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**A Sentimental Journey Through France And Italy**

**Yorick, ...**

**London, 1768**

Maria. Moulines

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## M A R I A.

## M O U L I N E S

I NEVER felt what the distress of plenty was in any one shape till now—to travel it through the Bourbonnois, the sweetest part of France—in the hey-day of the vintage, when Nature is pouring her abundance into every one's lap, and every eye is lifted up—a journey through each step of which music beats time to *Labour*, and all her children are rejoicing as they carry in their clusters—to pass through this with my affections flying out, and kindling at every

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group before me—and every one of 'em was pregnant with adventures.

Just heaven! — it would fill up twenty volumes—and alas! I have but a few small pages left of this to crowd it into—and half of these must be taken up with the poor Maria my friend, Mr. Shandy, met with near Moulines.

The story he had told of that disorder'd maid affect'd me not a little in the reading; but when I got within the neighbourhood where she lived, it returned so strong into my mind, that I could not resist an impulse which prompted me to go half a league out of the road to the village where

where her parents dwelt to enquire  
after her.

'Tis going, I own, like the Knight  
of the Woeful Countenance, in quest  
of melancholy adventures — but I  
know not how it is, but I am never so  
perfectly conscious of the existence  
of a soul within me, as when I am en-  
tangled in them.

The old mother came to the door,  
her looks told me the story before she  
open'd her mouth—She had lost her  
husband; he had died, she said, of  
anguish, for the loss of Maria's senses  
about a month before. — She had  
feared at first, she added, that it  
would have plunder'd her poor girl  
of

of what little understanding was left—but, on the contrary, it had brought her more to herself—still she could not rest—her poor daughter, she said, crying, was wandering somewhere about the road—

—Why does my pulse beat languid as I write this? and what made La Fleur, whose heart seem'd only to be tuned to joy, to pass the back of his hand twice across his eyes, as the woman stood and told it? I beckon'd to the postilion to turn back into the road.

When we had got within half a league of Moulines, at a little opening in the road leading to a thicket, I discovered

discovered poor Maria sitting under a poplar—she was sitting with her elbow in her lap, and her head leaning on one side within her hand—a small brook ran at the foot of the tree.

I bid the postilion go on with the chaise to Moulines—and La Fleur to bespeak my supper—and that I would walk after him.

She was dress'd in white, and much as my friend described her, except that her hair hung loose, which before was twisted within a silk net.—She had, superadded likewise to her jacket, a pale green ribband which fell across her shoulder to the waist; at the end  
of



of which hung her pipe. — Her goat had been as faithless as her lover ; and she had got a little dog in lieu of him, which she had kept tied by a string to her girdle ; as I look'd at her dog, she drew him towards her with the string. — “ Thou shalt not leave me, Sylvio,” said she. I look'd in Maria's eyes, and saw she was thinking more of her father than of her lover or her little goat ; for as she utter'd them the tears trickled down her cheeks.

I sat down close by her ; and Maria let me wipe them away as they fell with my handkerchief. — I then steep'd it in my own — and then in hers — and then in mine — and then  
I wip'd

I wip'd hers again — and as I did it, I felt such undescribable emotions within me, as I am sure could not be accounted for from any combinations of matter and motion.

I am positive I have a soul; nor can all the books with which materialists have pester'd the world ever convince me of the contrary.

M A R I A.

