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Vol Andrew

PRICE 15 CENTS.

DE WITT'S ACTING PLAYS.

(Number 61.)

PLOT AND PASSION.

A DRAMA, IN THREE ACTS.

(From the French.)

BY TOM TAYLOR.

Author of "Henry Dunbar," "Ticket of Leave Man," &c., &c.

AS FIRST PERFORMED AT THE OLYMPIC THEATRE, LONDON,
UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF MESSRS ROBSON AND
EMERY, MONDAY, OCTOBER, 17, 1853.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A description of the Costume—Cast of the Characters—Entrances and Exits—
Relative Positions of the Performers on the Stage, and
the whole of the Stage Business.

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No.		M.	F.	No.		M.	F.
75.	Adrienne, drama, 3 acts.....	7	3	21.	Dreams, drama, 5 acts.....	6	3
114.	Anything for a Change, comedy, 1 3 3			186.	Duchess de la Valliere, play, 5 acts..	6	4
167.	Apple Blossoms, comedy, 3 acts... 7 3			47.	Easy Shaving, farce, 1 act.....	5	2
93.	Area Belle (The), farce, 1 act..... 3 2			13.	Everybody's Friend, comedy, 3 acts. 6 5		
40.	Atchi, comedietta, 1 act..... 3 2			200.	Estranged, an operetta, 1 act..... 2 1		
89.	Aunt Charlotte's Maid, farce, 1 act. 3 3			103.	Faus and Marguerite, drama, 3 acts, 9 7		
192.	Game of Cards (A), c medietta, 1 3 1			9.	Fearful Tragedy in the Seven Dials, interlude, 1 act.....	4	1
166.	Bardell vs. Pickwick, sketch, 1 act. 6 2			123.	Female Detective, drama, 3 acts..... 11 4		
41.	Beautiful Forever, farce, 1 act..... 2 3			101.	Fernande, drama, 3 acts.....	11	10
141.	Bells (The), drama, 3 acts..... 9 3			99.	Fifth Wheel, comedy, 3 acts.....	10	2
67.	Birthplace of Podgers, farce, 1 act.. 7 3			145.	First Love, comedy, 1 act.....	4	1
36.	Black Sheep, drama, 3 acts..... 7 5			102.	Foiled, drama, 4 acts.....	9	3
160.	Blow for Blow, drama, 4 acts.....	11	6	88.	Founded on Facts, farce, 1 act.....	4	2
70.	Bonnie Fish Wife, farce, 1 act..... 3 1			74.	Garrick Fever, farce, 1 act.....	7	4
179.	Breach of Promise, drama, 2 acts.. 5 2			53.	Gertrude's Money Box, farce, 1 act. 4 2		
25.	Broken-Hearted Club, comedietta, 1 4 8			73.	Golden Fetter (Fettered), drama, 3 11 4		
24.	Cabman, No. 93, farce, 1 act..... 2 2			30.	Goo-c with the Golden Eggs, farce, 1 act.....	5	3
1.	Caste, comedy, 3 acts..... 5 3			131.	Go to Putney, farce, 1 act.....	4	3
69.	Caught by the Cuff, farce, 1 act..... 4 1			28.	Happy Pair, comedietta, 1 act..... 1 1		
175.	Cast upon the World, drama, 5 acts. 10 5			151.	Hard Case (A), farce, 1 act..... 2 2		
55.	Catharine Howard, historical play, 3 acts.....	12	5	8.	Henry Dunbar, drama, 4 acts.....	10	3
80.	Charming pair, farce, 1 act..... 4 3			180.	Henry the Fifth, historical play, 5 38 5		
65.	Checkmate, comedy, 2 acts..... 6 5			19.	He's a Lunatic, farce, 1 act..... 3 2		
68.	Chevalier de St. George, drama, 3 9 3			60.	Hidden Hand, drama, 4 acts..... 5 5		
76.	Chops of the Channel, farce, 1 act. 3 2			137.	His Own Enemy, farce, 1 act..... 4 1		
149.	Clouds, comedy, 4 acts..... 8 7			174.	Home, comedy, 3 acts..... 4 3		
121.	Comical Countess, farce, 1 act..... 3 1			64.	Household Fairy, sketch, 1 act..... 1 1		
107.	Cupboard Love, farce, 1 act..... 2 1			190.	Hunting the Slipper, farce, 1 act..... 4 1		
152.	Cupid's Eye-Glass, comedy, 1 act... 1 1			191.	High C, comedietta, 1 act..... 4 2		
52.	Cup of Tea, comedietta, 1 act..... 3 1			197.	Hunchback (The), play, 5 acts..... 14 2		
148.	Cut off with a Shilling, comedietta, 1 act.....	2	1	18.	If I Had a Thousand a Year, farce, 1 act.....	4	3
113.	Cyrill's Success, comedy, 5 acts..... 10 4			116.	I'm Not Meself at All, original Irish stew, 1 act.....	3	2
199.	Captain of the Watch (The), comedietta, 1 act.....	4	2	129.	In for a Holiday, farce, 1 act..... 2 3		
20.	Daddy Gray, drama, 3 acts..... 8 4			159.	In the Wrong House, farce, 1 act... 4 2		
4.	Dandelion's Dodges, farce, 1 act... 4 2			122.	Isabella Orsini, drama, 4 acts..... 11 4		
22.	David Barrick, comedy, 3 acts..... 8 3			177.	I Shall Invite the Major, comedy, 1 4 1		
96.	Dearest Mamma, comedietta, 1 act, 4 3			100.	Jack Long, drama, 2 acts..... 9 2		
16.	Dearer than Life, drama, 3 acts..... 6 5			139.	Joy is Dangerous, comedy, 2 acts... 3 3		
53.	Deborah (Leah) drama, 3 acts..... 7 6			17.	Kind to a Fault, comedy, 2 acts... 6 4		
125.	Deerfoot, farce, 1 act..... 5 1			86.	Lady of Lyons, play, 5 acts..... 12 5		
71.	Doing for the Best, drama, 2 acts.. 5 3			72.	Lame Excuse, farce, 1 act..... 4 3		
142.	Dollars and Cents, comedy, 3 acts.. 9 4						

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Olympic Theatre, London, Oct. 17, 1853. Laura Keene's Theatre, New York, June 17, 1857.

Fouché (Duke of Otranto, Minister of Police—Character Comedy).....	Mr. EMERY.	Mr. BURNETT.
M. Desmarests (Head of the Secret Department of Police—1st Low Comedy)....	Mr. ROBSON.	Mr. WHEATLEIGH.
The Marquis de Cevennes (a Legitimist—Walking Gentleman).....	Mr. LESLIE.	Mr. J. A. SMITH.
Berthier (Prince of Neufchatel, Grand Chamberlain—Utility).....	Mr. WHITE.	
De Neuville (Secretary to De Cevennes—Character Comedy).....	Mr. A. WIGAN.	Mr. LINGHAM.
Jabot (House Stewart to Madame de Fontanges—Utility).....	Mr. LINDON.	Mr. McDouAL.
Grisboulle (a Subordinate of Desmarests—2d Low Comedy).....	Mr. H. COOPER.	
Madame de Fontanges (Comedy Lead)...	Mrs. STIRLING.	Miss LAURA KEENE.
Cecile (her Maid—Chambermaid).....	Miss TURNER.	

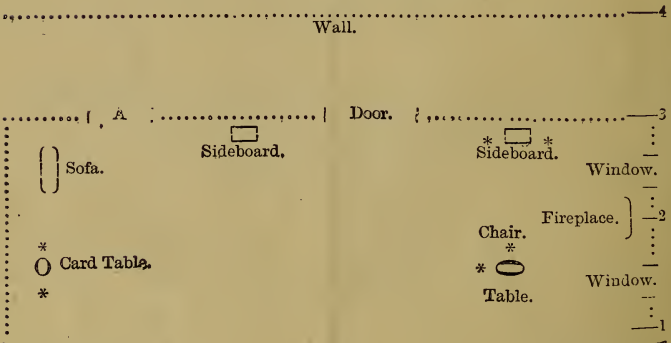
TIME—The Beginning of 1810.

SCENE—Acts I. and III. in Paris. Act II. near Prague.

TIME OF PLAYING—ONE HOUR AND A HALF.

SCENERY (French and German).

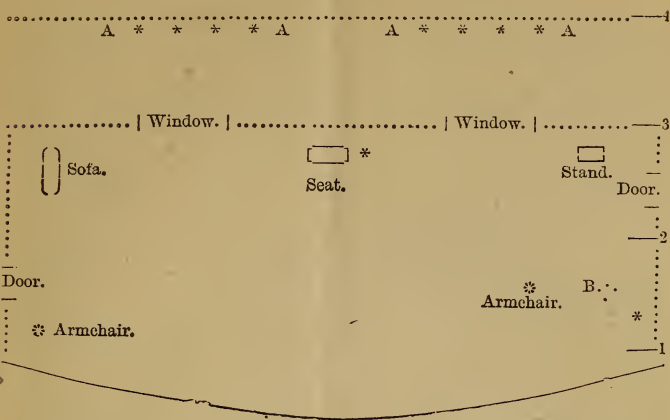
ACTS I. and III.—Interior in 4th grooves.



Carpet down; pictures on flat; A, a large picture which opens on hinges as a secret door; curtains to windows; looking-glass over mantel, L.; the furniture and frames of pictures modernized, antique patterns.

GIFT
EST. OF J. H. CORNING
JUNE 20. 1940

ACT II.—Interior of Villa and Garden in 4th grooves.



Landscape on flat of River Elbe and City of Prague in the distance; balustrade in the front; A, A, A, A, vases of flowers; French windows; B, an embroidery frame. pictures on wall, and carvings in pine wood.

COSTUMES—Of the Empire, 1810.

FOUCHE.—*First Dress:* The long black soutane of an Abbe, with black skull cap, covering the tonsure; black bands, with narrow white edging and narrow black cloak at the back: silk stockings; shoes and buckles; white wig. *Second Dress:* Blue velvet court cloak, embroidered with gold; white satin waistcoat and breeches; sword; silk stockings and shoes; iron-gray hair, cut straight on forehead, long at sides and back.

DESMARETS.—Black suit, breeches, and buckles. *Act II.:* Long boots; iron-gray hair, cut close in front, long behind.

DE CEVENNES AND DE NEUVILLE.—Maroon and chocolate coats, with high collars and long lappels, satin waistcoats, and breeches. *De C., Act II.:* Leather breeches and long top boots. *De N., Act II.:* Blue stockings, rich pants, and high boots.

BERTHIER.—Crimson velvet court suit, white satin waistcoat, and breeches, and sword.

JABOT.—Livery. *Act III.:* Dressing-gown.

GRISBOULLE.—German peasant's dress.

MADAME DE FONTANGES.—Elegant evening dress. *Act II.:* White dress, broad-leaved straw hat, blue sash cloak. *Act III.,* as in *Act II.*

CECILE.—Bandanna handkerchief on the head; long hose mittens

SYNOPSIS.

FOUCHE, Duke of Otranto, Minister of Police under Napoleon I., taking advantage of the passion of MADAME DE FONTANGES for gaming, causes her to be tempted by his agents, and begged through play, in order that he may avail himself of her services as a police spy. Of noble lineage and of high repute, and unsuspected in society, this lady is visited by FOUCHE, disguised as an abbe, under pretence of being her confessor, but, in reality, to clandestinely consult with DESMARETS, the head of the secret service. To enable him to do so, the minister had caused a concealed passage to be cut through the walls of the adjoining house, owned by his head agent, under the assumed name of LEBON. In this passageway is a secret vault, wherein are conserved state documents, which might either compromise the safety of FOUCHE or be used for his security. Visiting the apartments of madame beneath his priestly garb, the minister converses, in her absence, over state affairs with DESMARETS, his covert enemy, who informs him of the publication of a most bitter pamphlet, emanating from "Timon," which lays bare the enormities of FOUCHE's political career, supported by the reproduction of damning documents, copied from the secret archives of the state. DESMARETS inwardly exults over the vexation of his wily employer, to whom, as evidence of his ingenuity and subserviency, he presents a page of the original manuscript, obtained from a spy in the printing office wherein the publication was composed. FOUCHE vows vengeance upon the unknown author, should he be discovered, when he is visited by the MARQUIS DE CEVENNES, a noble charged with complotting for the restoration of Louis XVIII., and summoned into his presence in the name of the police. FOUCHE reveals himself to the astonished nobleman, and alarms him in to accepting of a delicate mission to Prague through accurately detailing incidents of his previous career in conspiracy. DE CEVENNES incautiously places in the minister's hands a memorial, the hand-writing of which corresponds with that of the offensive publication. The marquis, on receiving his instructions, promises to produce the author, his secretary, prior to his departure, and goes in search of him. MADAME DE FONTANGES, in the absence of FOUCHE and his new tool, returns to her house, where she finds DESMARETS, who declares his love for her upon her demanding the loan of money to redeem her jewels, pledged for gaming losses. Although scouting the agent's proposition of marriage, the lady, abashed at the degradation of her position, still overcome with her propensity for play, accepts the money, tendered only to rivet more firmly her chains, and hastens to again tempt fortune at the gaming table. FOUCHE, having arranged that the carriage on the left of the courtyard should proceed in desperate haste to Prague, while the one on the right, surrounded by soldiers, should convey the secretary, DE NEUVILLE, to the dungeons of Vincennes, returns to receive these gentlemen. DESMARETS, fearing that the arrest of DE NEUVILLE would disclose the fact of his having betrayed his trust through supplying documents from the secret archives, places the secretary on his guard, who, thus warned, takes the carriage destined for Prague. The marquis endeavors to depart on his mission immediately upon return of MADAME DE FONTANGES, who is in high spirits at having broken the bank, but, taking the wrong carriage, leaps from it to avoid arrest, is fired upon, and returns to the house. Discomfited at the escape of his calumniator, FOUCHE determines upon sending the beautiful DE FONTANGES to Prague, there to become acquainted with DE NEUVILLE, so as to fascinate and allure him back to Paris. She refuses to accept the task, and pleads hard to avoid it, still the orders of the police minister are imperative. At Prague, although surrounded by spies, the female agent, becoming deeply enamored of the man she is designed to betray, who, without knowing her real occupation, reciprocates her passion, endeavors to shake off the thralldom of FOUCHE and to apprise DE NEUVILLE of his danger. At this moment DESMARETS and DE CEVENNES appear upon the scene, the one as an emissary of the police minister, and the other as an unconscious bearer of a correspondence antagonistic to Napoleon's matrimonial schemes. The marquis exhibits to the agent a cane he is charged to carry from a lady to FOUCHE as a curious present. DESMARETS purloins a dispatch concealed within it, and substitutes a copy, and then, to gain DE FONTANGES' affection, entrusts her with the secret of the hidden vault, containing evidences of FOUCHE's treachery. The lady, in the desperation of love, resolves upon the overthrow of the minister to secure the safety of her lover. She avails herself of DE CEVENNES' return to Paris, and turtively accompanies him on his journey, and, while he sleeps, takes possession of the dispatch entrusted to him. DE NEUVILLE, mad with jealousy, and DESMARETS, fearful of his secret being betrayed, hurry after them. FOUCHE, apprised of his enemy's return, comes in person to cause his arrest, but MADAME DE FONTANGES, having caused the treacherous dispatch to reach the emperor, the power of the minister is broken, and he himself driven into exile.

PLOT AND PASSION.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Apartment in the house of MADAME DE FONTANGES, in 4th grooves. Candles burning.*

CECILE *at the fire-place.* JABOT *arranging the inkstand and a breviary on the table.*

CECILE. Seven o'clock, and Madame not returned! astonishing!

JABOT. Cecile, how often must I repeat to you that servants in a good family ought never to be astonished? Madame is young, charming, a widow, and may choose her own hours.

CEC. For her visitors—yes; but you forget this is her night for receiving her Confessor; she never would dare to keep the Abbé Lenoir waiting.

JAB. Pooh! she must leave a few of her sins to stand over till next week—there's a running account between them. When the Abbé arrives show him in here, and take care he is not disturbed in his pious exercises.

CEC. Hark! there's a fiacre in the court. (*she looks out*) The Abbé! (*she arranges her cap and hair at the glass.*) [Bell rings off, L.

JAB. What! even for an Abbé!

CEC. Why not? one must show some respect for the church, Monsieur Jabot. [Exit CECILE, C.

J.B. Oh, woman! woman! As if that walking monument of mortification had eyes for a waiting maid!

Re-enter CECILE, showing in FOUCHÉ in the dress of an ABBÉ. He walks with an air of pious abstraction; his hands folded, and his eyes cast down.

JAB. (R., *wheeling an arm chair forward*). Madame, unfortunately, has not yet returned—but she expected your Reverence's visit.

CEC. (L.). And directed that we should show every attention to your Reverence's wishes.

FOUCHÉ. Thank you, my children—I wish to be alone—see that no one enters this room, except your mistress, or my other penitent, M. de CEVELLES, should he arrive.

*JABOT *bows, CECILE curtsies, and exeunt.* L. FOUCHÉ, *rising, takes a rapid survey of the room, then closes the window curtains, places the lights on the mantelpiece, and bolts the door by which they have gone, and also the folding-doors.*

FOU. Never trust an order while there's a bolt. Now for my ferret:

—to all but me, M. Lebon, the respectable proprietor of the house next door—to me, Maximilian Desmarets, the most unmitigated rascal and most invaluable head of a secret department in Europe. It was a good idea of mine to establish him next door to Madame de Fontanges. We meet here unobserved. (*he touches a spring in the frame of the picture, R. It discovers secret doorway.*) Hist! Desmarets!

Enter from the secret door DESMARETS, with dispatch-box and papers. He takes a chair at the table, opens his box, unfolds his papers, R., and sits looking at FOUCHE.

FOU. At least, I am sure to find you at your post! (DESMARETS chuckles and rubs his hands) These women think only of pleasure.

DESMARETS. So do I—my pleasure's here! (*pointing to papers.*)

FOU. I pay Madame de Fontanges enough to ensure diligence, too.

DES. Madame receives exactly double what I do. Suppose you reversed the proportions?

FOU. You would serve me no better, and she would not serve me at all; besides, she has the enormous recommendation of an unblemished character!

DES. She!—so much for the world's judgment of a confirmed gambler!

FOU. That is her only vice—a secret confined to us and her mask! It was a good thought to allow of masks at the public tables.

DES. Do they hide many blushes?

FOU. They save many reputations. No, my excellent Desmerets, I have not spent twenty years in gauging the price of consciences without arriving at a tolerably fair estimate of the money value of my species, from Kings downwards.

DES. And you think my fidelity is worth just four thousand francs a month?

FOU. With your character I think no one would pay half as much for your treachery.

DES. You think so?

FOU. If anybody should make the offer let me know, and we can enter into a fresh arrangement!

DES. Ah! you know my heart is devoted to you!

FOU. I know your *head* is, and, as times go, that is perhaps a better security. But to work;—first, your dispatches from England!

DES. Two—(*takes papers*) One from Mons. Ouvrard, announcing that he has opened a negotiation for peace in *your* name, with the Foreign Secretary, but that he fears your other agent, Mons. Fagan, is not to be trusted.

FOU. Ordered—that M. Ouvrard keep a strict watch over M. Fagan. (DESMARETS makes a note on the dispatch) And the other?

DES. From M. Fagan, stating that your overtures for peace have been most favorably received by the English Prime Minister, but that he has reason to believe M. Ouvrard is in the pay of the Emperor.

FOU. Ordered—that M. Fagan establish a close espionage on M. Ouvrard. (DESMARETS makes a note on dispatch as before) I have long found the advantage of running my agents in couples. Two rogues so employed are as good as one honest man!

DES. And so much easier found.

FOU. The envoy of the Emperor has not yet arrived in London?

DES. (*referring to another paper*). No; he reached Amsterdam on the 3rd, but he will not sail for three weeks. I have made the necessary arrangements:

FOU. Good; by that time I shall have concluded my negotiations, and the Emperor will have found himself once more anticipated by his Minister of Police. We must teach these people that they cannot do without us.

DES. It is a danerous lesson sometimes with such pupils as the Emperor.

FOU. Hem! he has trusted me too far, Desmarets. Those letters, from his own hand, extending over the last ten years, are my security. While I have those, I stake his credit against my portfolio.

DES. And those letters, thanks to my skill in iron work, are safe in their secret deposit yonder. (*pointing to R. D. in F.*) How lucky the Revolution made a locksmith of me when it made a Member of the National Convention of you!

FOU. Yes, we have both been able to serve the state and ourselves. Go on.

DES. (*takes a pamphlet up*). From our London correspondent for printed papers—another of those pamphlets signed "Timon," which have been already found so disagreeable in high quarters.

FOU. Another? Is the Emperor never to be released from these attacks? Has this one reached France?

DES. Thirty thousand copies have been distributed, but I am sorry to say I have not yet discovered by what channel, which is the more annoying as this one is not directed against the Emperor.

FOU. Indeed! against whom, then?

DES. Against yourself!

FOU. Ah! (*starts up*.)

DES. It gives a very minute and apparently accurate account of your career.

FOU. No matter. (*uneasily*.)

DES. From the date of your Professoship at Nantes all is recorded—your strong measures in the Convention—your speeches in the Jacobin Club—

FOU. Enough, enough!

DES. What he calls your speculations in the Nièvre—your vote for the death of the King—your establishment of the Goddess of Reason in the Nivernais—

FOU. Pshaw! A truce to those youthful indiscretions.

DES. Your massacre at Lyons—your—

FOU. Desmarets, the mind of France must not be poisoned in this way! (*strikes table with his fist*.)

DES. Unfortunately the facts are supported by regular official documents.

FOU. They are forgeries—I destroyed all those papers when I become Minister.

DES. They may have been preserved, or copied.

FOU. Impossible! you alone had access to them besides myself!—Desmarets, how comes it this man is not discovered before this?

DES. Ha! ha! ha! What do you say to this. (*rises and shows a written paper much frayed and dirtied*) If we have not the man we have his handwriting.

FOU. Give it me. How did you get this?

DES. Through one of *my* agents—a compositor of the London printer, who puts into type these detestable calumnies.

FOU. Your register of handwritings—quick! (*DESMARETS gives a small book from the box*) Peltier, Fontaine, De Coigny, Talon. None of the known hands—yet it is clearly not a feigned character. It is flowing, bold, natural!

DES. Like that of a man who believes what he writes, and glories in writing it—the wretch! (*rubs his hands.*)

FOU. I must have this scribbler, Desmarests, (*stopping*) do you hear? I must have him; the author of these miserable calumnies must be found—must disappear—a cell in Vincennes first, and then a file of Grenadiers. Find him for me, and I will not say what I will do for you, Desmarests. (*he walks up and down, rapidly turning over the pamphlet.*)

DES. (*aside*). Ha, ha, ha!—I think I know—ha!—it stings, it stings! (*he chuckles, and rubs his hands.*)

FOU. Abominable!

DES. (*aside*). Excellent! (*aloud*) Oh! atrocious!

FOU. Infamous!

DES. (*aside*). Beautiful! (*aloud*) Horrible!

FOU. (*stopping short, and flinging down the pamphlet*). Mons. Desmarests, I can dispense with a chorus. You have ordered De Cevennes to attend me here?

DES. Yes—at half-past seven. 'Tis close on the time.

FOU. And have you prepared his false dispatches?

DES. They are here, expressing your great anxiety to conclude the Emperor's marriage with the Arch-Duchess Marie Louise!

FOU. And the real ones, communicating my negotiations in favor of the match with Russia?

DES. Here, as you directed, in the inside of the bonbons in this box. (*shows box—noise of carriage*) Hark!—a carriage! (*goes cautiously to window, and looks out*) It is De Cevennes!

FOU. Good!—another lesson for you, Desmarests. Fools make the best agents, provided they are skillfully hood-winked!

DES. (*aside*). I'll make a note of that for future use. Shall I retire?

FOU. Yes.

FOUCHE goes up and unfastens C. D. DESMARETS retires by R. D. in F., with box and papers. FOUCHE opens C. D.

Enter the Marquis DE CEVENNES, ushered in by JABOT.

JAB. Monsieur le Marquis De Cevennes. (*FOUCHE, who has taken up his breviary, and appears absorbed in it, lifts his head, rises and bows.*)

FOU. Leave us, my son. (*exit JABOT, R. FOUCHE watches him out and locks the door*) You were summoned here in the name of the Police. You did not expect to be received by one in this costume. You know the cowl does not always make the monk! I am Fouché.

CEV. (*stammering*). I am charmed to have the honor of making such an acquaintance.

FOU. Monsieur De Cevennes, you are a man of the world. (*DE CEVENNES bows*) So am I. You wish to know why you are summoned here! I will tell you. Your intrigues with the exiled family are discovered.

CEV. (*confused*). Sir!

FOU. Do not interrupt me. A word from me would consign you to Vincennes for life.

CEV. Sir, pardon me and I will confess all!

FOU. Let me see first what there is to confess. (*he reads from a paper very rapidly*) On the 6th you obtained a passport for Ostend on pretence of sea bathing—you travelled by post in a green calèche without arms—dined at Amiens, and complained of the amount of your bill. You then purchased a woodcock pie—for refreshment in the carriage I presume—slept at Montreuil, and swore at the damp sheets—arrived at

Ostend on the 9th—had an interview with Mons. Delbecq, agent for facilitating the passage of the Bourbonists to England—were lauded by him on the beach near Dover at 8 p.m., after suffering much from sea sickness—proceeded next morning to Hartwell—had an interview with the exiled Louis XVIII. at which you presented a statement of services, professed devotion, and asked for a Dukedom.

CEV. Good gracious! All known! But I was alone with the King.

FOU. Mons. de Blacas was in the room. When two persons are together I generally know what passes, when three invariably.

CEV. Is it possible?

FOU. You subsequently assured Mons. de Blacas that Napoleon Bonaparte was the man most detested by all classes in France—

CEV. Oh, no! your grace—

FOU. Except the wretch Fouché! Thank you, Mons. De Cevennes.

CEV. But I assure you—

FOU. One moment—where was I? “Except the wretch Fouché!” Shall I go on, or can your confession add anything to this tolerable complete detail?

CEV. Oh, sir! as you are omniscient, be merciful. If the devotion of a life—

FOU. That is a kind of devotion I have not, hitherto, found very available.

CEV. If my gratitude—

FOU. In my experience, fear is a more efficacious stimulus. Listen; I have need at the Austrian Court of a trusty envoy—(DE CEVENNES bows) a man of high rank—(DE CEVENNES bows again) and of polished manners. (DE CEVENNES bows still lower) I offer you the mission.

CEV. I fly—

FOU. You had better receive your instructions first. You are among Madame de Fontanges' guests to-night. (DE CEVENNES bows) In an hour a carriage will be waiting in the courtyard, furnished with money, passports, and all that is necessary for a rapid and uninterrupted journey to Prague. You will stop at the Kaiser.Karl Hotel, and ask for Madame Schoenbrunn. You will be shown to a lady masked. You will deliver to her these dispatches, (*giving them*) and return at once, without pushing curiosity or gallantry further.

CEV. I will be as mute as a fish and as cold blooded.

FOU. And—yes, I think I may trust you so far—you will also present to that lady a *bonbonnière* from Mons. Lenoir. Remember the name.

CEV. Mons Lenoir. It is engraved, Monsieur, here, (*touching his forehead*) as you clemency and confidence are here (*touching his heart.*)

FOU. And this is the suspicious and double-dealing Fouché! Confess, your friends of the Faubourg St. Germain do us injustice, marquis.

CEV. I will undeceive them. Oh! your grace, I have been so ill requited for my services to the Royal Family. Here is my statement of them. I presented it six times without any effect to the King, I mean the exile. If you think it would serve me with the Emperor—(*shows a paper, FOUCHE catches sight of it.*)

FOU. Let me see your memorial.

CEV. (*gives it*). Modestly but firmly expressed—is it not?

FOU. (*aside*). The same hand. (*to him*) Perfect alike in style and calligraphy Your own composition?

CEV. (*sumpering*). Yes.

FOU. And your own hand-writing?

CEV. No—copied by my Secretary, a young man, a native of Guada-loupe, where his father was Governor, under Louis XV.

FOU. What is his name?

CEV. (*aside*). He charged me to keep his name and arrival a secret. (*aloud*) His name ?

FOU. Yes, I wish to make a note of it, for employment in my bureau. Such a writer ought to be at once laid hold of.

CEV. (*aside*). What a chance for him ! (*aloud*) His name is Henry de Neuville.

FOU. So !—de Neuville !—Guadaloupe !—(*he reflects a moment*) Like yourself, an adherent of the Bourbons, I presume ?

CEV. A rash young man ; but one, I have no doubt, whose eyes may be soon opened to the error of his ways.

FOU. As yours have been. I should like to see him. Bring him with you to-night ; but remember that, in this house, I am not Fouche, the Duke of Otranto, but the Abbe Lenoir.

CEV. I pledge you the honor of a De Cevennes ; and when did a De Cevennes succumb to either fear or temptation ?

FOU. (*who has unlocked the door, goes up stage*). Enough, enough—I know precisely what one De Cevennes is worth, and by him I estimate the value of the family ! (*bows*.)

CEV. I will be punctual to a minute. (*aside*) Decidedly, one of the most agreeable persons I have ever met. [Exit CEVENNES, C.]

FOU. (*eagerly comparing the paper given him by DE CEVENNES with the paper given him by DESMARETS*). Line for line and letter for letter, the same !

DESMARETS enters noiselessly by R. D. in F., and watches, R.

FOU. I have this bravo of the pen—this stabber of reputations. To-night he shall sleep in Vincennes ! (*turns and sees DESMARETS*) I did not call.

DES. (R. C.). But I heard the door close, and I knew I was wanted ! I have not yet got through my dispatches.

FOU. They will keep, Desmarests—they will keep ! (*exultingly*) You look astonished !

DES. I am not accustomed to see you indulge in the vulgar emotions of joy or sorrow.

FOU. You are right. A Minister of Police, under the Emperor, cannot afford the luxury. Look here, my old friend—here ! (*holds up the two writings*) There, Desmarests, what say you to that ?

DES. Eh !—I do not perceive—(*with some confusion*.)

FOU. Where are your eyes ? The characters are identical to the turn of a hair stroke—and more, I know the writer,—and more than that, he will be here in half-an-hour.

DES. (*agitated*). Indeed !

FOU. You do not seem to relish this discovery. (*suspiciously*) Ah ! I see—you can't bear that I should have made it, instead of yourself ; but enough, I feel I hold him fast. Order a coach here at nine—a gendarme in disguise on the box. Plant a double file of mounted gendarmes in the stable, who will take their posts on either side when the prisoner is in the carriage ; and resist to the death any attempt to escape between this and Vincennes. Let that coach take its place to the right of the courtyard ; the carriage to convey De Cevennes to Prague, to the left. I will write a letter to the governor of the fortress, from your cabinet. You will wait here to receive Madame de Fontanges—why, Desmarests, you look confounded !

DES. Your excitement stupifies me

FOU. It is unworthy of me, I admit it ; but the Minister is but a man ; he must be allowed his moments of weakness. [Exit FOUCHÉ, R. D. in F.]

DES. De Neuville discovered—arrested! will he have mettle to resist and keep the secret? Should he turn coward and purchase pardon by discovering that it is from one of Fouche's confidential agents he received the information contained in the pamphlet—should he have preserved the letter which sent it—should Fouche discover that letter came from me! He must not be arrested, or my life is not worth an old per stump. But how to baffle Fouche? Let me see—let me see—I am as much excited as he was—I can't think coolly! (*sits down and pours out glass after glass of water, which he drinks rapidly, then presses his head with his hand*) Eh! yes; I have it! (*flings himself back in his chair and gives a long low chuckle*) Ha, ha, ha! betray his secrets—rifle his papers—release his prisoner! Ho, ho, ho! he can dispose of my place, but I can dispose of his head! Ha, ha, ha! the great Fouche at two millions a year, and the little Desmarests at four thousand francs a month! Ho, ho, ho! there is some compensation in the world, after all! (*a hurried knocking at the door, L.*) Come in! (*opens door, L.*)

Enter MADAME DE FONTANGES (taking off a mask as she enters; agitated and parched, L.

MADAME DE FONTANGES. The Duke?

DES. He is busy in my cabinet; can I not supply his place

MAD. DE FON. What money have you about you?

DES. Money?

MAD. DE FON. Yes, you ought to understand the word, money!

DES. My last month's salary was paid to-day; it is here—four thousand francs. (*shows pocket-book.*)

MAD. DE FON. Give it to me—quick!

DES. Eh! give it you?

MAD. DE FON. Your master—our master, Fouche, will repay on my order. (*writes hurriedly*) Here! now the four thousand francs!

DES. Madam, I have an infinite respect for you, and the most implicit confidence in your note of hand, but you will forgive my hesitation, at least, till I know—

MAD. DE FON. Till you know what I want this money for so urgently? 'Tis the old story, then, if you will have it; I have played again to-night; I have lost all, down to my bracelets—see! (*holds out her arms*) I want my revenge! (*hoarsely*) I shall win all back—I feel I shall! Quick, the money!

DES. Madame—Madame de Fontanges, I would give you anything—everything I possess in the world—but this money I will not give you!

MAD. DE FON. Insolent! you dare to you refuse me?

DES. I will not supply you with the means of ruining your beauty—your health—your happiness—your peace of mind—at the gaming-table.

MAD. DE FON. Youth—beauty—peace of mind! Ha! ha! ha! (*bit-terly*) You forget to whom you are speaking.

DES. To Marie de Fontanges—the daughter of a noble father, the widow of a brave gentleman, the ornament of the Faubourg St. Germain!

MAD. DE FON. No, no!—that is the world's Madame de de Fontanges. You speak to Marie de Fontanges, the Gambler, the spy, the creature of Joseph Fouche, and, lower still—if there be a lower—of Maximilian Desmerets! No more words; but the money, man, the money!

DES. You use a strange way to charm it out of my pocket.

MAD. DE FON. Pshaw! Do you want me to cringe for it—to wheedle and cajole? I am low enough even for that, but do not force me.

DES. Why will you repay with scorn my respectful interest?

MAD. DE FON. Interest!—you forget to whom you are speaking.

DES. You have reminded me—to the gambler, the spy, the creature of Joseph Fouche.

MAD. DE FON. True, true—why will you awaken in me a pride I ought to forget?

DES. Because I love you

MAD. DE FON. You!

DES. Why not? By your own showing, we are equal. But it is not that I would level you with me; I wish you to be a thing that I may look up to—that may teach me to be better myself, and to think better of others.

MAD. DE FON. No more of this, Desmerets. Desperate necessities, and an absorbing passion, may have driven me to Fouche's service; the chances of the table, and some love of secret power, may keep me there. I seldom look into my myself; but you almost awaken me to reason, when you show me how near I am fallen to the level of a creature like you.

DES. I am low—I know it; but love works such wonders! It will save me. It is the one spark of good left here—(touching his heart) do not trample it out—do not! (he kneels.)

MAD. DE FON. Miscreant! dog! slave of a slave!—stand up, or I will tread you under my feet!

DES. Take care—I might hurt your heel. Marie, listen to me!

MAD. DE FON. Silence! Oh, I hear foul words enough about the green table, and try to shut my ears to them; but I would like to remember them all, that I might pour them on your sordid head. Serpent! let go my hand! (she tears her hand away from his.)

DES. (rising; maliciously). Ha, ha, ha!—my hand pollutes you, but you will touch my money. Here it is—bought with lies, and treachery, and blood—buy with it misery, and madness, and despair. Here, here, here! (forcing it on her.)

MAD. DE FON. How dare you? Keep your money—I will not take it. (to R.) Yet, no—give it me, quick—black came up eight times running—the color must change—I will try a martingale on red—double or quits every throw—the luck must turn—it must—or there is laudanum at the worst.

[Exit, furiously, L.]

DES. So, Marie de Fontanges! "Serpent," she said; well, serpents are grovelling things, no doubt, and prond folks tread on them, but they sting, and so does Maximilian Desmarts.

Enter FOUCHE, R. D. in F.

FOU. Has Mademoiselle de Fontanges not yet returned?

DES. Yes; from the gaming table—plucked to the last feather as usual.

FOU. Why don't she cheat?

DES. She has still some scruples left; another twelvemonth under your tuition may remove them. Not finding you, she has gone back for another cast of the dice.

FOU. Her passion for play will be that woman's ruin.

Enter JABOT, C.

JAB. M. De Cevennes—M. De Neuville.

Enter DE CEVENNES and DE NEUVILLE, C.

CEV. Abbe, let me present to you my secretary, M. De Neuville; M. De Neuville, the Abbe Lenoir. (*they bow.*)

FOU. The unworthy confessor of Madame De Fontanges.

NEUV. Pardi, Abbe! your task should be a light one, for Madame De Fontanges, the Marquis assures me, is perfect.

FOU. Perfection is not given to erring humanity: but Madame is unusually near it—a model for her sex and a goddess for ours. (*sighs and folds his hands*)

NEUV. She seems to want one virtue, however—punctuality—for here we are in the temple, but where is the divinity?

FOU. Your language is profane.

NEUV. I beg your pardon. (*DESMARETS goes to window.*)

FOU. Nay, I know the warmth of a tropical temperament, and can excuse it.

NEUV. I will try not to sin again; but our Creole tongues, Abbe, have a terrible trick of running away with their masters.

FOU. You will find the need of a curb in Paris, my young friend.

NEUV. I will put the unruly member under your training. Luckily, here, in the Faubourg St. Germain, we are safe.

FOU. Alas! how little you know Paris! You may, even now, be surrounded by spies. May he not, M. De Cevennes?

CEV. Eh! so they say; but I don't believe it!—(*aside*) incredible self-command!

NEUV. Well, I will promise to be rash only in the Marquis's hearing, and in yours, Abbe, and then, at least, I shall be secure!

FOU. Let up hope so; but Madame de Fontanges does not appear! I suppose I must give up my game at picquet.

NEUV. If you will allow the Marquis or myself to replace the lady for once, and then you can lecture me while we play. (*he approaches table; JABOT places card-table*) You will find me the most patient of penitents.

FOU. With all my heart, my son. But you will find me a bad school-master; I have too much sympathy with the openness and ardor of youth.

DES. (*returns from window, aside to FOUCHE*). De Cevennes' carriage for Prague has arrived, and the coach for Vincennes. (*aside.*)

FOU. Good! now for our game.

DES. If you'll allow me, I will look on.

NEUV. (*aside to FOUCHE*). You can rely on him?

FOU. As on a second self: he is one of us; come! (*FOUCHE and DE NEUVILLE sit at the table; DESMARETS and DE CEVENNES look on.*)

FOU. I conclude from your high spirits, my son, that you have not been long in Paris?

NEUV. Only a fortnight! and, to tell you the truth, I am disenchanted already; I had imagined it the home of pleasure, gayety, and wit; the theatre of noble arts, arena of great deeds.

FOU. And you have found it—

NEUV. The haunt of intrigue, servility, and treachery; a great prison, where every one is the jailer of his own thoughts; a huge masquerade, but without the mirth, the music, and the champagne. I sigh for my native Guadalupe! Oh, Abbe! if you but knew our island—its blue, unclouded skies, its palms and summer seas, where, though salvery surrounds us, we whites at least are free to move, and speak, and think like men.

DES. You are primitive in your tastes, sir!

NEUV. Very! I hate laughter without joyousness; love-making with-

out passion; society without confidence, and sanctimoniousness without piety. I fear I am very old-fashioned.

CEV. Oh, savage! perfectly savage!

“*Tytre tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi!*”

FOU. Yes, Paris is sadly changed; but we must pay the price of imperial glory! (*shrugging his shoulders.*)

NEUV. The glory of one man bought by the misery of millions! There is no true glory so purchased. Abbe. Frenchman as I am, I feel dishonored in this man's greatness. Blood tarnishes the gold of his crown; blood stains the purple of his Imperial robe! His acquisitions are a robber's booty; his triumphs, the brutal mastery of wrong.

CEV. Hush, De Neuville! (*behind table L. c.*)

FOU. Let him talk—he refreshes me!

DES. It is most refreshing!—your card, M. de Neuville.

NEUV. And is it to this, Abbe, that the horrors of the revolution are to conduct us? Must the drunken dream of the mob end in the heavy waking of the prison-house, or the bloody delirium of the battle-field? No, this cannot be the end. This is a purgatory we are passing through—the glory is beyond.

FOU. (*aside*). The very style! (*aloud*) Ah! could we but find pens to write these truths!

NEUV. Why not, if there are swords to maintain them? but the swords will come, for which were such thoughts spoken but they found echoes in a thousand breast?

FOU. Yes, thank the spirit of old French chivalry, we have still some who dare utter all we feel. The author of those recent pamphlets, for example, signed Timon, those master-pieces of indignant eloquence—

NEUV. What—you have read them?

FOU. I know them by heart.

NEUV. (*grasping his hand*). If you knew the good these words do me—

DES. I have read them too—that last, for example, against the monster Fouché.

FOU. Ah! how the wretch must have writhed!

NEUV. I thought he was invulnerable to shame, as he is inaccessible to pity. Depend upon it, Fouché is one of that lowest stamp of rogues, who imagines shamelessness, heroism, and consistent rascality, statesmanship. Oh, I know him well, Abbe.

FOU. I have heard him called inscrutable.

NEUV. Only because few are base enough even to conceive the arts which he practises habitually. No, that pamphlet traces his career, step by step, through every doubling, from disguise to disguise, from treachery to treachery, and only leaves him, at his present post, on the right of the Imperial throne, the tricky head to guide the desperate hand. Does that pamphlet contain one word beyond the truth?

DES. Not one.

NEUV. Every document cited was authentic, for I had information—

DES. (*breaking hastily*). Monsieur, you've lost a fish—two fish—four; you'll be ruined if you don't attend to your cards.

NEUV. Thank you for the warning, but the subject of these pamphlets has a peculiar interest for me.

FOU. A nearer one, young man, then it would be safe to avow here. Nay, do not start—our friend de Cevennes has hinted.

CEV. (*deprecatingly*). Oh, sir!

NEUV. What, De Cevennes, you cannot have been so imprudent ?

FOU. Oh ! he knew his man. Do not blush. Great writer, scourge of tyranny, bearer of the face of fraud, let me embrace you. (*embraces him, then speaks aside over DE NEUVILLE'S shoulder to DESMERETS*) Now !

DES. M. De Cevennes, have you brought with you the list of your services which you promised us ?

CEV. No, I—I left it at home, I think, on my bureau.

DES. Careless man that you are ! It is most unfortunate, as the Abbe wanted to forward it.

NEUV. I will go for it with pleasure. I know the paper—I copied it only yesterday ! *rises.* DESMERETS *writes on a card unseen.*

FOU. Nay, I cannot allow you to take this trouble.

NEUV. Yes, yes ! If only to hide my confusion at your praises.

FOU. Stop, my coach is below ; suppose you take it—the night is damp !

NEUV. A thousand thanks !

DES. I will show it you from the window if the fog will permit. (*takes him to window*) There, the facade on right of the entrance. (*quick, and aside*) Take the carriage on the left—not a word ! Read (*giving card*) before you get in—it's life or death !

[*Exit DE NEUVILLE, C. DESMARETS returns to FOUCHE and DE CEVENNES.*]

DES. (*aside to FOUCHE*). It's done !

FOU. (*aside to DESMARETS*). Excellently managed !

Enter MADAME DE FONTANGES, L.—her manner is entirely changed—she is radiant with joyous excitement.

FOU. At last, daughter !

MAD. DE FON. A thousand pardons, Abbe ! Marquis, what penance should he impose ? (*aside*) M. Desmaret, your money, doubled ! (*he takes it, and goes up L. H.*)

CEV. (*crosses L. to MADAME*). Ah, Madame ! always charming—always radiant ! How lovely you are to-night !

MAD. DE FON. Hush, hush, or the Abbe will scold you ! I have to confess to him, and your delicate compliments will oblige me to add another to my list of sins. Item—to one indulgence in feminine vanity. No, not a word will I hear ! (*cross to R. H. to FOUCHE*.)

CEV. Ah ! cruel ! (*goes up L. H. to DESMARETS*)

FOU. (*talking to MAD. DE FONTANGES, forward*). What is the meaning of this ? Desmaret tells me you have been playing again.

MAD. DE FON. Yes, increasing your revenue, M. Fouché. Nay, don't frown at me, what would become of your secret service money, without the contributions of the gaming houses ? And what would become of their contributions without me, and those like me ? You see I am logical for a woman.

FOU. Woman never yet wanted logic to guide her to ruin.

MAD. DE FON. Ruin ! Ha, ha, ha ! Who first lured me to the table ?

FOU. My agents, but that was to drive you into my nets—now you are there, I wish you to avoid those places.

MAD. DE FON. And our compact—do I not keep it ? Do I not play your spy at those places.

FOU. No, you get so excited by your calls that you lose your faculties of observation. Once for all, you must and shall give up play. Do you hear me ?

MAD. DE FON. And you tell me this—*you*, and to-night when I have broken the bank at Petiot's—see—(*thrusts her hand into her bosom and*

brings it out filled with bank notes) why, man, I am independent of you for a week. (*she goes up L. C.*)

FOU. (*aside*). It is hopeless to speak to her now. I must get her away from Paris.

CEV. (*L. C. looking at clock*). It is nine o'clock, the hour fixed for my departure (*to FOUCHE*) M. le Duc, my time is come.

FOU. You are punctual; a good sign; your dispatches are in the carriage.

CEV. And the *bonbonniere*?

FOU. Ah I had forgotten that, in weightier matters. (*takes it from his pocket*) There.

DES. (*taking him to the window*). The carriage on the right of the entrance.

CEV. Thank you. I am infinitely obliged.

DES. Oh! do not mention it.

[*Exit DE CEVENNES.*]

MAD. DE FON. (*throws herself into a chair, L. H.*). Thank Heaven that Coxcomb is gone at last; I could not have borne his chatter a minute longer. I feel faint—some of that water, Duke?

FOU. (*giving it to her*). Fool! you see what this excitement leads to.

MAD. DE FON. Do not scold me now. I cannot bear it; leave me to myself a little. I have a calculation to make. (*she takes a pack of cards to table and begins to combine them—marking their color with a pin on a card as they turn up.*)

FOU. I will stay, and stay you, Desmarests! (*a noise heard without*) What is that? (*two shots fired*) The prisoner!

DES. He leaps from the carriage. He runs this way.

MAD. DE FON. I thought my house safe—at least from this. (*DE CEVENNES rushes in, followed by an OFFICER and TWO GENDARMES, C.*)

FOU. De Cevennes!

CEV. Save me—M. le Duc—Abbe—I mean—say it is a mistake—say I'm not the man. (*down R.* DESMERETS speaks aside to the OFFICER who orders the GENDARMES. They fall back respectfully. DESMERETS goes after them, C.)

CEV. There—I said I was not the man! But they would fire, though, thanks to the fog, they missed me.

FOU. (*R. C.*). Now, sir, what is the meaning of this?

CEV. (*A.*). That is what I was about most respectfully to ask you.

Re-enter DESMERETS. He and FOUCHE come forward. DE CEVENNES talks to MADAME DE F.

DES. (*R.*). A mistake of the carriages, owing, no doubt, to the fog. De Neuville is, by this time, beyond the barrier, on his way to Prague, in the carriage intended for M. de Cevennes!

FOU. Quick, the telegraph!

DES. I thought of that, but unfortunately the fog is too thick for the telegraph to work.

FOU. Baffled! Confusion!—Desmerets, this is your bungling.

DES. (*shrugging his shoulders*). I really cannot undertake to control the fog.

FOU. By to-morrow morning pursuit will be in vain—nothing can stop him!

DES. What a pity it is I had made such perfect arrangements that the Marquis's journey should be uninterrupted!

FOU. Marquis De Cevennes, this will cause a day's delay in our plan; but be ready to start to-morrow. (*he reflects.*)

CEV. Certainly, M. le Duc; but I do hope you will give the gendarmes

orders to be a little more particular about firing. Madame, I have the honor.

[Exit DE CEVENNES, C.]

MADAME DE FONTANGES *has returned to her occupation with the cards.*

FOU. Your plan, Desmerets!

DES. He will be on friendly territory at Prague—it won't do to carry him off by force.

FOU. I know an infinity of schemes that won't do—tell me one that will.

DES. Suppose you sent her (*pointing to MAD. DE FON.*) to draw him back to Paris—she is a stranger to him and she has attractions, till you know her. (*aside*) Ho, ho, ho! my proud lady won't like that task, I think.

FOU. A good thought! (*he touches her on the shoulder*) Madame, your health is evidently impaired by the excitement of Paris—you require change of air! A young gentleman has just succeeded in escaping from Paris, whom it is essential I should have brought back again.

MAD. DE FON. Well, sir, what is that to me?

FOU. You must follow him to Prague, where he has taken refuge; and employ those charms which are so irresistible when you like to exert them, to attract him again to Paris.

MAD. DE FON. No! I have been your spy, but I will not be your decoy. (*rises and crosses R.*)

FOU. As a request is insufficient, I regret to change it into an order.

MAD. DE FON. And I must meet that order by a refusal. Oh, I know you can imprison me—torture me—murder me, perhaps—I shall not be the first. I have not forgotten Pichegru and Cadoudal!

FOU. They were state criminals; but, my dear Madame, when did you ever know me rude to a lady? No, you are free to refuse—do so, and, to-morrow I have you proclaimed in every drawing-room of Paris as the paid agent of the police—the salaried spy of Fouché.

MAD. DE FON. You will not. You cannot have the heart to put this choice upon me. You know me for what I am, but still I have a high place and fair fame in the world. I will be your slave—your unquestioning tool in all besides this—but do not set me between such business and such dishonor.

FOU. Choose!

MAD. DE FON. I know you cannot feel respect for me, but there may be some woman in the world you reverence or love—a mother, a sister, or a wife. If there be think of her, and spare me. Do—do—only in this—only in this!

FOU. Choose!

MAD. DE FON. He is pitiless!

FOU. I give you five minutes. (*takes out watch—a pause.*)

MAD. DE FON. Better face my own conscience than the world. I will go. (*she faints.*)

FOU. I thought she would!

DES. (*aside*). I hoped she would not. (*moves towards the bell.*)

FOU. Do not alarm the servants—a glass of water! (DESMARETS brings one—FOUCHE leisurely sprinkles her brow.)

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Interior of Cottage, in 4th grooves.*CECILE *discovered in arm chair, seeming lazily, R. C.*

CECILE. Oh, dear! oh, dear! what a length these German days are, to be sure! I suppose it's because one measures time by laughs in Paris, and by yawns in Prague. Two months have we been here—two months with nothing to look at but those stupid trees, and flowers, and clouds, and that great, long, lazy river, run—running, shine—shine—(*yawning*) shining in the sun all the day long! Whatever could bring Madame to a place like this? Prague! as if anybody in their senses ever went to Prague, (*takes a long stretch*) and she pretends to enjoy it, too! To be sure, she has M. de Neuville to make love to her, and very nicely he makes it. And I've nobody but that stupid Karl, who makes nothing but hay. Madame could not bring a valet from Paris, so we took Karl with the cottage.

Enter GRISBOULLE, D. L.

He's dreadful—doesn't even talk, only snorts! and he's always at your elbow when you're not thinking of him!

GRISBOULLE (L.). Note! (*holds out letters.*)CEC. (R.). Oh, Lord! (*starts*) there he is! Good-morning, Karl.

GRIS. Note!

CEC. Oh! for Madame, from M. de Neuville! I wondered we had been a whole day without seeing him! He hasn't spent much time in his own little cottage since he made Madame's acquaintance! I never saw a poor young man more in love, but Madame doesn't treat him as I should treat such a lover. (*GRISBOULLE retires and busies himself with the flower vases on the terrace*) She is wearing his life out. They've had a tiff, and this note's to make it up again. Coquette that she is! never satisfied but when she's flirting with somebody! I wish I'd anything to flirt with—Karl does not know how—and he won't learn. Karl—(*tenderly*) Karl.

GRIS. (*gruffly*). Eh?

CEC. What are you about, Karl?

GRIS. Flowers.

CEC. Will you make me a bouquet, Karl? (*insuatiingly.*)

GRIS. Can't.

CEC. There! was there ever! (*shrugs her shoulders*) Shall I teach you, Karl?

GRIS. No.

[*Exit, D. L.*]

CEC. Dear, dear! one might as well try to amuse one's self with a German Primer. "Ach," "Och," "Ich!" all in grunts of one syllable. But here comes Madame.

Enter MADAME DE FONTANGES, from the terrace, C.

A note, Madame, from M. de Neuville.

MAD. DE FON. So. You may go, Cecile.

[*Gives hat to CECILE, who puts it on couch, and exit, L.*]

He has been playing truant for the last twenty-four hours, and this explains his absence, I suppose. Poor fellow! I fear my dart has pierced rather deeper into that bare bosom than into the well-padded chests of my Parisian adorers. The vehemence of his passion startles me some-

times. It is his tropical temperament, I suppose. The sun, which has bronzed his cheek, may have enriched his blood and quickened his susceptibilities, but can it make nature truer, or affection more constant? No! he may be as changing and hollow as the rest. If you could but believe in man, what a glorious thing love would be! The few tranquil weeks I have spent here, since by a simple artifice I made his acquaintance, I really think have been the four happiest of my life. I have not once missed the excitement of the cards! Strange! in playing with his heart, there have been moments when his earnestness has shot a sudden thrill through me which I never felt before. If it were the first stir of love! Pshaw! let me remember what I am, and what I have to do! I wish Fouché had found another instrument. But his note. (*she opens it and reads*) "Madame—" Madame! we are distant this morning, Monsieur—"If I listened to the promptings of my heart I would not begin thus coldly—"listen to them, Monsieur! happy you if you hear anything—"but I dare not, and yet I cannot stifle them. I love you madly—"poor fellow! "with a passion violent like my nature, but reverential as my worship of that saint whose sweet name you bear—"pretty! "my love is so real, so ungovernable—you must have seen it—"What were eyes given us for? "and yet you will not deal with me as a true-hearted woman should." Alas! if truth and heart both be wanting! "I would live for you—die for you—and you but trifle with me. Either tell me I am indifferent to you, and then I will go and wrestle with my grief alone, or show, by a tenderness like my own, that you are worthy of as true a devotion as ever man felt for woman." (*she pauses*) "I have struggled with myself the whole night through before writing this—I am almost mad. If I am too bold, forgive me—for I cannot live out of your sight. May I come for your answer? Henri de Neuville." (*she sits and lets the letter fall on her lap*) If it should be true that his heart is of a different mould from those that till now have found their best use as my playthings, what a terrible task is this I am about? I will go no further with it! But Fouché's orders are irrevocable; and, alone as I am here, so far away from Paris, I feel as if his cold, relentless eye was on me at every turn. Who knows? this man may after all be only a more consummate actor than the rest! This show of rough sincerity may be art. No, no! I feel in my inmost self that he is true and noble! To win such a heart might make any woman proud; but to win it on a cold, passionless calculation—to win it that I may place it under the point of Fouché's stiletto! Oh! foul, foul! The more noble it is, the more hideous is my treachery! What is to be done?

Enter HENRI DE NUVILLE, by terrace, L. H.

NEUV. Your pardon, Madame, if I have come without a summons. You have read my letter?

MAD. DE FON. Yes, M. de Neuville, and shall I tell you the truth?

NEUV. Tell me nothing but the truth always.

MAD. DE FON. The tone of it is new to me.

NEUV. It may be, for it is the voice of a real, a devoted love—the love of a man who has never felt before what it was to hang with all his being upon the breath of another. Till now I have shared the hopes, and fears and projects of my party, of those who looked to the restoration of our rightful King. But now ambition, projects, plots, hopes, fears, all are dead within me—my life, my soul are yours!

MAD. DE FON. (*restraining herself*). I believe you feel all this now, but who can answer for himself a week hence? Love! Who that knows the changefulness of the weather and the fashions can believe in the eternity

of anything, much less of love, which we change oftener than an April day, or a spring bonnet.

NEUV. I cannot believe her frivolous who awakens in me what I feel.

MAD. DE FON. At least do not conclude too soon. I shall soon return to Paris, and absence will test your devotion.

NEUV. Absence! You do not think I can leave you?

MAD. DE FON. Nay, it is impossible you can return to Paris, where, Fouche threatens your liberty—indeed your life!

NEUV. Ha! so danger is to deter me! Go, go! that you may see if I will follow—aye, though Fouche's spies were ranged at every barrier, and I must run the gauntlet of them all! But why return to Paris? You are free. Our positions are equal. I offer you my hand for the hundredth time! Oh, make me happy with yours, and we will live here in an exile that we shall bless, because in it we shall be all in all to each other!

MAD. DE FON. (*aside*). This is real! And shall I be his destroyer? Forgive, me M. de Neuville, if I have appeared sometimes to trifle with you, but there are obstacles which even with love on both sides cannot be surmounted.

NEUV. Obstacles! Name them, that I may prove to you they are none.

MAD. DE FON. Suppose I were to say I will never marry—that I find the liberty of widowhood too agreeable?

NEUV. I would not believe you. Give me a better reason.

MAD. DE FON. You have grave duties to your party—duties which love distracts you from. Till your King is restored to France you have no right to chain your destinies to a woman

NEUV. The King was first in my heart till I knew you—now he is second. A better reason still. Do you love another? De Cevennes has boasted—

MAD. DE FON. He! Oh, no; my heart is free! But why force me to say there are motives—I regard you too much to tell you them. Do not ask me, if you would still love me as you say you do.

NEUV. Oh, why will you not lay bare your heart to me, as I do mine to you?

MAD. DE FON. How do you know that I have one?

NEUV. By the color that mounts to your cheek when I speak to you of love; by the languor that veils your eyes when we sit together and watch the sunset in a silence too passionate for speech; by the trembling of your voice when we bid each other farewell; by the thrill that shoots from my being to yours, from yours to mine, when our hands meet, or a tress of your hair brushes my cheek. By these signs, and the thousand subtler that a lover's eye can see but no tongue can describe, so delicate are they. You have a heart, Marie de Fontanges, and that heart is mine! (*he seizes her hand.*)

MAD. DE FON. (*overcome*) Henri, my own! (*starts back from his embrace*) Sir, you forget yourself! you have no right to put my nervous susceptibility to the proof of such excellent acting.

NEUV. Acting!

MAD. DE FON. Yes; do not talk to me, after that tirade of your inexperience. Talma might take a lesson from you. I remember uttering just such a scream after his grand burst in "Orestes."

NEUV. Oh, you will drive me mad! (*starting up.*)

MAD. DE FON. No, no; but serious'y, (*sits*) are you wise in yielding to this passion for one you scarcely know? Why, I may be an adventurer—who knows? an emissary of Fouche's, perhaps?

NEUV. No; the instincts of such a love as mine are infallible;—it

would shrink up at the contact of baseness as the sensitive plant at a touch! I know you as if I had watched your actions from a child;—I know you as your own conscience knows you!

MAD. DE FON. Hush—hush, Henri!

NEUV. Oh! let me throw myself where the slave should be—at his tyrant's feet; where the worshipper should be—prostrate before his saint. (*he throws himself at her feet*) Let me but lie thus, and look up into your eyes, and rest my brow upon your hands, and forget time, duty, danger, all in the delirious happiness of my love! (*he suits the action to the word.*)

MAD. DE FON. Oh, Henri! check this passion—you must; it is not that my heart is cold to it, if I durst listen to its promptings!

Enter CECILE, C., comes down R. HENRI rises.

CECILE. A gentleman, Madame—oh, I beg pardon!—who gave his card. (*aside*) Very pretty!

MAD. DE FON. M. Lebon. (*aside*) Desmaret's! (*rises and goes to L.*)

NEUV. My preserver! Oh, show him in here, Cecile, at once!

[*Exit CECILE, C. and L.*]

I long to see and thank him. He saved me, Marie, on that night I was to have been arrested from your house.

MAD. DE FON. (*aside*) Fouche distrusts me. The taskmaster is sent to overlook the slave. It is too late!

Enter CECILE showing in DESMARETS, C. from L.

CECILE. M. Lebon.

[*Exit, CECILE, R.*]

DES. Being on my way from Vienna, whither a little money affair took me, I ventured to pay my respects to Madame.

MAD. DE FON. (*bows*). You are at home in my house, Sir, as you know.

DES. You are too kind!

NEUV. Failing Madame de Fontanges, you have a sacred right of asylum with me, M. Lebon; you remember me?

DES. Ah, M. de Neuville!

NEUV. Your timely warning saved me on the night Fouche was to have arrested me. I have bewildered myself in endeavoring to discover a clue to the treachery which betrayed me. Can you explain it?

DES. We live in wretched times, my young friend. The son is not safe from the father, the husband from the wife, the lover from his beloved. (*looks at MADAME DE FONTANGES*) Fouche buys up all affections and all dignities.

NEUV. Say, rather, all treacheries and all basenesses! But here I can defy him. Spies cannot breathe the air of purity and peace that bathes these blue hills, and scarce ripples that placid river. I only think of him as of an adder, whose spring I have escaped, and whose hisses I laugh at. (*takes up a flower*) But how came you to be warned of my danger?

DES. Oh! one of his creatures, the wretched Desmaret's, had a scruple of conscience, or rather some fear for his own safety, which led him to reveal the plot to me, that I might warn you.

NEUV. So!

DES. By-the-by—what interesting documents that last pamphlet of yours brings to light. How did you procure them?

NEUV. From an unknown correspondent, one evidently having access to the archives of the Police.

DES. You have, of course, preserved the letters transmitting them?

NEUV. No! fearing they might some day endanger my unknown informant, I burnt every scrap I ever received from him.

DES. (*aside*). I am safe! Ah, that's a pity; you might, in case of danger, have purchased safety by denouncing him.

NEUV. M. Lebon, that is a counsel no gentleman would take. I am surprised any gentleman should give it.

DES. Ah! you have the chivalry of youth, I the caution of riper years;—but this conversation is not interesting to Madame.

MAD. DE FON. Pardon me! all that concerns Fouche has a strange fascination for me.

DES. Oh! I could tell you stories of him that would horrify you! Conceive his employing a troop of wretched, degraded women, whom he calls his "Cohorte Cythérienne," to attract his victims within his reach—and they do it, too.

NEUV. Can there be women so base?

MAD. DE FON. (*aside*). Viper! (*aloud*) Before we condemn, we should know the the arts by which he has enslaved them. Once enslaved, it may be they are powerless.

NEUV. But surely death would be preferable to such baseness?

MAD. DE FON. Death!—Yes! But he can disgrace these women; reveal their shame to the world—nay, worse—to those they love, and who love them! What death is so sharp as that?

DES. Poor creatures—poor creatures! They are much to be pitied. I pity them, especially when I think there may be haughty beauties among them, who have been used to despise others.

MAD. DE FON. (*aside*). He chafes me to distraction! (*aloud to DE NEUVILLE*) M. Lebon is a stranger to our valley, M. de Neuville; will you show him the lovely prospect from these hills?

NEUV. With pleasure, if M. Lebon will accept me for a guide; but I warn you it is rough climbing.

DES. Never fear, I've a strong sense of the picturesque.

NEUV. But have you a strong pair of legs? You have—eh? Then come along; I'll show you every sight worth seeing within a league round (*aside to MAD. DE F.*) and dream of you dearest, at each point where we have sat together.

DES. Au revoir, Madame!

[*Exeunt DESMARETS and DE NEUVILLE, by the terrace.*]

MAD. DE FON. Yes, the mask is off at last! I see my hideous self! And he thinks me pure! The sincerity of his own nature reflects itself on mine! What an awakening, should he learn the truth! And Desmaret, malignant as he is, will soon find out I love him. What is to be done? Fouche alone can relieve me from this task, which, base always, is now a sacrilege; for I love him—love him as he is worthy to be loved—love him with my whole soul! Yes! I will write to Fouche.

Enter DESMARETS by terrace.

I feel a power within me that will work even upon him. I will write at once! (*as she turns for writing materials her eye falls on DESMARETS—she stands staring at him, then sinks into a seat*) You here again!

DES. I have dispatched M. de Neuville into Prague for my *ca'êche*. Let me congratulate you, Madame, on the restorative effects of the Austrian air. You look so much better—that is—you did until you saw me. You were going to write to Fouche—pray write—unless you think I can save you the trouble.

MAD. DE FON. He has sent you down here?

DES. Yes; he was naturally anxious about your health, and he sent me to inquire—merely to inquire. He was also anxious to know how our little ruse was succeeding—when we might expect to see the Siren wing her flight back to Paris, with her captive in her clutch.

MAD. DE FON. Desmarests, I have lived a new life since that promise was made. I cannot keep it.

DES. Ah—M. Fouche will be sorry to hear it. He is so particular about promises, so very particular—

MAD. DE FON. Sir, you have professed an interest in me; if you retain a spark of that interest still, release me from the degrading task to which M. Fouche has condemned me.

DES. Listen to me, Marie de Fontanges, I am not young, not pleasant to look at; I have no graces of speech; I am what the world calls a spy, an informer—what you will that is more ignoble and treacherous; but I have a will like iron, and a head which, under any other chances, might have made a different man of me. Till I knew you, all my species were alike to me—counters to be pushed about as suited my game; but at sight of you I felt that you were my fate—my good angel, if you chose to be so!

MAD. DE FON. Oh! no, no! we are our own good and evil angels.

DES. Let me finish. You spurned me once in a fashion that few men of a less determined spirit would provoke or endure twice. Yet I provoke it again, for proud as you are I love you still.

MAD. DE FON. Oh! no, no!

DES. I love you still! There is but one way to save you from Fouche—it is by sacrificing him! Give me but hopes that time will change your scorn of me to endurance—leave me to change endurance into pity, and pity into love. From day the which gives me that hope, Joseph Fouche's fall and your rescue are both begun!

MAD. DE FON. This from you! I thought you were devoted to him.

DES. Oh, so I am—so I am!—ha, ha, ha! but my devotion never stands in the way of my will—never!

MAD. DE FON. But surely it is madness in you to dream of striking at one placed so high and seated so securely?

DES. Ho, ho, ho! (*chuckles*) A small worm may sink a big ship! Listen!

CEV. (*without*). At least you can announce me, my tactiturn friend. The Marquis de Cevennes—de Cevennes!

DES. That fool! Will you see him?

MAD. DE FON. No, no; not now!

DES. He is here—we will resume this this conversation when he is gone.

MAD. DE FON. (*going into her room*). Oh, sir, have pity on me!

[*Exit into her room, R.*]

Enter DE CEVENNES, C. from L., shown in by GRISBOULLE.

CEV. He is certainly the man of the fewest words I ever—Ah! Madame not here, eh? The excellent M. Lebon, (*DE CEVENNES carries in his hand a common stout walking-stick with a silver head*) one of our party on that eventful night when I was so highly honored and so nearly shot. You have not forgotten me?

DES. Few that meet the Marquis de Cevennes can forget him.

CEV. Ah, Monsieur you are very polite! Yes, it was a delightful soirée—that is, all but the little mistake which concluded it. Would you believe it, sir, I've been three times to Prague and back since that eventful evening! But it's very odd—many as are the dispatches I carry, I

never bring back any answer—" *vestigia nulla retrorsum!* " Not that I return empty handed, either—the ladies of the court employ me about their little commissions—give me things to carry—the oddest things, sometimes. Now, on this occasion, what do you think the Duchess von Kaiserleben gave me to take to the Duke of Otranto? Only guess.

DES. Oh, I give it up!

CEV. A stick—this stick—(*holding it up*) neither more nor less. Odd present from a Duchess to a Duke, is it not?

DES. (*takes it and sways it in his hand*). Very; Dukes have given such things to Duchesses now and then.

CEV. You can examine it at your leisure while I wait for Madame.

DES. Shall I order you some refreshment?

CEV. Eh! well, really—if you can take the liberty—but shall I not see her first?

DES. I am afraid not—she was denied to me—she is not well.

CEV. Poor creature! excitable always! Well, if I cannot see her, I think a cutlet and a bottle of Geisenheimer—

DES. Karl!

GRISBOULLE *appears on the terrace and comes down.*

Karl, luncheon for the Marquis. (*aside to him*) Not here!

GRIS. Good! (GRISBOULLE *goes off, L.*)

CEV. A thousand apologies for the trouble. By the way, I have been so constantly on the move since the eventful evening, I have never been able to recover any trace of my secretary, M. de Neuville. You remember the young man the Duke took such a fancy to, who disappeared so mysteriously on the same eventful evening? What can have become of him?

DES. Ah! from discretion, I've never inquired.

GRIS. (*appearing at door, L.*) Lunch!

CEV. Ah! my friend of the limited vocabulary! Have you observed how very sparing he is of words?

DES. Dis—cretion.

CEV. Yes; I have remarked the Germans are discreet.

GRIS. Lunch! (DESMARETS *makes him a signal.*)

CEV. I'm coming, my abrupt friend, I'm coming. (*as he goes off looking at him*) A most repulsive physiognomy! [*Exit DE CEVENNES, L.*]

DES. The chattering ape has left behind him the only thing worth a thought—this stick. Ah! he little knew I turned it! (*he screws off the head of the stick, which is hollow, and draws out a roll of paper*) The answer to Fouche's last dispatch, which went, by the way, in a paté of snipe. (*opens paper*) Why will Joseph not trust his old friend? Why will he force him to this sort of thing? (*looks at paper*) So, Joseph: more counterplotting the Emperor, and in his marriage, too! He wants an Austrian wife, and you insist on giving him a Russian one. Have a care, Joseph, have a care! It's a game of heads, Joseph, and thine totters, Joseph, totters! totters! Karl!

Enter GRISBOULLE, L.

GRIS. What?

DES. A fac-simile of this paper immediately.

GRIS. Good!

[*Exit, L.*]

DES. A very valuable man, Grisbouille. He can assume any disguise, copy any handwriting, drink any quantity of wine, and never goes beyond monosyllables.

Enter MADAME DE FONTANGES, D. R.

MAD. DE FON. Has the Marquis gone?

DES. No; but he is at table, where, as I don't hear him chattering, I conclude his teeth are employed. Let me resume the conversation he interrupted.

MAD. DE FON. You ventured to threaten Fouche!

DES. I never bark when I cannot bite! Papers of his are in my hands that would condemn him were he ten times Fouche!

MAD. DE FON. And he knows this?

DES. A man must trust somebody! He has trusted me! Ho, ho, ho!—And I will trust you! I contrived the place of deposit for these very papers. You know the picture on the left of your drawing-room?

MAD. DE FON. Yes.

DES. Press the third ornament on the right side of the frame; the picture moves and discovers a passage. It leads from my house to yours.

MAD. DE FON. Ha!

DES. Touch the rosette of the third panel in that passage—it slides away. In the recess stands the box containing Fouche's treasonable correspondence with Bernadotte, with Murat, with all who have an interest in the Emperor's death, or hopes of sharing the spoil of his downfall; there, too, are the Emperor's private letters and instructions, the bulwark to which Fouche trusts when all else fails him. Madame de Fontanges, I have given you my secret. I have put into your hands the master-key to my life and fortunes; you know my secret!

MAD. DE FON. (*reflects*). Your secret is safe with me!

GRISBOULLE *enters silently, c., and unseen by MADAME DE FONTANGES, lays paper on table and exit, with look at DESMARETS, noiselessly.*

DES. I have surrounded Fouche himself with the meshes of my police. He is inquisitor over France. I am inquisitor over him. (*takes papers GRISBOULLE has left*) See here, this is a secret dispatch which that ass, De Cevennes, is bearer of without knowing it. That was never intended to come to my knowledge; yet here is a fac-simile of it, which goes to Fouche, while I retain the original. (*he places fac-simile in stick*) You see I show you my cards!

MAD. DE FON. And having overthrown Fouche, you would aspire to his post?

DES. If alone, yes; if with you, no. I will go where you bid me—be what you will—if you will not refuse the endurance, which is all I ask, in return for restoring you to honor and happiness?

MAD. DE FON. (R. c.). Give me some time for reflection!

DES. Oh, certainly! certainly! Weigh my offer well. I will wait for your answer before I return to Paris. Work with me if you will—betray me if you dare!

[*Exit by terrace, L.*]

MAD. DE FON. He dare attack Fouche to serve his ambition! Shall I fear him to save my love? These secrets! Without betraying him I might use them to extricate myself and save Henri. Desmraets does not know I love Henri; he must not see us together! I must fly to Paris without leaving any trace of my route. There I will see Fouche, and, failing prayers, this secret must serve me against him. But how to leave this place undiscovered?—

CEV. (*without*). My carriage at once!

MAD. DE FON. Ha! his carriage!

Enter DE CEVENNES, D. L.

CEV. Ah! Madame, this is indeed happiness. I was going away a heart-broken pilgrim without a sight of the fair saint of my pilgrimage.

MAD. DE FON. A truce to compliments, Marquis; it is important I should return to Paris speedily and secretly. Will you give me a seat in your calèche?

CEV. Ah, Madame! the felicity will be overpowering. (*aside*) Discretion!

MAD. DE FON. I will meet you at the turn of the road. Not a word to any one!

CEV. Not even that dear M. Lebon

MAD. DE FON. To him least of all.

CEV. I fly, a happier man in every respect. (*aside*) A perpetual tête à tête with a lovely creature all the way to Paris!

[*Exit DE CEVENNES, C. and L.*

MAD. DE FON. Yes, I will go—but Henri, what will he think of this departure? Oh! I cannot leave him;—and yet, with Desmarests here, I dare not risk a parting, or our love will be known, and with it, my infamy. Yes, I must go for his sake; and, once at Paris, I may see him, and free myself from the sword which is always hanging over my head. Yes, though my heart break, I must leave you, Henri!—And yet, to go without one word! No—no—I cannot—(*she writes a note hastily and leaves it on the table*) And now, dear home where I have first known peace and love, good-by—good-by—good-by! (*she throws herself down and buries her face in a chair, then rising, looks passionately about her. There, after tying on her hat, takes a flower from one of the vases and exits hurriedly along terrace and R.*)

Enter DESMARETS, C.

DES. Ah! not here.

Enter CECILE, door R.

Where is your mistress?

CEC. Out, I suppose, sir.

DES. She has not passed out by the terrace.

CEC. All I know is, she's not in her room.

DES. Where can she be?

Enter GRISBOULLE, C.

I'm in a cold sweat till she pronounces her decision. Ah! here's one who will know something. Where is Madame?

GRIS. Gone!

CEC. Gone?

DES. Gone! with no word for me?

GRIS. (*seeing note on table*). Note! (*gives it, R.*)

DES. (*looking at address*). For me?

GRIS. No!

DES (*reads address*). M. de Neuville! (*reads*) "Farewell! I leave this place—perhaps for ever. Ask not why or whither—I love you passionately. But I must leave you. Marie." Gone!—by what means?

GRIS. (*at terrace*). Look! (*DESMARETS turns up and looks out.*)

[*Exit GRISBOULLE.*

DES. De Cevennes' carriage stops at the turn of the road—a woman gets in—it is she! The carriage starts again at full gallop!

CEC. Gone! (*she runs off, D. R.*)

DES. Oh! fool that I was to leave my calèche at Pragne! She carries my secret with her! My fortune—my life may depend on my outstripping them to Paris. But this note to De Neuville!—"I love you passionately!" Can she really love him? Then her listening to me was a trick to worm my secret out of me, and then use it for herself. I see it all, all now! Oh! gull, idiot that I am! She loves him, and so flies to escape the revelation of her infamy face to face. What hinders me from revealing it to him still? Or shall I keep the secret and let him follow her to Paris? Were he brought there, Fouche's end would be gained. He has burnt my letters. I have nothing to fear from his arrest now. Yes, it shall be done—he shall follow her to Paris. She has gone with De Cevennes—ah! jealousy—jealousy!—I will destroy him, reveal her shame, and break two hearts—ah! at one blow. Ho! ho! ho! 'Tis a revenge might satisfy Bêzebub, or Fouche himself.

Enter DE NEUVILLE, C. from L, in joyous excitement, speaking as he enters.

NEUV. M Lebon, your calèche will be here in ten minutes; I saw it brought out, and the horses harnessed. I am sorry you leave us so soon, and so will Madame De Fontanges be, I am sure; but at least you must not go without a stirrup cup. Here, Karl!—wine! Cecile, tell Madame M. Lebon is going.

DES. Madame is gone herself!

NEUV. What do you mean? Gone! Where?

DES. Nobody knows.

NEUV. Surely she has left some word—some letter——

DES. Nothing!

NEUV. But when—how did she go?

DES. Just now—in the carriage with the Marquis De Cevennes.

NEUV. The Marquis De Cevennes!—(*he stands aghast*) gone with De Cevennes! What can this mean? With De Cevennes, my friend?

DES. 'Tis the privilege of friends at Paris.

NEUV. This accounts for her caprice—her hesitation—her trifling with my passion. She was only playing with me, to pass away the time, while that frivolous coxcomb was in her heart all the while! Gone! (*crosses R.*)

DES. Forget her.

NEUV. Forget her! Old man, she has grown a part of me—to tear out her image, I must tear out my heartstrings with it! Oh! to know what road they have taken!

DES. We have no chance of overtaking them.

NEUV. We have! What speed can outstrip revenge?

DES. Revenge!

NEUV. Do you think that when one of my blood is so wronged, he that wrongs him is allowed to live? (*crosses to L. He is going.*)

DES. My carriage will be here immediately. It is at your service. We will go together.

Enter GRISBOULLE, C.

NEUV. Thanks, my friend, thanks!—but, their route, their route? How to discover that? No matter, the instinct of revenge will guide me—some!

KARL. I know. (*stop, c.*)

NEUV. Ah! the road!—speak! speak!

KARL. To Paris.

NEUV. To Paris! to Paris! Quick!

DES. Think of the danger. Arrested by Fouche on French soil you are a dead man!

Re-enter CECILE, R. H.

NEUV. Death may be there, but revenge is by its side. I want that first; then let death come! To Paris, to Paris!

DES. He is mine! (*following DE NEUVILLE, L. U. E.*)

CECILE.
R.

GRISBOULLE.
R. C.

QUICK CURTAIN

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Same as in Act I.—Night—stage dark—candles unlighted on table, R. C., and manteipiece.*

Enter MADAME DE FONTANGES, shown in by JABOT, C. D., who has a lantern in his hand.

JAB. (R. C.). A thousand excuses, Madame, for having kept you at the door.

MAD. DE FON. Enough, my good Jabot, I accept them; I was not expected.

JAB. I had retired unusually early.

MAD. DE FON. No more apologies; light the candles and leave me.

JAB. Madame—(*hesitating.*)

MAD. DE FON. Well, why do you not light them?

JAB. A thousand pardons, Madame, but—

MAD. DE FON. (*feeling for and finding them.*) Here they are!

JAB. Yes; but Madame will understand—I am not in a fit state; I ask pardon—but my—my *deshabille*; I am not fit to appear—

MAD. DE FON. (*laughing.*) Oh, my poor Jabot!—I understand—leave your lantern—I will light the candles.

JAB. You are too good, Madame; you have relieved my mind. You require nothing more, Madame?

MAD. DE FON. Nothing, Jabot. Good night!

JAB. I have the honor. (*bows*) In two minutes I will be prepared to appear before you, as propriety requires.

MAD. DE FON. Do not come unless I ring. [*Exit JABOT, C.*]

MADAME DE FONTANGES *lights the candle hastily.*

By good fortune and the Marquis's liberality to the postilions, we have reached Paris before Desmarets. While De Cevennes slept, I have extracted the fac-simile of the secret dispatch from the cane. It is another arm against Fouche. Now to secure the papers Desmarets described—with them I may conquer Fouche at his own weapons! He shall find I have not served in his school for nothing! (*goes to R. D. in R. and feels for the spring*) The spring should be in this ornament—(*she feels for it*)—yes, the picture yields! (*door opens and discovers FOUCHE within. a dark lantern in his hand*) Fouche! (*the candle she holds begins to tremble*)

in her hand from the violence of her agitation—FOUCHE remains calm and unmoved.)

FOU. The candlestick is too heavy for your hand, Madame; allow me to relieve you of it. (*he takes the candlestick from her, and puts it on the table—aside*) A minute sooner and she would have found me at the recess! (*to her*) You are agitated; pray sit down and compose yourself. (*she sits mechanically L. of table. Aside*) Can she know anything? (*aloud*) I was not aware you had the secret of that passage.

MAD. DE FON. I discovered it by an accident. (*hesitating.*)

FOU. (*aside*). I told Desmarests it was unsafe. (*aloud*) I ought to apologize for making such a breach in your party wall without notice, but I have such an objection to being announced, and I hate front doors.

MAD. DE FON. You have reason.

FOU. (*sits, R.*). You seemed startled to see me?

MAD. DE FON. I did not know—(*pause.*)

FOU. Oh! my visit then is an unexpected pleasure—not so yours! (*aside*) What can have brought her back?

MAD. DE FON. You knew I had left Prague?

FOU. How else should I have been prepared to receive you?

MAD. DE FON. No news could have reached you! I left suddenly, and we travelled as fast as four horses could carry us.

FOU. (*aside*). We? A companion! (*aloud*) Four leagues an hour is good travelling, but the telegraph beats it.

MAD. DE FON. Inscrutable man! Then you know all?

FOU. Not all, precisely, but most; your travelling companion, for example.

MAD. DE FON. De Cevennes has told you?

FOU. (*aside*). So, it was he! (*aloud*) My dear Madame, if I gave up my sources of information I should not long hold my portfolio of the Police. Enough, that I know of your leaving Prague in company with the Marquis.

MAD. DE FON. You had your spies even there! Perhaps you know my reasons for leaving?

FOU. The reasons you gave the Marquis, of course. But a lady's real reasons are beyond even my penetration. Perhaps you will favor me with them—I am all attention.

MAD. DE FON. You know how I struggled against the duty you imposed upon me. (*he bows*) But your hold over me was too strong. (*he bows again*) I yielded and set about my work—reluctantly, at first, but by degrees the devil of womanly vanity got the upper hand, and I laid siege to De Neuville's heart with all the arts that my experience of Parisian society had taught me. Impassioned and inexperienced in woman's wiles he was an easy conquest.

FOU. You see I chose my emissary well.

MAD. DE FON. You did not!

FOU. Ah!

MAD. DE FON. You thought the hot wind of play had dried up in me all that was good or akin to good—I thought so too. Neither of us knew how vital the roots of love are in a woman's nature. At contact with the fresh and springing life of his passion my dead affection awakened, till what we both thought a stone became a living, leaping, loving woman's heart. I found him ready to follow me to the jaws of death—

FOU. And you did not lead him to Paris? It was a blunder!

MAD. DE FON. I resolved to risk my life to save his. I knew all I exposed myself to in disobeying your orders. I knew that shame, imprisonment, perhaps death, lay in the path of duty. There they sit in

you—and here (*rising*) stands love in me to meet and grapple with them!

FOU. (*rises*). You would have made a capital actress! But no heroics, pray—leave them to the theatre and Mademoiselle Georges. You have told me what brought you back; and now oblige me by explaining how you mean to conduct this struggle between shame, &c., or Joseph Fouché, and love, &c., or Marie de Fontanges?

MAD. DE FON. I should not have said “struggle.” How can an unfriended woman struggle with the potent Minister of Police?

FOU. Exactly the question I wished to ask, better expressed.

MAD. DE FON. I meant, after telling you the truth, to have appealed to the good I cannot believe utterly dead in you, now that it has revived in me. Ah, Fouché! think of all that virtuous love means in a woman like me—self-scorning, self-loathing, living only to be the prey of frantic excitement, or the tool of dark intrigues. It is the branch that sweetens the bitter waters of my life—the ray that breaks upon the labors of the prisoner to tell him he has pierced the outer wall of his dungeon. Till I knew it, I had nothing to believe in—nothing to venerate—nothing to live for. Having it, a future of peace and purity opens before me. Do not darken this future! Spare him, that I may love him—far from Paris—far from plots, and intrigues, and passions. Spare him, Fouché! spare him!—and spare me! (*she has risen while speaking, and now falls on her knees grasping FOUCHÉ'S hand.*)

FOU. (*who has betrayed once or twice slight signs of emotion*). What eloquence earnestness gives! I never could feel in earnest, or I should have been eloquent. Rise, Madame! We will talk of this again when you are less excited.

MAD. DE FON. No—now—here. I will not leave this spot till you have answered me.

FOU. I am sorry for it, as I must refuse.

MAD. DE FON. Refuse! Oh, you cannot!

FOU. (*shrugs his shoulders*). You cannot understand state reasons, or you would see I must. What would the world say of Fouché, if they heard that having the serpent under his heel, he forbore to crush it, out of consideration for a woman's unreasonable passion. My dear Madame, I should have all the serpents hissing at once. No—once for all—it cannot be. I will listen to no more. (*crossing c*)

MAD. DE FON. (*rising*). Beware, Joseph Fouché!

FOU. (*turning and smiling*). Eh! you spoke?

MAD. DE FON. You have laughed at my love—fear my hate!

FOU. Come, this is better; your grief pained me, your rage amuses me.

MAD. DE FON. Take care lest the time should come when you will sue to me.

FOU. Eh? ha, ha! Excuse my laughing, but—when shall I sue to you? Ha ha! ha!—though you are charming enough, especially when excited, to render it not improbable.

MAD. DE FON. Mocker! I tell you I have means of action against you you little dream of—I will use them—I warn you of it—ruthlessly—remorselessly—if by them alone I can save the man I love!

FOU. (*aside*). Can she know anything? Pshaw! a woman's bravado. (*he turns and bows*) Madame, I have the honor—

MAD. DE FON. (*crosses L*). Then we separate on my terms.

FOU. No—on mine. Return to Prague. Fulfill your contract, and all shall be forgotten that has occurred to-night. Refuse—and to-morrow, your connection with the Police is the topic of conversation in every salon of Paris.

MAD. DE FON. Very well! Then it is war between us—war to the knife! Be it so! [Exit, L

FOU. She has a man's courage, at all events. I rather like her. But these threats are childish. My papers are safe—I saw them a quarter of an hour ago. It is now ten o'clock. You are mistress of the situation to-night; to-morrow it will be too late! (*a ring heard*) Ha! a late arrival! (*looks out of window*) The Marquis de Cevennes, come, no doubt, to inquire after the health of his travelling companion. He will be surprised to find me! [Exit, R. D. in F.

Enter JABOT (dressed), showing in DE CEVENNES, C.

JAB. I will announce M. le Marquis to Madame!

CEV. Do! Say I merely wish to assure myself she has not suffered by our rapid journey, (*exit JABOT, C., closing doors*) or been annoyed by my attentions on the road. A charming *tête à tête*! Unluckily I was so fatigued I slept most part of the way!

Enter FOUCHE by R. D. in F., unseen by DE CEVENNES.

I will see Madame first, and then for the dear Duke!

FOU. No; the dear Duke first, and then Madame!

CEV. (*turning*). Ha! the Duke here! why, how did you enter?

FOU. My movements, like my intelligence, are rather mysterious, Marquis! But here I am. I congratulate you on your quick return, and on your fair *compagnon de voyage*!

CEV. Oh! your Grace has heard! It's incredible!

FOU. (R.). You delivered your dispatches?

CEV. Yes!

FOU. They required no answer. I think I may dismiss you at once to Madame.

CEV. Ah! I had almost forgotten! The Duchess Von Kaiserleben—really, 'tis too odd, too ridiculous—particularly requested me—you'll excuse the absurdity—to present the Abbe Lenoir—now don't be angry!—with this walking cane!

FOU. Give it me! (*coolly taking the cane from the MARQUIS.*)

CEV. You are not surprised?

FOU. Never! so—a pretty cane! The handle is a souvenir. (*looking at the head*) See! (*shows it him.*)

CEV. Why, I never observed before; 'tis a death's head and cross bones!

FOU. Yes; an appropriate present to me, in my spiritual capacity; very pretty and cheerful!

CEV. Remarkably! (*aside*) How very lugubrious!

FOU. You are impatient to see your travelling companion? You will find her in that room; (*pointing to folding doors, L.*) return here before you leave the house. I may have a fresh commission for you—a new mark of the imperial favor.

CEV. Ah, your Grace! (*aside*) I wish, though, he'd give me a little time for repose between my journeys; I am worn to a skeleton!

[Exit DE CEVENNES, L.

FOU. So—and now for Czernitcheff's dispatch; it should announce the final stipulations for the Russian alliance. (*begins to unscrew the head of the cane*) The Emperor's heart is set on the Austrian Archduchess; but my head on the Russian. Head against heart is desperate odds always! (*he has unscrewed the head and has found the hollow empty*) How's this! Empty? Can Czernitcheff be retreating, or has this fool discovered and

abstracted the paper? No, no; it is incredible! Or can some sharper sight have penetrated the secret? I must find out, for this is a matter of life and death to me! I have gone between the lion and his prey, and have no inclination to try the weight of his imperial paw. (*reflects.*)

Re-enter DE CEVENNES, L.

CEV. So now for this new mark of imperial favor, Monsieur le Duc. Madame having retired, I am at your Grace's service.

FOU. (*angrily*). So! Sir—this is the way you discharge your commissions! The Duchess's present has been mutilated?

CEV. Mutilated! The stick is as when I received it—upon the honor of a De Cevennes.

FOU. The Duchess's letter, describing it, speaks of diamonds in the eyes of the skull. They have been abstracted.

CEV. No—upon my honor!

FOU. The stick must have quitted your hands!

CEV. Never! I kept tight hold of it all the way from Prague to Paris.

FOU. You slept in the carriage?

CEV. Not a wink—on the honor of a De Cevennes.

FOU. Then you extracted the diamonds yourself!

CEV. Oh! M. le Duc—what a slur on the honor of a De Cevennes!

FOU. That for the honor of the De Cevennes. (*crosses L., snapping his fingers*) I am dissatisfied with you, Sir! I know your intrigues with the exiled family—you may need to take better care of your own head, than you have of this cane's. Look to it, Sir! And now, sit at that table and write, briefly, the stages of your journey, your places of stoppage, the persons you met. (*aside*) I must at once dispatch another messenger to inquire into this; in the mean time, lest there should be anything in Madame's threat, there can be no harm in setting a watch to see that she does not leave the house to-night. [*Exit. R. D. in F.*]

CEV. (*writing at L. of table, not aware the DUKE has left the room*). You shall have every information, M. le Duc. (*writes*) "Left Prague on the 16th, at ten. Lunched at Madame de Fontanges' cottage. (*aside*) Shall I say I met M. Lebon? I had better tell the truth—as he knows everything. Started with Madame—he knows that too. What was the next stage? Eh! Oh! those dreadful German names—I haven't the least notion how to spell Schratzenellenbogen—I must appeal to the Duke. Monsieur—M. le Duc, how do you spell—(*looks round*) Eh! spell—why I declare he's gone. (*rising—the folding doors open*) Here he comes. (*he runs to table and begins to write diligently.*)

Enter MADAME DE FONTANGES, L.

MAD. DE FON. The doors are guarded. The officer has orders not to allow me to quit the house! What is to be done to get this paper carried? Ha! Fouche not here, and De Cevennes alone! May I trust him? I must. Monsieur. (*she comes forward.*)

CEV. Eh! not the Duke! Madame, you come to save me.

MAD. DE FON. How?

CEV. Madame, for the love of mercy, how do you spell Schratzenellenbogen?

MAD. DE FON. Pshaw! You have seen the Duke?

CEV. I have. (*dolefully.*)

MAD. DE FON. And this new mark of imperial favor he promised you?

CEV. There's a hitch somewhere. In fact I'm a disgraced—a ruined

man, and it will be entirely owing to the Duke's good nature if I'm not denounced to-morrow, for my treasonable correspondence with the king. He says there are diamonds missing from the head of that cane.

MAD. DE FON. Hush! there is missing from that cane what is more precious to Fouche than all the diamonds of Golconda. There needs but one quarter of an hour's resolution to enable you to save yourself and to ruin him.

CEV. Only a quarter of an hour's resolution? Madame, I am prepared for any danger—speak!

MAD. DE FON. The cane concealed a secret dispatch.

CEV. A secret dispatch!

MAD. DE FON. Which I abstracted in the carriage while you slept.

CEV. Oh, Madame! How could you?

MAD. DE FON. Many lives depended on it. That paper involves Fouche in the guilt of high treason (*she produces dispatch letter*) It is here. Take it instantly to the Grand Chamberlain—yes, there is a ball at the Tuileries to-night—he will no doubt conduct you to the Emperor. State you came from me—

CEV. But this letter?

MAD. DE FON. Only stipulates for the safety of one who is very dear to me as the price of this intelligence. Quick! Fouche may be back any moment—and soon, no doubt, egress from my house may be as impossible for you as it is for me. Quick! do not hesitate—for my sake!

CEV. But the risk?

MAD. DE FON. For your own sake.

CEV. I will go at once!

[*Exit DE CEVENNES, C. and L.*]

MAD. DE FON. And now, Duke of Otranto, it is a race for life between you and me!

Enter JABOT, C.

JABOT. A gentleman to see Madame instantly. Here is his card. (*giving it*)

MAD. DE FON. Desmarets! He here? I was just in time! And Henri—he will bring me news of Henri! Yes, admit him! (*Exit JABOT, C.*) Should he have betrayed to him what I am—with what intention I following him to Prague! He is cruel enough! Oh, if I could read in his face!

Enter JABOT, shows in DESMARETS, C., and exit MADAME-DE FONTANGES stands eagerly and keenly looking at him.

DES. Delighted to see you once more, Madame but you have given me a hard journey. (*he takes a light from the table, goes rapidly to R. D. in F, and exit by it.*)

MAD. DE FON. I cannot read through the mask.

Re-enter DESMARETS, R. D. in F.

DES. So our deposit is safe! Your departure from Prague was so abrupt I fancied you were in a hurry to transmit certain papers to the Emperor.

MAD. DE FON. You see I have respected your confidence.

DES. Hm! At least I see you have not had time to make use of it.

MAD. DE FON. M Desmarets, pardon my sudden flight. I had no lives.

DES. Oh, a lady is not bound to have any, you know, nor to tell them if she has!

MAD. DE FON. But tell me—what did M. de Neuville think, say, of my disappearance?

DES. Oh! you don't expect me to repeat a lover's incoherencies—*for* I find he is a very warm lover. I congratulate you on the success of that part of your mission. But the best of it is, he is under the impression, poor innocent, that you love him!

MAD. DE FON. That I love him! Ah, he is so inexperienced—and these Creoles are so passionate! And then I played my part so well! It was my part to appear to love him! Love him! (*forcing a laugh*) No! Ha, ha, ha! I was not there to love him! But what matter what *he* thinks? You know the truth!

DES. (R. C.). I do. Shall I tell it you?

MAD. DE FON. (L. C.). Me, Desmaret's?

DES. Yes, you, Marie de Fontanges! you do love this man!

MAD. DE FON. Oh! no, no, no—you must not believe him!

DES. It is not from him I know it, but from *you*!

MAD. DE FON. Me! I tell you it is not so—I do not love him!

DES. Will you tell *him* so?

MAD. DE FON. Oh, if that will satisfy you, I will write as much to him at once! (*aside*) I need not send the letter.

DES. Why write when he is here?

MAD. DE FON. Here! Here, in the very den of the wolf?

DES. In *your* house, Madame!

MAD. DE FON. You have not told him what I am—with what intentions I came to Prague?

DES. Eh! (*looks at her maliciously.*)

MAD. DE FON. Oh! for mercy's sake—you have not told him of my shame?

DES. What matter if I have or not—you do not love him, you know; but it is time undeceive him. I will send him to you that you may tell him you do not love him. [*Exit DESMARETS, C. and L.*]

MAD. DE FON. One moment will decide all.

Enter HENRI DE NEUVILLE—appears, c.

Oh, Henri, Henri! my love!

NEUV. Your love! that name was not meant for me. I am Henri de Neuville, Madame!

MAD. DE FON. For you—for whom else but you? Do not look at me so! Speak to me—the worst, if it must be—anything rather than this silence.

NEUV. Better silence than the truth.

MAD. DE FON. The truth!

NEUV. Your pardon! I forgot myself. The man whose heart you have made the plaything of your summer leisure, when he wakes to the truth may suffer—it is a compliment to your fascination—but that he should complain—absurd! I do not come to complain Madame! (*sternly.*)

MAD. DE FON. (*clasping her hands*). Henri! why are you here?

NEUV. (L. C.). To revenge!

MAD. DE FON. (R. C.). Has that man betrayed me?

NEUV. Oh! you use the wrong word; he has opened my eyes—I know all!

MAD. DE FON. All!

NEUV. The mode of your departure—it was admirably contrived ;— your companion—he was well chosen, for he was my friend !

MAD. DE FON. Ah ! De Cevennes !

NEUV. I expected to find him here. (*puts his hat down, L. H.*) It is from him and not you I am come to ask an explanation.

MAD. DE FON. (*aside*). Ah ! it is but jealously, after all. Oh, Henri ! be more just to me, if not to yourself, than to imagine that coxcomb could hold a place in my heart.

NEUV. I did not imagine he held a place in your heart, Madame, but in that which does duty for your heart—your vanity. Besides, he had prior claims. How often has he not proclaimed himself your adier—*long*—long before I had the misfortune to know you.

MAD. DE FON. Henri De Neuville, look at me well. It was necessary, to save you, that I should leave Prague secretly and speedily. The Marquis De Cevennes's carriage offered me the only means. I took that means for you—and you doubt me.

NEUV. Marie ! Is this the truth ?

MAD. DE FON. Look into my eyes, as I swear to you, this is the truth.

NEUV. There is conviction in your look, Marie—I do believe you ! Forgive me.

MAD. DE FON. No ! no ! It is I who must ask for forgiveness. Oh ! if you knew all !

NEUV. I know only this, that we are once more together, and that we will never part more. (*they embrace ; suddenly she starts away from his arms.*)

MAD. DE FON. Hush, Henri ! in my joy, I forget all !—to stay here is death.

NEUV. Nay—nay. Fouche is the only enemy I have to fear, and here I am secure from him.

MAD. DE FON. Oh ! no, no — what place is safe from that man ?

NEUV. Yes, this place is safe (*holding her in his arms and looking on her fondly*) Falsehood never sat on that pure and open brow. Treason never lurked in the depth of that clear eye. Poison never seethed in the honey of these lips. (*he kisses her*)

MAD. DE FON. His kisses scald like molten lead. Oh ! Fly ! fly ! Henri ! Every minute it may be too late !

Enter DESMARETS, C. from L.

DES. (*at the window*). I begin to think it is too late already. (*crosses to R. C. behind.*)

MAD. DE FON. Ah ! (*going to window*) Gendarmes in the court !

NEUV. Has treason followed me so close ! I will not die without a struggle !

MAD. DE FON. (*crosses in front to R. Aside to DESMARETS*). Stay ! (*pointing, R.*) There is a passage here—(*she rushes to putarc—tries the spring*) It will not work !

DES. Oh ! I forgot to explain to you the counter spring

MAD. DE FON. Lost ! lost ! Oh ! no—(*crosses to L.*) at least stay here, Henri. The Gendarmes may retire ; we do not know they come for you.

NEUV. Doubtless they do. I am betrayed. I may yet discover the traitor.

DES. (*R.*). You may, easily—shall I reveal his name ?

NEUV. (*C.*). You ? Where is he ?

MAD. DE FON. (L.). No, no—for mercy's sake!

NEUV. (C.). Where is he?

DES. (R., *smiling coldly and pointing to MADAME DE FONTANGES*). There!

NEUV. (*laughs scornfully*). M. Lebon, our rapid journey has disordered your wits! This is Madame De Fontanges! a pure and stainless woman, and my love! Her honor is mine!

DES. I am sorry for it. I tell you—

MAD. DE FON. Oh, mercy! mercy! Do not!

DES. There stands the woman who, when you escaped hence, followed you to Prague to win your affections and lure you back to death at Paris—your affections are hers—you are in Paris—she has obeyed her orders (*she sinks on her knees, L. C., hiding her face*) as becomes the spy, the decoy of Fouche.

NEUV. Liar!

DES. (*shrugs his shoulders*). Look there! (*points to her*.)

NEUV. Marie, you hear him? Tell him as I have told him—he lies! lies like a coward! How's this? No word? You hide your eyes when they should strike him dumb! Marie, speak to me, if not to him; say he lies! Oh! God! he lies! Marie, does he not lie?

Enter FOUCHE, C., in court dress.

FOU. (L.). Let me answer that!

NEUV. The Abbe Lenoir—in this dress!—but you know her, Abbe?

FOU. First let me see you right about myself! I am Fouche, though, thanks to Madame's complaisance, I have been occasionally allowed to usurp the character of her confessor.

DES. She needs one no longer now; I have confessed for her!

FOU. Let her agony save her the pain of an avowal. Accept my assurance that what this gentleman has said is, oddly enough, the truth! (*DE NEUVILLE sinks into a chair, R. C., and hides his head on his folded arms, which rest on the table.*)

DES. (*to MADAME DE FONTANGES, who has dragged herself up to a chair and sits on it, ghastly pale*). I told you the serpent could sting! (*crosses to L. C.*)

FOU. This shock is naturally overpowering at first, but you will get over it—particularly with the advantages for cool reflection which you will have in Vincennes, to which safe and retired residence I have particular pleasure in consigning the brilliant and sarcastic Timon! (*goes up stage*) Lest you should make any attempt at escape. I may inform you that the house is guarded at every exit. And now, Desmarests, perhaps we had better leave them together a little—they may need some mutual explanation. (*looking at MADAME DE FONTANGES*) Poor creature! she threatened me, Desmarests? (*going off C. and L.*)

DES. Ah,—and she spurned me—but I bear no malice! (*following FOUCHE by C.*)

MAD. DE FON. (*struggles up and walks faltering to where DE NEUVILLE sits. She stands before him with her head bent down*). Henri! M. de Neuville!

NEUV. Still here?—I hoped I was alone! (*he turns from her, throws his head down on the table, and sobs bitterly. She approaches him and tries to take his hand—he looks up fiercely*) Do not touch me! I wish I could have spared you the sight of this humiliation. It is not for myself I am so shaken, but that you—you whom I had set so high in my heart should be so fallen! A spy! worse—a decoy?

MAD. DE FON. It is true, but let me not hear it from your lips. Spare me! spare me! I cannot bear it.

NEUV. (*passionately*). Why cross my path? What wrong have I done to you that you should wreck my happiness thus? Why do you stay? Is it to look on the ruin you have made? Why are you not with them for the wages of your work? You have earned them well—too well.

MAD. DE FON. No, no, no! do not look at me so—speak so! I was not vile enough to finish what I had the vileness to begin. I loved you, Henri, at last—truly, fondly loved you—with the love before which life and death are indifferent. Only one thing I could not bear—your scorn! It was the dread of this that kept me from avowing the shameful truth that sometimes made your softest words daggers. If you knew the weight of self-scorn I bore under my happiness in your love, my nights of bitter tears, my days of hidden shame—fallen as I am, you would pity me, Henri—indeed you would! (*still kneeling.*)

NEUV. How am I to know this tone does not mask some new treachery?

MAD. DE FON. No! my shame is revealed now—and that—that was all I ever concealed from you!

NEUV. And your flight was not to draw me to my destruction?

MAD. DE FON. No! as I live, no! It was to try one last appeal to FOUCHÉ for release from my infamy.

NEUV. But what could she have been who could first lend herself to such ignominy?

MAD. DE FON. A gambler, Henri! enticed to the table by FOUCHÉ'S arts—beggared there by his agents—and then, when ruin and dishonor beset me, the tempter was ever at my elbow with gold. I listened, I fell, I became his spy; once fallen to that, the man who tempted me ordered me to tempt you—and I did tempt you—wretched woman as I am—you, for whom if I had a thousand lives I would give them all!

NEUV. Poor, poor Marie! My suffering dates but a few hours back, and yours has been the misery of years!

MAD. DE FON. (*rises and advances, c.*). But is the agony I feel now no atonement for my past, Henri? I feel as if it might be, my suffering has been so bitter—so bitter! You will let me take your hand, Henri? (*she takes it, he does not resist*) There are tears in your eyes—you look upon me as you did in those happy days when you thought me worthy of your love! I feel that I have destroyed you. Henri—forgive me, I did not mean to use that word! May I still call you so?

NEUV. (*in a broken voice*). Yes, yes!

MAD. DE FON. Ah! I am forgiven! Speak!

NEUV. Yes! yes, my poor Marie! I forgive the past—such suffering and such repentance redeem all! (*she falls into his arms; he presses her to his heart*) And so we will meet fate together! They did not look to find us thus—thy wet cheek on my loving heart! I can face imprisonment, death, now, if it must be, without a quiver! (*they embrace and remain in each other's arms.*)

Enter FOUCHÉ and DESMARETS with SOLDIERS, c.

FOU. (*speaking at the entrance*). We will try that! Madame, I regret to disturb your tête-à-tête, but the carriage waits to conduct this gentleman to Vincennes.

MAD. DE FON. Kill me! kill me! How can I live with his blood upon my head? Henri! Henri! (*the SOLDIERS advance*) Where he goes I go! To prison with him—to death with him!

NEUV. (L. c.). One moment, gentlemen. Joseph Fouché so sure as there is an eternal justice above us, so surely shall this wickedness be atoned for! Aye, smile, and tremble while you smile—for you feel that truth speaks out of him, who on his way to the grave, pauses here to give you your true titles of knave and coward!

FOU. (c) Do your duty!

BERTHIER (*speaking without*). Stay without, gentlemen, the carriage for Vincennes may wait.

Enter DE CEVENNES, accompanied by BERTHIER in court dress, c.

MAD. DE FON. Ha! Berthier! Prince, my prayer?

BER. (R. c.). Is granted.

MAD. DE FON. He is free! Henri, you are free! free! Do you hear? I said so; I knew they could not part us now! You are safe—something here at my heart told me so—you are safe! God bless the mouth that tells me so!

BER. M. le Duc, my errand is to you. (*beckons DE CEVENNES and takes paper*) A glance at this paper may spare painful avowals. (*hands dispatch*) You will wait the further directions of the Emperor on your estate of Pont Carre.

FOU. (*looks at dispatch, then to MADAME*). Admirably done, Madame: worthy of myself, upon my honor!

BER. Your Grace will not wonder, after this discovery, that I am charged to demand your portfolio; you will give up your cabinet and papers to the Duke of Rovigo!

FOU. (R. c.). Savery—poor Savery! (*takes snuff*) Savery—after me!

BER. (c.). Among the papers to be given up the Emperor includes all his autograph letters, and instructions.

FOU. (*to BERTHIER*). I regret extremely not to be able to oblige the Emperor; but, fearing so delicate a correspondence might fall into bad hands, I have burnt it. [*Exit DESMARETS by secret passage.*]

BER. Burnt it!—you will find it difficult to convince the Emperor of that.

FOU. I have always found him difficult to convince. But it is nevertheless true. His autographs are burnt. (*DESMARETS returning with box, crosses behind FOUCHÉ, to c.*)

DES. Not all, I think, M. le Duc—not quite all.

FOU. You, too, Desmaretts! then I am down!

DES. Your Highness will find His Majesty's revered autographs in this box, besides much interesting correspondence with Marshal Bernadotte and the King of Naples. (*aside*) I should not like Joseph to fall without my having a hand in it. (*crosses to R.*)

FOU. Prince, I am a victim to calumny. I resign my portfolio and myself, until His Majesty again requires my services. Desmaretts—no—I leave you to my successor *ad interim*. I have only to hope he will find you as trustworthy as I have done.

DES. (R.). Adieu!

FOU. (R. c. *looking at him fixedly*). No, *au revoir!* Madame, permit me to compliment you on the skill of your play! M. de Neuville, you have acquired a jewel. Treasure it, but don't forget you took it out of the mire.

NEUV. (L. c.). I will remember it, Duke of Otranto. Think *you* how precious must be that jewel, which, for a moment soiled by contact with your hands, is yet worthy of being set here—in the heart of an honest man! (*he takes her to his arms—she falls on his neck.*)

MAD. DE FON. (*goes to c.*). If from the whirl of passion, plot, and play,
 My storm-tossed bark seeks wedded life's calm bay,
 What tamed the gambler's passion in my heart?
 What 'gainst the plotter turned his own deep art?
 What made weak hands strong for a giant's fall?
 The master passion, Love—"that still is lord of all."

SOLDIERS.

DE CEVENNES.

FOUCHE.

DESMARATS.

DE FONTANGES.

DE NEUVILLE.

R.

R. C.

C.

L. C.

L.

CURTAIN.

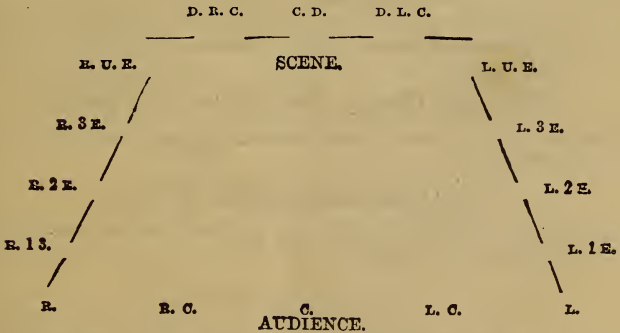
PROPERTIES.

ACTS I. and III.—Writing materials on table, L., front; water decanter and glasses on sideboard up L.; antique clock and candelabra on table and mantel; prayer-book; bell; candles, burning; dispatch-box, containing books and papers; half-mask for MDE. DE FONTANGES; bon-bon case; pack of cards; candles, unlit, as before; two lanterns, to burn; cane, as in Act II.; letter-paper, sealed, for BERTHIER.

ACT II.—Books; flowers; embroidery frame; letters for KARL; flower-pots; note for MDE. DE FONTANGES; cane with large silver ball head, which screws off and shows socket containing folded paper.

EXPLANATION OF THE STAGE DIRECTIONS.

The Actor is supposed to face the Audience.



- L. Left.
- L. C. Left Centre.
- L. 1 E. Left First Entrance.
- L. 2 E. Left Second Entrance.
- L. 3 E. Left Third Entrance.
- L. U. E. Left Upper Entrance
(wherever this Scene may be.)
- D. L. C. Door Left Centre.

- C. Centre.
- R. Right.
- R. 1 E. Right First Entrance.
- R. 2 E. Right Second Entrance.
- R. 3 E. Right Third Entrance.
- R. U. E. Right Upper Entrance.
- D. R. C. Door Right Centre.

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144. Lancashire Lass, melodrama, 5 acts.	12 3	61. Plot and Passion, drama, 3 acts.	7 2
34. Larkins' Love Letters, farce, 1 act.	3 2	133. Poll and Partner Joe, burlesque, 1 act.	10 3
137. L'Article 47, drama, 3 acts.	11 5	110. Poppleton's Predicaments, farce, 1 act.	3 6
111. Liar (The), comedy, 2 acts.	7 2	50. Porter's Knot, drama, 2 acts.	8 2
119. Life Chase, drama, 5 acts.	14 5	59. Post Boy, drama, 2 acts.	5 3
165. Living Statue (The), farce, 1 act.	3 2	95. Pretty Horse-Breaker, farce, 1 act.	3 10
48. Little Annie's Birthday, farce, 1 act.	2 4	181 and 182. Queen Mary, drama, 4 acts.	33 8
32. Little Rebel, farce, 1 act.	4 3	157. Quite at Home, comedietta, 1 act.	5 2
164. Little Ruby, drama, 3 acts.	6 6	195. Queerest Courtship (The), comic operetta, 1 act.	1 1
109. Locked In, comedietta, 1 act.	2 2	132. Race for a Dinner, farce, 1 act.	10 10
85. Locked In with a Lady, sketch, 1 act.	1 1	183. Richelieu, play, 5 acts.	16 2
87. Locked Out, comic scene.	1 2	38. Rightful Heir, drama, 5 acts.	10 2
143. Lodgers and Dodgers, farce, 1 act.	4 2	77. Roll of the Drum, drama, 3 acts.	8 4
189. Leap Year, musical duality, 1 act.	1 1	13. Ruy Blas, drama, 4 acts.	12 4
153. Marcoretta, drama, 3 acts.	10 3	194. Rum, drama, 3 acts.	7 4
164. Maria and Magdalena, play, 4 acts.	8 6	195. Rosemi Shell, travesty, 1 act, 4 scenes.	6 3
63. Marriage at Any Price, farce, 1 act.	5 3	158. School, comedy, 4 acts.	6 6
39. Master Jones' Birthday, farce, 1 act.	4 2	79. Sheep in Wolf's Clothing, drama, 1 act.	7 5
7. Maud's Peril, drama, 4 acts.	5 3	37. Silent Protector, farce, 1 act.	3 2
49. Midnight Watch, drama, 1 act.	8 2	35. Silent Woman, farce, 1 act.	2 1
15. Milky White, drama, 2 acts.	4 2	43. Sisterly Service, comedietta, 1 act.	7 2
46. Miriam's Crime, drama, 3 acts.	5 2	6. Six Months Ago, comedietta, 1 act.	2 1
51. Model of a Wife, farce, 1 act.	3 2	10. Snapping Turtles, duologue, 1 act.	1 1
184. Money, comedy, 5 acts.	17 3	26. Society, comedy, 3 acts.	16 5
108. Mr. Scroggins, farce, 1 act.	3 3	78. Special Performances, farce, 1 act.	7 3
188. Mr. X., farce, 1 act.	3 3	31. Taming a Tiger, farce, 1 act.	3 3
169. My Uncle's Suit, farce, 1 act.	4 1	150. Tell-Tale Heart, comedietta, 1 act.	1 2
130. My Wife's Diary, farce, 1 act.	3 1	120. Tempest in a Teapot, comedy, 1 act.	2 1
92. My Wife's Out, farce, 1 act.	2 2	146. There's no Smoke Without Fire, comedietta, 1 act.	1 2
193. My Walking Photograph, musical duality, 1 act.	1 1	83. Thrice Married, personation piece, 1 act.	6 1
140. Never Reckon Your Chickens, etc., farce, 1 act.	3 4	42. Time and the Hour, drama, 3 acts.	7 3
115. New Men and Old Acres, comedy, 3 acts.	8 5	27. Time and Tide, drama, 3 acts and prologue.	7 5
2. Nobody's Child, drama, 3 acts.	8 3	133. Timothy to the Rescue, farce, 1 act.	4 2
57. Noemie, drama, 2 acts.	4 4	153. 'Tis Better to Live than to Die, farce, 1 act.	2 1
104. No Name, drama, 5 acts.	7 5	134. Tompkins the Troubadour, farce, 1 act.	3 2
112. Not a Bit Jealous, farce, 1 act.	3 3	29. Turning the Tables, farce, 1 act.	5 3
185. Not So Bad as We Seem, play, 5 acts.	14 3	168. Tweedie's Rights, comedy, 2 acts.	4 2
84. Not Guilty, drama, 4 acts.	10 6	126. Twice Killed, farce, 1 act.	6 3
117. Not Such a Fool as He Looks, drama, 3 acts.	5 4	56. Two Gay Deceivers, farce, 1 act.	3 3
171. No hing Like Paste, farce, 1 act.	3 1	123. Two Polts, farce, 1 act.	4 4
14. No Thoroughfare, drama, 5 acts and prologue.	13 6	198. Twin Sisters (The), comic operetta, 1 act.	3 1
173. Off the Stage, comedietta, 1 act.	3 3	162. Uncle's Will, comedietta, 1 act.	2 1
176. On Bread and Water, farce, 1 act.	1 2	106. Up for the Cattle Show, farce, 1 act.	6 2
90. Only a Halfpenny, farce, 1 act.	2 2	81. Vandyke Brown, farce, 1 act.	3 3
170. Only Somebody, farce, 1 act.	4 2	124. Volunteer Review, farce, 1 act.	6 6
33. One too Many for Him, farce, 1 act.	2 3	91. Walpole, comedy, 3 acts.	7 2
3. £100,000, comedy, 3 acts.	8 4	118. Wanted, a Young Lady, farce, 1 act.	3 3
97. Orange Blooms, comedietta, 1 act.	3 3	44. War to the Knife, comedy, 3 acts.	5 4
66. Orange Girl, drama, in prologue and 3 acts.	18 4	105. Which of the Two? comedietta, 1 act.	2 10
172. Ours, comedy, 3 acts.	6 3	98. Who is Who? farce, 1 act.	3 2
94. Our Clerks, farce, 1 act.	7 5	12. Widow Hunt, comedy, 3 acts.	4 4
45. Our Domestics, comedy farce, 2 acts.	6 6	5. William Tell with a Vengeance, burlesque.	8 2
155. Our Heroes, military play, 5 acts.	24 5	136. Woman in Red, drama, 3 acts and prologue.	6 6
178. Out at Sea, drama in prologue and 4 acts.	16 5	161. Woman's Vows and Mason's Oaths, 4 acts.	10 4
147. Overland Route, comedy, 3 acts.	11 5	11. Woodcock's Little Game, farce, 2 acts.	4 4
156. Peace at Any Price, farce, 1 act.	1 1	54. Young Collegian (Cantab.), farce, 1 act.	3 3
82. Peep o' Day, drama, 4 acts.	12 4		
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