

A Poem of  
Letitia Elizabeth Landon  
(L. E. L.)  
in  
The Keepsake, 1836

compiled  
by  
Peter J. Bolton



## *The Escape of Fenella*

*Painted by A. E. Chalon R. A.    Engraved by J. C. Edwards*

## FENELLA'S ESCAPE.

BY L. E. L.

WITHIN the stately palace,  
    Within the stately room,  
They kept the silent maiden  
    As it had been her tomb.  
The birds that sing of summer  
    Went through the sunny air ;  
She watch'd them in the sunshine,  
    And wish'd she, too, were there.  
At length she fled—the evening  
    Was darkening in the sky ;  
There was revel in the palace,  
    None mark'd the captive fly.  
She fled, and found her brother  
    All lonely by their hearth :  
He was thinking of his sister,  
    And of their former mirth.  
She could not tell her story—  
    She had no words to tell ;  
But the shadow of her sorrow  
    Like night around her fell.  
Her cheek and brow were alter'd  
    From their open look of yore,  
Her eye was dim and downcast,  
    And her lip wore smiles no more.  
He rose, and he avenged her,  
    That brother—and there came  
An after hour of triumph,  
    Atchieved in freedom's name :

The sunny town of Naples,  
The far and shining sea,  
Re-echoed to the thousands  
Who shouted, "we are free!"  
The tale of those bold fishermen,  
Is writ in blood and tears;  
True freedom asks the labour,  
And care of many years.  
But slavery's strong foundations,  
In such hours are o'erthrown,  
In doubt, turmoil, and danger,  
The glorious seed is sown.

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The basis of this poem is Auber's Opera '*La Muette de Portici*' in which Fenella is a non-singing role performed by a dancer with extensive use of mime. This character was derived from the Fenella in Scott's '*Peveril of the Peak*', who in this case is a dwarf feigning to be deaf and dumb. Note the spelling 'atchieved' in line 28.