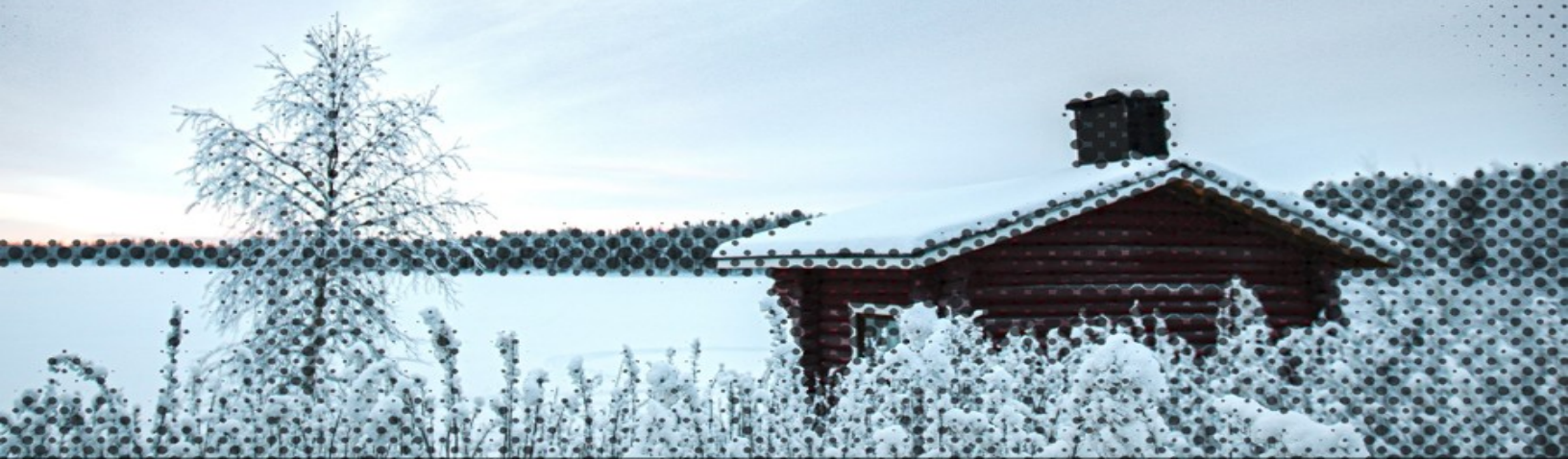


**John Fletcher**



*The Faithful  
Shepherdess*

**John Fletcher**

# **The Faithful Shepherdess**



Published by Good Press, 2022

[goodpress@okpublishing.info](mailto:goodpress@okpublishing.info)

EAN 4064066315306

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Cover](#)

[Titlepage](#)

[Text](#)



Actus Primus. Scena Prima.

Enter Clorin a shepherdess, having buried her Love in an Arbour.

Hail, holy Earth, whose cold Arms do imbrace The truest man that ever fed his flocks By the fat plains of fruitful Thessaly, Thus I salute thy Grave, thus do I pay My early vows, and tribute of mine eyes To thy still loved ashes; thus I free My self from all insuing heats and fires Of love: all sports, delights and jolly games That Shepherds hold full dear, thus put I off. Now no more shall these smooth brows be begirt With youthful Coronals, and lead the Dance; No more the company of fresh fair Maids And wanton Shepherds be to me delightful, Nor the shrill pleasing sound of merry pipes Under some shady dell, when the cool wind Plays on the leaves: all be far away, Since thou art far away; by whose dear side How often have I sat Crown'd with fresh flowers For summers Queen, whil'st every Shepherds Boy Puts on his lusty green, with gaudy hook, And hanging scrip of finest Cordevan. But thou art gone, and these are gone with thee, And all are dead but thy dear memorie; That shall out-live thee, and shall ever spring Whilest there are pipes, or jolly Shepherds sing. And here will I in honour of thy love, Dwell by thy Grave, forgetting all those joys, That former times made precious to mine eyes, Only remembring what my youth did gain In the dark, hidden vertuous use of Herbs: That will I practise, and as freely give All my endeavours, as I gain'd them free. Of all green wounds I know the remedies In Men or Cattel, be they stung with Snakes, Or charm'd with powerful words of wicked Art, Or be they Love-sick, or through too much heat Grown wild or

Lunatick, their eyes or ears Thickned with misty filme of dulling Rheum, These I can Cure, such secret vertue lies In Herbs applyed by a Virgins hand: My meat shall be what these wild woods afford, Berries, and Chesnuts, Plantanes, on whose Cheeks, The Sun sits smiling, and the lofty fruit Pull'd from the fair head of the staight grown Pine; On these I'll feed with free content and rest, When night shall blind the world, by thy side blest. Enter a Satyr.

Satyr. Through yon same bending plain That flings his arms down to the main, And through these thick woods have I run, Whose bottom never kist the Sun Since the lusty Spring began, All to please my master Pan, Have I trotted without rest To get him Fruit; for at a Feast He entertains this coming night His Paramour, the Syrinx bright: But behold a fairer sight! [He stands amazed. By that Heavenly form of thine, Brightest fair thou art divine, Sprung from great immortal race Of the gods, for in thy face Shines more awful Majesty, Than dull weak mortalitie Dare with misty eyes behold, And live: therefore on this mold Lowly do I bend my knee, In worship of thy Deitie; Deign it Goddess from my hand, To receive what e're this land From her fertil Womb doth send Of her choice Fruits: and but lend Belief to that the Satyre tells, Fairer by the famous wells, To this present day ne're grew, Never better nor more true. Here be Grapes whose lusty bloud Is the learned Poets good, Sweeter yet did never crown The head of Bacchus, Nuts more brown Than the Squirrels Teeth that crack them; Deign O fairest fair to take them. For these black ey'd Driope Hath oftentimes commanded me, With my clasped knee to clime; See how well the lusty time Hath deckt their rising cheeks in

red, Such as on your lips is spread, Here be Berries for a Queen, Some be red, some be green, These are of that luscious meat, The great God Pan himself doth eat: All these, and what the woods can yield, The hanging mountain or the field, I freely offer, and ere long Will bring you more, more sweet and strong, Till when humbly leave I take, Lest the great Pan do awake, That sleeping lies in a deep glade, Under a broad Beeches shade, I must go, I must run Swifter than the fiery Sun. [Exit. Clo. And all my fears go with thee. What greatness or what private hidden power, Is there in me to draw submission From this rude man, and beast? sure I am mortal: The Daughter of a Shepherd, he was mortal: And she that bore me mortal: prick my hand And it will bleed: a Fever shakes me, And the self same wind that makes the young Lambs shrink, Makes me a cold: my fear says I am mortal: Yet I have heard (my Mother told it me) And now I do believe it, if I keep My Virgin Flower uncropt, pure, chaste, and fair, No Goblin, Wood-god, Fairy, Elfe, or Fiend, Satyr or other power that haunts the Groves, Shall hurt my body, or by vain illusion Draw me to wander after idle fires; Or voyces calling me in dead of night, To make me follow, and so tole me on Through mire and standing pools, to find my ruine: Else why should this rough thing, who never knew Manners, nor smooth humanity, whose heats Are rougher than himself, and more mishapen, Thus mildly kneel to me? sure there is a power In that great name of Virgin, that binds fast All rude uncivil bloods, all appetites That break their confines: then strong Chastity Be thou my strongest guard, for here I'll dwell In opposition against Fate

and Hell. Enter an old Shepherd, with him four couple of Shepherds and Shepherdesses.

Old Shep. Now we have done this holy Festival In honour of our great God, and his rites Perform'd, prepare your selves for chaste And uncorrupted fires: that as the Priest, With powerful hand shall sprinkle on [your] Brows His pure and holy water, ye may be From all hot flames of lust, and loose thoughts free. Kneel Shepherds, kneel, here comes the Priest of Pan. Enter Priest.

Priest. Shepherds, thus I purge away, Whatsoever this great day, Or the past hours gave not good, To corrupt your Maiden blood: From the high rebellious heat Of the Grapes, and strength of meat; From the wanton quick desires, They do kindle by their fires, I do wash you with this water, Be you pure and fair hereafter. From your Liver and your Veins, Thus I take away the stains. All your thoughts be smooth and fair, Be ye fresh and free as Air. Never more let lustful heat Through your purged conduits beat, Or a plighted troth be broken, Or a wanton verse be spoken In a Shepherdesses ear; Go your wayes, ye are all clear.

[They rise and sing in praise of Pan.]

The SONG.

Sing his praises that doth keep

Our Flocks from harm,

Pan the Father of our Sheep,

And arm in arm

Tread we softly in a round, Whilest the hollow neighbouring ground Fills the Musick with her sound. Pan, O