May I be assured, said she, that you have forgiven me, and that I have again some Share in your Affections? Alas! how have I taken to Heart the Tokens you have given me of your Indifference, which is more horrible to me than Death itself! What Tears and Sighs has it not cost me. Well, my pretty Child, replied the Traitor, ready to smother her with feigned Caresses, if my Love be dear to you, assure yourself that you have the sole Possession of my Heart; and that nothing shall ever be able to diminish the Ardor of my Passion. I confess, added he, that I alone am the Author of the Misfortunes which I have accused you of; for I did not imagine that the Person whom I made my Confidant, would become my Rival. But let us entirely forget what is past, and think of nothing now but to taste the Pleasures
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of a sincere and tender Reconciliation.

How could *Mannoa* defend herself from such seductive Language. Transported with Joy, she threw her Arms round the Neck of this abandoned Villain, and gave him a thousand Proofs of the most sensible Acknowledgment. He returned these Caresses in the most passionate and affecting Manner, in order to convince the unfortunate *Mannoa*, that all Resentment was entirely vanished. But this was the last Visit he intended to make her; he extorted a Promise from her that she would come to see him in his Chamber the next Day; and the Reason he gave to engage her to comply with his Request, was, that in her Condition his Reputation would be endangered, should he continue to visit her at Home. You need, said he, only come to Church
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in the Dusk of the Evening; and whilst our Nuns are at the Refectory, I will conduct you to my Cell. To-morrow then I shall expect to see you at six o'Clock in the Evening; and pray take care not to weary my Impatience. He desired she would be obedient to his Desires. Adieu, my dear Child, then said he, it is with Regret that I part from you; and my only Consolation is the Assurance you have given me, that I shall presently have the Happiness of seeing you again.

Unfortunately for her, she was but too exact in performing the Promise she had made him. Blinded by her Passion, she waited with Impatience for the fatal Moment which was to effect her Ruin. The Clock struck Six; she ran with a Lover's haste to the Place of Rendezvous.

The cruel *Musket* came to meet her; and, as he had promised, con-
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ducted her privately into his Chamber. He delayed the Execution of his barbarous Design till he thought his Brethren the Friars were in a profound Sleep. His brutal Passion however, would not suffer him to act an idle Part in the intermediate Space. Several times did he glut his bestial Lust upon the unfortunate Victim of his Cruelty. At Length the profound Silence which reigned in the Convent, acquainted him that the Moment was arrived wherein he could without Danger pursue his horrid Purpose. Under Pretence of easing himself by a natural Evacuation, he tore himself from her Arms, leaped out of the Bed, armed himself with a Poniard, and had the Barbarity to plunge it several Times in the Breast of her who had but just satiated his infamous Desires.

Such was the deplorable Fate of the unfortunate *Mannoa*. The Villain having deprived her of Life,
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threw her Body into the *Rhone*. By the Help of a large Quantity of Water, which he had provided for that Purpose, he washed off all the Traces of Blood which had been shed in his Chamber ; but it was not in his Power to wash off that which was imprinted on the Wall that faced the River. A few Days after this Murder was committed, two Sailors happened to see the Body of this unfortunate Girl floating upon the Surface of the Water; they took it into their Boat, and went into the City to make their Report to the Judges, who put every Method in Practice to discover the Author of this inhuman Murder.

Musnot however thought himself very secure ; for carrying about him such an external shew of Sanctity, by which he had acquired an high Reputation in the City, he did not imagine he should be suspected. But Heaven would not suffer such

abominable Crimes to go unpunished. Some Person perceiving the Marks which the Blood had made upon the Wall, as I have before observed, the Judges were summoned to look at it, and thereupon grew very suspicious. *Musnot's* Chamber was visited, and his Bed being found bloody, he was seized and shut up in a Dungeon. It would notwithstanding have been very difficult to convict him of the Murder he had been guilty of, if *Manna's* last Letter had not been found among his Papers. This Letter was presented to him, at which he suddenly grew exceeding pale: He was legally examined and committed to the Prison of *Grenoble*. The Judges, after having examined the Informations lodged against him, condemned him to suffer an ignominious Death. Before his Execution, he not only confessed this last Crime he had been guilty of, but a Thousand other abominable

abominable Transactions, which one would think the very worst of Mankind could not possibly be guilty of. The Sentence pronounced against him was then executed, which was far inadequate to the Punishment he deserved.

