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A Sentimental Journey Through France And Italy

Yorick, ...

London, 1768

Maria.

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M A R I A.

WHEN Maria had come a little to herself, I ask'd her if she remember'd a pale thin person of a man who had sat down betwixt her and her goat about two years before? She said, she was unsettled much at that time, but remember'd it upon two accounts—that ill as she was she saw the person pitied her; and next, that her goat had stolen his handkerchief, and she had beat him for the theft—she had wash'd it, she said, in the brook, and kept it ever since in her pocket to restore it to him in case she should ever see him again, which, she

She added, he had half promised her. As she told me this, she took the handkerchief out of her pocket to let me see it; she had folded it up neatly in a couple of vine leaves, tied round with a tendril—on opening it, I saw an S mark'd in one of the corners.

She had since that, she told me, stray'd as far as Rome, and walk'd round St Peter's once—and return'd back—that she found her way alone across the Apennines—had travell'd over all Lombardy without money—and through the flinty roads of Savoy without shoes—how she had borne it, and how she had got supported, she could not tell—but *God*
temperis



tempers the wind, said Maria, to the
thorn lamb.

Shorn indeed! and to the quick,
said I; and wast thou in my own
land, where I have a cottage, I would
take thee to it and shelter thee: thou
shouldst eat of my own bread, and
drink of my own cup—I would be
kind to thy Sylvio—in all thy weak-
nesses and wanderings I would seek
after thee and bring thee back—when
the sun went down I would say my
prayers, and when I had done thou
shouldst play thy evening song upon
thy pipe, nor would the incense of
my sacrifice be worse accepted for
entering heaven along with that of a
broken heart.

Nature

Nature melted within me, as I utter'd this ; and Maria observing, as I took out my handkerchief, that it was steep'd to much already to be of use, would needs go wash it in the stream.—And where will you dry it, Maria ? said I—I'll dry it in my bosom, said she—'twill do me good.

And is your heart still so warm,
Maria ? said I.

I touch'd upon the string on which hung all her sorrows—she look'd with wistful disorder for some time in my face ; and then, without saying any thing, took her pipe, and play'd her service to the Virgin — The string I had touch'd ceased to vibrate—in a

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moment or two Maria returned to herself—let her pipe fall—and rose up.

And where are you going, Maria? said I.—She said to Moulines.—Let us go, said I, together.—Maria put her arm within mine, and lengthening the string, to let the dog follow—in that order we entered Moulines.

M A R I A.