

THE  
HISTORY OF  
BLUE BEARD;  
OR,  
FEMALE CURIOSITY.



DEVONPORT:  
PRINTED BY AND FOR  
Samuel and John Keys.

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# BLUE BEARD.

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In Turkey dwelt a wealthy man,  
Whom maid and matron fear'd;  
For frightful was his countenance,—  
He wore a large blue beard!

Most pompous was his equipage:  
He num'rous slaves controlled!  
With damask all his rooms were hung,  
His chariots shone with gold.

He sought the company of the fair,  
But all would shun his sight;  
He seem'd a being but to awe,  
And drown the mind in fright.

At length a neighbouring lady, lured  
By Blue Beard's fond professions,  
Consented to become his wife,  
And share his vast possessions.

Fatima was this lady's name—  
Of graceful form and fair;  
Rich were the flowing robes she wore,  
Bright gems bedeck'd her hair.



And now the wedding day arriv'd,  
In splendor all array'd,  
Great Blue Beard to the altar led  
The unsuspecting maid.

The clarion, pipe, and tabor's sounds  
Proclaim'd the nuptial day;  
While flower-girls, as the pageant pass'd,  
With roses strew'd the way.



The sacred ceremony o'er,  
The marriage train repair  
To Blue Beard's gorgeous residence,  
And feast and banquet there.

Then Blue Beard introduced his friends  
To each magnific room,  
Each shrubb'ry, flower-garden sweet,  
And elegant saloon.

The admiring gazers view'd them all  
With wonder and surprise :  
These things made Blue Beard look less  
fierce  
In all the ladies' eyes.

In gay amusements pass'd the time,  
No sound of care was heard ;  
Fatima's hours were happiness,  
Nor dreaded she Blue Beard.

A month though scarcely had elapsed,  
When Blue Beard told his wife,  
That for a while he must depart  
From her, his dearest life.

" Affairs of great import," said he,  
" Now call me from thy charms ;  
But soon, my love, will I return  
To thy delighted arms.

" Mourn not my absence, I entreat,  
But entertain your friends,  
For greatly the repulse of grief  
On merriment depends.

" Here, take the keys of this domain ;  
This opes the chest of plate ;  
These to my wardrobes do belong ;  
This to the mansion-gate.

“And this unlocks my treasury ;  
The casket this one fits,  
Contains my splendid jewellery,  
Pearls, diamonds, amethysts.

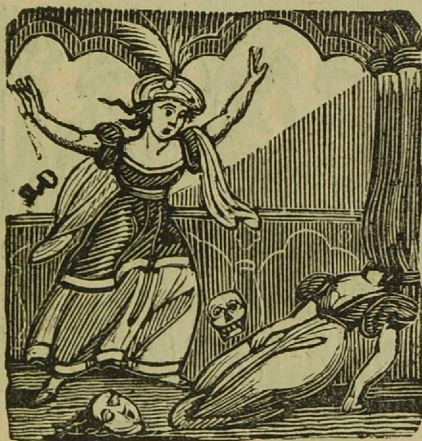
“Use all these as it seems thee best ;  
But this which now I give  
Unlocks yon closet—open it not,  
Or else you cease to live !”

Scarcely had Blue Beard left his home,  
Ere gaiety began ;  
Swift through the halls th’ enlivening  
notes  
Of mirthful music ran.

Fatima leads her wond’ring guests  
Around the glittering dome ;  
And now her prying spirit pants  
To view the secret room.

Away she flew—applied the key  
To the black dungeon’s door :—  
Lo ! murder’d ladies met her gaze,  
All weltering in their gore.

Oh ! horrid, soul-appaling sight !  
She quivered with dismay,  
To see the skulls and straggling bones  
Which on the pavement lay.



She in her trepidation dropp'd  
The key of this grim den :—  
It lay among the mangled limbs,  
Imbued with bloody stain !

She seized it—hastily shut the door,  
Quick to her sister hied :  
And to erase the fatal spots  
For hours they vainly tried.



Next day Blue Beard return'd: he ask'd  
– Fatima for the keys :  
She gave them: with a sudden glance  
The blood-stain'd key he sees.

“So, madam, you have spurn'd my threats,  
And visited the place  
I bade thee shun: well, thy sweet form  
Its gloomy walls shall grace.”



Then forth he drew his scimitar,  
To slay his beauteous wife :  
Her sister interpos'd, and begg'd  
He would not take her life.

“No ! die she shall, and instantly !”  
Th' inhuman monster cried :  
“O give a little time for prayer !”  
Implor'd his fainting bride.

Up to the turret's lofty top  
The sisters fond repaired;  
But ah! no cheering hope remain'd,  
Fatima would be spared.

"O Ann look out," Fatima cried;  
"See if our brothers come."  
"No, sister, I see nought but sheep,  
Which through the meadows roam."

"Come down!" most fiercely Blue Beard  
roar'd;

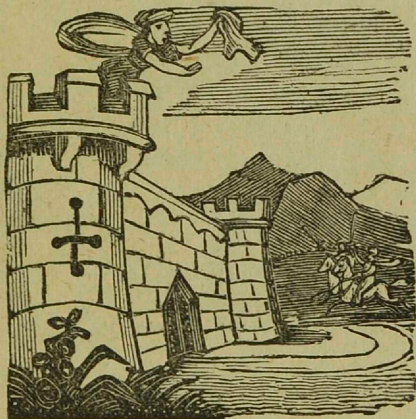
"Your given time's expired!  
Fatima! faithless wretch! come down!  
His eyes with anger fired.

"Another short five minutes grant!"  
Fatima, faltering, pray'd;

"I grant it—not a moment more  
Thy death shall be delayed!"

"Pray look again, dear sister Ann;  
Does any one draw near?  
I tremble on the verge of death,  
The victim of despair!"

"They come! they come!" exulted Ann,  
I see them on the plains;  
Our brothers come with rapid course;  
They fly with loosen'd reins."



Blue Beard, infuriated, rush'd  
Upon his hapless bride ;  
He grasp'd her by her lovely locks,  
While she in anguish cried.

"Forgive me, oh ! forgive your wife,  
Let pity warm your heart !  
Inexorable still he stands—  
His eyeballs fury dart.



He aims the fatal blow—when hark,  
A noise which makes him start;  
Her brothers enter with drawn swords,  
And pierce him to the heart.

Fatima swoon'd: but when reviv'd,  
She thanked her gallant brothers:  
Gave them much wealth, and soon be-  
stow'd  
Her hand upon another.

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