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No. CCXXII.

H'S STANDARD DRAMA.

THE

DARK HOUR BEFORE DAWN.

A Play, in Five Acts.

BY JOHN BROUGHAM AND FRANK B. GOODRICH.

WITH CAST OF CHARACTERS, STAGE BUSINESS, COSTUMES,
RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c., &c.

FIRST PERFORMED BY AMATEURS, FOR THE
BENEFIT OF THE AMERICAN DRAMATIC FUND.

NEW-YORK:

SAMUEL FRENCH,

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[Catalogue continued on third page of cover.]

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The Acting Edition.

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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

FIRST PERFORMED BY AMATEURS, FOR THE

BENEFIT OF THE AMERICAN DRAMATIC FUND.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1853, by JOHN BROUGHAM and FRANK B. GOODRICH, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York.

NEW YORK:

SAMUEL FRENCH,

122 NASSAU STREET, (UP STAIRS.)

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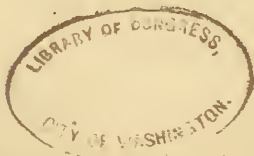
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Cast of the Characters.—[THE DARK HOUR BEFORE DAWN.]

Viscomte de Rosiere.....
Baron de Trep.....
Alfred de Senneville.....
Chevalier Freluquet.....
De Merluche.....
De Meschin.....
La Foree, afterwards the Marquis de Mousseron.
Joseph La Tour.....
Papillon, Valet to the Viscomte.....
Tirebouchon, Butler.....
Papa Chauve-Souris.....
Pierre Le Belle.....
Trebuchet.....
Officer of the Guard.....
Cecile La Tour, Vicomtesse de Rosiere.....
Muscadine, Femme de Chambre.....

Visitors, Guards, Servants, Galeriens, &c., &c., &c.

** The Costumes are of the period of the latter part of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth.



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THE AUTHORS

New York, March 16, 1859.

THE DARK HOUR BEFORE DAWN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Breakfast Room in the hotel of the VISCOMTE DE RO-SIÈRE.—A table spread.—Around it are seated PAPILLON, MUSCADINE, TIREBOUCHON, and other SERVANTS.*

Papillon. Alas! gentlemen's gentlemen, the fatal intelligence is but too true!—the bloom is off the plum of our existence, our sun has set—we have eaten our last bachelor meal—the inexorable fiend, matrimony has swallowed our master—he is married!

All. Oh!

Pap. Married, nobody knows whom. Married without consulting us! We, who have spared *him* no expense to make his hotel the most liberal and enjoyable in the city!

Tirebouchon. Let's drink to his liberality, anyhow. [*Drinks.*]

Pap. I call upon you to do something to show the indignation which should follow such outrageous conduct.

Tir. That's my idea; let's drink his best wine!

Pap. Shall we be so dead to all the finer feelings of humanity, as to endure tamely, this—this—ah—tyrannical disregard of our long established privileges?—not that I see any precise way to help ourselves—but it's so pleasing to let one's anger mount into big sentences!

Tir. Let's help ourselves to the wine, anyhow.

[*MUSCADINE rises.—All applaud.*]

Muscadine. Hem!—Ladies of the Household:—Friends and Fellow Sufferers: you have heard, from the honied lips of our own butterfly, that an individual—a woman—I may say, in fact, a young female is about to be placed at the head of this establishment. *You* may have your feelings upon the subject, but what can they be when compared with mine? I, who have grown up since childhood with the Viscomte. I, who looked upon myself as the possessor of everything, except the responsibility of ownership. I, who could come and go, and do what I pleased, now to have the eye of a mistress upon my actions!

Tir. Let's drink to the mistress's eye.

Mus. For my part, my mind's made up, and I mean to be as im-

pertinent to this intrusive female stranger, as it is possible for housemaid to be, within the limits of safety. [Sits.]

Pap. You don't mean to insinuate *that* would be a singular phenomenon?

Mus. Not among your impudent tribe; you men are so conceited one would suppose the world belonged to you.

Pap. So it does.

Mus. Indeed! By what right, pray?

Pap. The right of possession. We were first on it, and if you had'nt taken a mean advantage of our very first slumber, to steal a fragment of our anatomy, you never would have been at all; and, indeed, that bone too much in our original configuration, has been a bone of contention ever since.

Tiv. We'll drink to the bone, anyhow.

Mus. And did'nt woman recompense you by giving you her heart to cheer you, and her hand to help?

Pap. That would have been all very well, if she had'nt given her ear to the devil at the same time.

Mus. Ah! you're ungrateful reprobates, all of you.

Pap. So we are, Rosebud; you gave us the first taste for fruit, and by Pomona! our mouths have been watering for the dangerous dessert ever since. But that's a delicate subject, so we'll leave it to the philosophers.

Tiv. We'll drink to the dessert, anyhow.

[A violent ring.—All start up.]

Pap. Who on earth is this? It can't be the Viscomte! Confound it, its that purblind Baron De Trop, come at the wrong time, as he always does.

Enter BARON DE TROP.

Baron. Ah!—there you are—thought I should be the first to welcome you—how do you do—you are looking extremely well after your accident—pshaw! Excuse me—I mean your marriage. Where are those cursed spectacles? Ah! I've left them at home, as usual. Never mind; I'm glad to see you—that is, I would be glad if I could.

Pap. [Aside.] Takes me for my master! We'll have some fun with the old mole. [Aloud.] Delighted to see you, Baron.

Bar. Thank you—I knew you would. [MUSCADINE laughs.] What's that? I heard the twitter of a woman's laugh. It isn't the—? Eh? you know. I can't see her—but I have four of my senses left. Lucky that I left my spectacles at home, or I should have died from a surfeit of—oh—you know—the other element. Pretty compliment that, I think.

Pap. Overpowering, Baron. Let me present you to her Royal Highness, the Duchess of Schnoutenhoutenvonpoufenheimer!

Mus. [Snickering.] Pouf!

Bar. Delighted, I'm sure, to make the acquaintance of a lady with so elongated a patronymic! Ah! Duchess, your name betrays your illustrious origin. It speaks of the sunny banks of the glorious

Rhine—it recalls to me the land of—the land of—krout and sour beer—no, of beer and sour krout; of curds and cheese—*kase*, as you say in your own romantic tongue—do you not, Duchess?

Mus. Yah!

Bar. Delicious idiom!—in any one's mouth a melodious dialect; but upon your lips, Duchess, positively it gives me an idea of—a sort of foretaste of the music of—the spheres. It does, by Venus!

Mus. Oh, nein!

Bar. At least, I should say—we'll call it nine—[*aside*] I haven't the slightest idea what. I wonder if she's married. I'll ask her. [*Aside*] Duchess, is there a Duke of—a Duke of—in short, of what you are Duchess of? I declare, I've quite forgotten the—

Mus. [*Aside.*] Good gracious! he doesn't expect me to remember it, does he? Here, Papillon; quick! What's my name?

Pap. Muscadine Cabassol.

Mus. No, the other; my royal highness' name, you know; that thing with a heimer va Shnouten—

Pap. Oh! I can't remember that. It was an inspiration; it can't be done again.

Bar. Really, Duchess, it's singular; but for the life of me, I can't recall—

Mus. What, did my name make so little impression on you? Oh, fie, Baron!

Bar. Well, 'pon my life—I declare—Oh! I'm sure I shall remember. It was winey in its termination; it had a grapey fall. 'Twasn't Hockheimer?

Mus. Why, that's something to drink.

Tir. Then let's drink it, I say!

Bar. [To PAPILLON] Who's your friend?

Pap. I'll present you shortly, Baron.

Bar. I shall be delighted, I'm sure. Oh, I have it!—Johanis-burger.

Mus. Oh! it's twice more longer again as dat.

Pap. [*Whispering to MUSCADINE.*] I have it—Shnoutenhoutenvonpoufenheimer.

Mus. I'll bet you can't say it again.

Pap. Shnoutenhoutenvonpoufenheimer.

Mus. Ah, yes! Baron, I'll assist you—Hooten-tooten-shnoutenheimer.

Bar. How stupid of me! Of course—Pooten-pooten- [*very loud*] heimer! I knew it ended in heimer.

Mus. Yes, that's near enough, for all the good it'll do you.

Pap. Baron, let me present our friends. [*Aside.*] The stable-boy first. [*Aloud.*] The Marquis de Frangipanni. [*Aside.*] Now the butler. [*Aloud.*] The Duke de Chateaumargot, Baron de Vin-ordinaire.

Bar. Delighted, sir, I'm sure. I've known several members of your family. [*Aside.*] Really, the Visconte receives the most choice society.

Mus. Baron, won't you swallow a little something? Here's a mor-

sel of pasty, cut for you by Frangipanni's own hands, [*aside*] and with his own knife.

Bar. I don't mind if I do. Illustrious pasty! carved by a Frangipanni, and served up by a Pootenheimer!—let me absorb thee!

[*Bell and whip-cracking heard without.*]

Pap. Good lord, there's master!

Mus. And missis.

Pap. Let's get the things out of the way; quick!

[*Great hurry-skurry.*—PAPILLON takes off cloth, with everything on it—FRANGIPANNI drags CHATEAUMARGOT out—MUSCADINE snatches BARON'S plate from him—consternation on the part of BARON, &c.

Enter VISCOMTE DE ROSIERE and CECILE.

Viscomte. At last, my love, we are at home. Here are the servants to welcome us. Ah, Papillon! Muscadine, you see I have brought you a mistress back. Cecile, this is Muscadine, your waiting-maid—a good girl, too.

Mus. Ah, madame! we are so glad you have come. We have always thought it such a pity that master didn't get married.

Pap. Yes, ma'am, we were saying just now, not two minutes ago, me and Muscadine, how much pleasanter the house would be with a delicate female in it.

Bar. [*Aside.*] What do I hear? The Pootenheimer turned lady's maid?

Cecile. Well, my good girl, I must try and not disappoint your expectations. Will you show me to my room?

Mus. Willingly, madame.

Cec. I am going to look round the house a little, Edward. I have never seen a bachelor's establishment, you know.

Mus. Oh, madame! everything at all bachelor has been scrupulously suppressed. We knew you was a-coming, ma'am.

[*Exeunt* MUSCADINE and CECILE.

Bar. I am absolutely brutified with stupefaction.

Vis. Why, Baron! excuse me, I did not see you. How are you? How have you been during the past fortnight?

Bar. Go away! Go away!

Vis. Hey, Baron! what's this?

Bar. [*Excitedly*] I swear it's too bad! I never leave my spectacles at home—which I do pretty much all the time—but everybody makes game of me, and comes all sorts of jokes over me. Here have I been hobnobbing with counts and duchesses, and curse me, if I don't believe it was your precious servants! But let them tremble, Viscomte, [*Going.*] let them oscillate with terror; [*At door.*] I am going to get—

Vis. What? The police?

Bar. No! My spectacles! Ho! ho!

[*Exit.*]

Pap. [*Trembling burlesquely.*] I'm oscillating all over!

Vis. Papillion, run immediately to the house of my cousin, Alfred de Senneville, and request him to come here at once. You may tell

him of my marriage, for I didn't care about breaking the ill news to him myself.

Pap. Ill news?

Vis. Yes, to *him*. He expected me to die early and to make him my heir.

Pap. I fly, my lord. [*Aside.*] Now I'll make this *cousin* oscillate. [*Exit PAPILLON.*]

Vis. I expect an explosion from that young man, and, in fact, it is the only anxiety I have in connection with my marriage, for I almost promised him, in one of my misanthropic fits, to allow my estate to revert to his branch of the family. However, there's no help for it now. But where can Joseph, my wife's brother be, I wonder?

Re-enter CECILE.

Cec. A very well ordered house, Edward, a place for everything and everything in its place. It's too large, though—too grand. I am afraid my country eyes and country habits will never become accustomed to the change, We lived so differently at home, you know.

Vis. That puts me in mind of a matter of which I ought to have spoken to you before, Cecile, one concerning your brother.

Cec. My brother?

Vis. You know, love, that there has been a great difference between your education and his. You were brought up in a convent, and habituated from your earliest years to the usages of society, and to the refinements of conventional life, and I have never for an instant doubted your ability to sustain your rank creditably in the saloons of Paris. But it is not so with your brother, whose only education has been that of the farmhouse, and whose manners are those of the field. If he were known to be your brother, he would act as a drag upon you, besides being constantly in a false position-himself.

Cec. Poor Joseph! What do you propose doing then, Edward?

Vis. Let him be presented to our household as the late Steward of your estate at home, now promoted to the Intendancy of our hotel in town.

Cec. Oh, my poor brother! But what will he say to this arrangement, do you think?

Vis. Here he comes, let him speak for himself.

Enter JOSEPH LA TOUR, with stick.

La Tour. Well, here we are in Paris, sister, thanks to our good brother-in-law, who would transplant us from our quiet little country garden, to this great entangling forest of brick and stone. By St. Denis! I nearly lost my head from bewilderment while making my way here. I can't say much for your hall servants' manners, my lord brother-in-law. He was for keeping me on the wrong side of the door, until I stirred up his politeness with this. [*Shaking stick.*] Wanted to know who I was, but I soon satisfied him that it was none of his business who I was. "Oh, you came with his lordship, may-

be?" said the fellow, rubbing his pate where I had let the manners into his thick skull—"you'll soon find out, my saucy friend," said I. Then up comes a donkey-faced jack a-dandy and began braying at me, and wanting to know "what odor of turnip-fed rusticity saluted his delicate nerves." I just pointed to my explainer, and he tripped away like a dancing-master. I do believe, my lord brother-in-law, that these ignorant louts take me to be a sort of upper servant to my lady sister and yourself. Ha! ha!

Vis. Perhaps it's better that they should.

La T. What!

Vis. Nay, hear me out, Joseph; you are a sensible lad, and it is in reference to this very subject that Cecile and I wish to speak to you. You will not take offense, I'm sure, where none is meant, but suppose you represent yourself to be, for a time merely, what the household have taken you for—the Steward or Intendant of the hotel—until you acquire, as with your habits of observation you soon will, the external graces and finish which custom requires gentlemen to possess.

La T. Why, look ye, Viscomte, if I am not good enough to show my face along with you and sister, why did't ye leave us alone in the country where you found us?

Cec. Now, brother dear, don't speak so harshly to Edward; he is only doing it for your good.

Vis. *La Tour*, I have no false pride. It is not on my account that I make the proposition. I am perfectly willing—nay, I should be proud to acknowledge you as my brother, and recognize my relationship to one whom I look upon as a yeoman prince; but I cannot force the Parisians, with their caustic wit, to admire you as much as I do.

La T. Well, after all, what do I care for anything but the happiness of my dear Cecile? How long will it take to polish me up like a fine gentleman?

Vis. Six months, perhaps.

La T. And how does a steward—or an intendant, as ye call it—pass away the time? What must I do, in short, for my wages?

Vis. Well, as we don't pay you any wages, we won't exact any duties of you. There shall be a sub-intendant to do the work.

La T. No, no; if I wear the title, I'll discharge the duties. What are they?

Vis. Well, you must furnish the stores required for the house and the stable, keep the accounts, pay the bills, engage the servants—

La T. Can I make love to the servant-girls?

Cec. Oh, Joseph! how can you?

La T. There's a mighty pretty one, I notice. I'll practice my gentility on her.

Vis. You must look out for Papillon, then; for he asserts a prior claim to Mademoiselle Muscadine.

La T. Well, Viscomte, I'll be your steward till I've learned my manners: and here's my hand upon it. [*Professionally.*] What will your lordship be pleased to order for dinner?

Enter PAPILLON.

Pap. Monsieur Alfred de Senneville is in the ante-room, and desires an interview with Monsieur le Visconte. [*Aside to* VISCOMTE.] I told him the news, and he's in a dreadful rage.

Vis. I expected as much. Cecile, my love, retire with Joseph to the next room, till I have prepared our cousin to receive you. He's a fiery young man, and has been badly disappointed.

La T. [*With mock gravity*] What hour will your lordship dine?

Vis. [*Imitating him.*] Whenever dinner is ready.

[*Exeunt* CECILE and LA TOUR.]

Pap. So, so; our new intendant. I thought there was a flavor of domesticity about him.

Vis. Well, I'm glad to see him take it in such good part, at any rate.

Pap. [*Announcing.*] Monsieur Alfred de Senneville.

Enter DE SENNEVILLE.

Vis. Cousin, I am glad to see you. [*Offers hand.*]

De Senneville. [*Refusing hand.*] Is this news true, Visconte?

Vis. It is true that I am married, if you refer to that.

De S. You are the first of your name, sir, who ever broke his word.

Vis. [*Restraining himself.*] I am the first of my name, too, who ever failed to revenge an insult. But I have not broken my word, and that you well know.

De S. You promised never to marry.

Vis. I said it was unlikely I should ever marry; and I promised, in that case, to make no will, but to suffer my estate to pass to you, my next of kin and heir at law. I have changed my mind, as I had a right to do, and I have summoned you here to present you to my wife. Are you ready to receive her?

De S. [*Aside.*] I'll insult her to her face! [*Aloud.*] Bring her forth, Visconte; I am ready to receive her. [*Aside.*] I'll be cruelly revenged!

VISCOMTE leads forth CECILE.

Vis. Alfred de Senneville, I have the pleasure of presenting you to my wife, the Vicomtesse de Rosiere.

[*DE SENNEVILLE turns his back upon her—CECILE drops her head in her hands—VISCOMTE seizes* DE SENNEVILLE.]

Enter LA TOUR, with napkin on his arm.

La T. Dinner!

Pap. [*Announcing.*] The Baron de Trop.

Enter BARON.

Bar. How d'ye do? How are you? I've got my spectacles.

Tableau.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Apartment at DE SENNEVILLE'S.*

Enter CHEVALIER DE MESCHIN, LE VISCOMTE FRELQUET, and DE MERLUCHE.

De Merluche. Bad news, this, for De Senneville.

De Meschin. Much worse for us, De Merluche.

Freluquet. [*Combing wig by hand mirror.*] Ruinous for me. By the bones of my ancestors, he owes me two thousand louis.

De Mer. I have advanced him five thousand.

Fre. Poor devil!

De Mes. And I three thousand.

Fre. An undone party, by the shade of King Pharaoh! Confound the fellow, he told me his cousin, the Visconte, was irredeemably consumptive, and incurably misogynic; on the contrary I find him disgustingly healthy, and inconveniently uxorious.

De Mer. Its an abominable trap.

De Mes. A disgraceful cheat.

Fre. Nay, i'll do him the credit to say this untoward affair is as unexpected by him as it is by us, nor is he the man to remain inactive under the circumstances. He's a ready-witted and unscrupulous fellow, quick at invention and fertile in resources. I'll 'gage my knighthood he'll wriggle out of the difficulty somehow.

De Mer. I don't care what he does, so he manages to wriggle me out my five thousand louis. Egad, here he comes with a thunder cloud on his brow.

Enter DE SENNEVILLE.

De S. Ah! you have heard of this precious marriage, I perceive?

De Mer. Yes, my dear fellow—ill news travels fast.

Fre. We were just deploring the catastrophe, Alfred, and mingling our condolences together.

De S. Most disinterestedly, of course, as one's dear friends always do, especially when they hold little obligations rendered somewhat doubtful by the shuffling of fortune's cards.

De Mer. Well, to say the truth, Alfred, the idea did enter slightly into our calculations.

De S. Ha! you thought, perhaps, that I was tame fool enough to lie quietly down, and let the wheels of destiny roll over me; but, no; not while I have wit to plot and strength to execute. I have hated him ever since his canting uncle, and mine, on the plea of my loose life, as he was good enough to designate it, robbed me of my right,

and left him all. Ah, be assured that I have not forgotten! I will have revenge! I only want some subtle means to bring it about. His weak point is the unsullied honor of his name. I'll work on that—to fix suspicion of a stain upon his wife, would be to make him loose her even from his very heart strings. If you will but join with me, the end is certain, and will trebly pay you.

Fre. My dear fellow, don't mention that.

De Mer. By no means.

De Mes. Our friendship only urges us to aid you in the recovery of your right.

De S. Call it what you like, for my part I scorn to wear a mask; you shall not be compromised a tittle—on my own head be the entire responsibility. Silence is all that I demand; a sign—a look, at the proper moment, will be aid sufficient. Is it agreed?

All. Agreed!

[*They shake hands.*]

De S. Enough! I know a conscienceless scamp, who, for sufficient pay, would undertake the darkest villainy. One La Force, a fellow of good family and consummate address, but a double-dyed rascal. I have learnt he has just come back from a long service in the galleys. My anger got the better of my discretion, at the introduction of the Viscountess, but I have patched up a reconciliation, and we are friends again. There is to be a formal reception this evening—of course you will all attend—so shall I. Farewell till then. Mark what occurs, and take your cue therefrom.

Fre. Depend upon us.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Interior of a poor cabaret.*—PAPA CHAUVE-SOURIS discovered at head of table surrounded by PIERRE LE BELLETE, TREBUCHET, GRIFFE, COUP JARRET, POINT DE GUEPE, &c.

SONG AND CHORUS.—*Papa Chauve-Souris.*

To all honest rogues in the world, fill high,
Who no sheepskin garments wear,

But boldly cry

As the lambs pass by,

We are wolves! of our teeth beware.

Then sing and drink,

Till the tired stars wink,

And care into limbo fling;

For a clinking song

Helps time along,

It's a very, very jovial thing.

With a ding, ding, dong,

Dong, dong, ding!

Merry, merry let the glass bells ring.

To all fearless hearts through the world, brave boys,
Now a foaming bumper fill ;

Let fools split straws,
But a fig for their laws,

We have none but our own good will.

Then sing and drink, &c.

That's right—jolly dogs! Fling care to the four winds. Here's your true joy-inspirer! pass it round, and be merry. Here's confusion to the hobbling old Jezebel, Dame Justice—and may she always be a day's march behind us!

All. Hurrah!

Belle. Say rather before us, old boy, for then we need'nt overtake her unless we desire it.

Trebuchet. Tete de Diable! I'd rather the old beldame kept out of the way altogether.

Papa. Pshaw! there's no fear. She has'nt been seen about here lately.

Bel. They say Mazarin has sent her to the Blind Hospital, to have her eyes attended to.

Papa. More likely to have the bandage tied a little tighter.

Treb. The Doctor's will take care of that! It would be inconvenient to them, if she saw too clearly.

Papa. Faith, if she did, there's no knowing what murders would come to light: a bolus is as good as a bullet sometimes.

Bel. Come, come, you must'nt libel the faculty. Bless you, they never kill patients, they only *lose* them.

Papa. That's true, and as they are only tried by a jury of doctors, the verdict is pretty sure to be justifiable homicide:—but has anybody seen La Force to-day? His little retirement at that fashionable watering place, has given him health, if not wealth. Exercise is wholesome. Ah: I remember him a swashing blade—the idol of the feminines and the pride of the Boulevards! What a dainty rascal he was to be sure!

Treb. What was he sent to the galleys for?

Papa. A trifle of amateur surgery, that's all. An over particular individual objected to the peculiarity of his play, at Rouge et Noir, one evening, and got so hot-blooded about it, that La Force found it necessary to cool him, by letting it all out with an unprofessional lancet.

Bel. Ah! that's the inconvenience of not being in regular practice.

[LA FORCE sings without.

Papa. Ah! here he comes! let us receive His Majesty of the Galleys, with all honor.

Enter LA FORCE—a picturesque ragamuffin. *All cheers, and gather round him, shouting.*

All. Long live the King of the Galleys.

La Force. My beloved subjects—this cordial welcome touches our royal heart. It rejoices us, on returning from the somewhat protracted visit to our marine palace, to find your loyalty unshaken.

Although it is usual in a speech from the Throne, to indulge in diplomatic ambiguity, and contrive to say nothing particular, in as many words as possible, we shall not follow the example of our cousins of the kingly family, but say what we mean, utterly disregarding the delicate susceptibility of the public funds. Our crown is safe: we have worn it since infancy, and it sits easy on our shoulders. We care not for domestic treason, or the plots of rival statesmen, but reign o'er honest rascals, true to one another, and to crown all, our treasury is free from peculation, the only one that is, because there's nothing in it.

All. Hurrah! hurrah!

Papa. May I presume to inquire if your Majesty has had any luck to-day?

La F. You mean in raising the supplies? Not much. A worthy bourgeois was kind enough to assist us with a small amount. We didn't ask him, yet he felt obliged to leave a little in our hands—we took it, but regret to say the donor didn't wait for us to thank him. [*Throws purse to PAPA.*] A lovely damsel, too, bewildered by our close attention, lost her heart, besides this slight memorial. In a moment of abstraction she parted with it, entirely heedless of the sacrifice she made. By the light handed Mercury, and Venus the lighter hearted, we're not past conquest yet.

Papa. Faith, so it seems! a pretty keepsake that.

La F. What? do your palms begin to itch, and your red eyes snap, old greedy.

Papa. [*Aside.*] Diamonds! big diamonds, as I'm alive.

La F. There, take it, Demogorgon! you know it's value to the last shadow of a grain. I never shall, until you tell me when I've melted it within this fiery alembic. [*Drinks.*]

Papa. Ah! we shall thrive now, since you have returned. Bless me! I thought they were diamonds. [*Rubbing with sleeve.*]

La F. [*Starting to his feet.*] And so they are, old Cheat-the-devil! Peste! would you try your tricks on me?

Papa. Yes, yes; I see they are now, but of small value—dim and full of flaws.

La F. Why, what a pity! Give it me back; it isn't worth your notice.

Papa. There now, how quick you are! I'll turn it to account, and give you the full value, be assured.

La F. No, no; your chance has passed. Come, give it up, you miserly old harpy! You know I'm obstinate, and somewhat dangerous, when crossed or played with.

Papa. I won't! I won't! You shall have months, nay, years of drink and lodging for it. It is of value. I confess the lie. Abuse me, pummel me, but let me keep it—oh! let me keep it.

La F. I tell you, no! You've roused the tiger in me. Restore me that trinket, or I'll cut it from your miserable heart.

[*General movement.—A sharp knock at the door—all alarmed, crouch into corners, and conceal themselves—others sit quietly at table—LA FORCE hides.*]

Papa. The saints be praised! Oh, should it be the hawks of justice!

La F. Beware!

[*PAPA unbolts door.*]

ALFRED DE SENNEVILLE *enters, disguised in large roquelaire and slouched hat.*

De S. Pardon this intrusion, my honest friend. I seek one Monsieur La Force, who, I am informed, sometimes visits here.

Papa. He does, sir—

La F. [*Interrupting*] Stay, I know the person he inquires after; let me answer him. Proceed, sir, with your question.

De S. It is simply to ask if he I seek is here at present.

La F. Faith, if your purpose is a friendly one, he might be found without much trouble. But if not—

De S. Well, and if not?

La F. Ventre St. Gris! you know not the brotherhood that calls him chief, or you might have sense enough to guess.

[*Touches his knife.*]

De S. You mean, my throat might be in danger?

La F. I regret to say that such desperate contingency would then be not at all unlikely.

De S. Perdrie! I knew the ticklish ground I had to tread upon, and came not here, believe me, without due precaution.

Treb. [*Rushing forward with others.*] What, does he threaten us? Down with him!

La F. Pooh! pooh! Restrain your anger, my impetuous friends. Most excellent sir, will you extend your courtesy so far as to inform us what induced the honor of this unexpected visit?

De S. Pardon me, but that concerns him only that I am in quest of.

La F. Then pray relieve your lungs at once, sir, for he stands before you.

De Sen. I thought so. I was sure of it. That heroic air convinces me. Let me pay homage to the adventurous spirit of whose bold exploits I've heard so much.

La F. Oh, sir! you overcome me quite. [*Aside.*] The fool has shown his hand. I know his game—he wants me.

De S. I mean to do you a service.

La F. [*Aside.*] I'll warrant that; but not for nothing, I'll be sworn.

De S. Could we not have some talk alone?

La F. One moment, if you please. Pray don't accuse me of indelicacy—a mere routine, that's all. [*Taking out ALFRED'S sword.*] A fine blade! Here, Papa, be careful of his excellency's sword. Why, what a charming ornament! [*Takes poniard.*] Spanish, I think. These gentlemen are fond of curious workmanship; they'll just examine these apart, while we converse. No harm shall come to them, I pledge my honor. [*All go off, examining swords, singing refrain of chorus. ALFRED somewhat annoyed.*] You mustn't think harshly of my children's playful habits. And now, Monsieur, we are alone, let me entreat you to be explicit, and above all things, frank and open.

Dissimulation or word-fencing will be waste of time and breath. To put you at your ease at once, let me premise that I'm a gentleman of wit and leisure, somewhat bruised and frayed, indeed, by falling from a social height, perhaps as lofty as your own—but let that pass. When station stoops to such companionship as this, and shows itself within the market-place of crime, it can be only as a purchaser. Well, you know the merchandise in which we deal. Don't fear eavesdroppers. What do you require?

De S. Most clear and business-like, I must confess. To meet you, then, on equal grounds, I am desirous of using your wit and leisure for a little time. Both shall be well rewarded.

La F. Ah! now you're interesting. Proceed, monsieur, my ears are sharpened. What kind of service do you want?

De S. An easy one—and void of every risk.

La F. Yes, yes—of course. When souls follow the devil's finger-post, the road is always smooth at first. Go on.

De S. To come, then, to the point at once—I simply wish to have a woman compromised.

La F. An innocent one?

De S. The world believes so, but our creed ignores such a phœnomenon.

La F. And young?

De S. But just past girlhood.

La F. Unmarried?

De S. No, a recent wife.

La F. And happy in her choice, no doubt—hum! In the first dawn of life, and love, and joy—to be destroyed forever. I wish you had desired some other service. Why, man, it's equal to a score of simple murders. A sudden plunge with the red hand and there's an end. But here, every life-breath for the long years to come, will be a separate stab! If life and honor are both quenched at once, the means are merciful that bring oblivion; but to kill the soul only, and still suffer the heart to throb, and the brain to work!—I would you had not asked me to do this.

De S. Pshaw! man. Why, is it not done daily for mere pastime? Don't reputations hang upon the lips of fools and gossips, everywhere? I little thought to find such scruples here; no matter—it's of little moment—think no more of what I said. *[Going.]*

La F. Softly, sir—don't misunderstand me. I'm ready to do any devil's work the fiend thrusts in my way, for fate has made me desperate. I only put it in the strongest light, in hope that the great strain upon my conscience would be considered, when we touch upon the pecuniary.

De S. You shall be amply paid.

La F. The sum—the definite sum! There's nothing so encouraging as to see in perspective, a good round total, except, perhaps, the pleasing certainty of a present instalment. To say the truth, my wardrobe lacks variety. The social world has claims which should be respected.

De S. It will be absolutely necessary for you to have the appear-

ance of a man of rank. Here are 100 louis d'or—so pray equip at once. A few moments of your time employed this evening, as I shall dictate, will be all I shall require, then claim from me a thousand more. Are you satisfied?

La F. Almost. Will the effect of that which you would have me do, be certain?

De S. As sure as destiny!

La F. Then you can have no objection to sign an obligation for the residue? A mere debt of honor, you know, can compromise no one. There's nothing like being particular in money matters.

[*They go to table, as ALFRED is signing, scene closes.*]

SCENE III.—*Ante-chamber in the Hotel de Rosiere. Front scene—about 2d grooves.*

Enter PAPILON and MUSCADINE, from opposite sides.

Pap. Cofound these sudden household revolutions—they interfere sadly with gentlemen of fixed habits. Our whole establishment is in a most perplexing state of confusion.

Mus. Abominably unendurable. For my part, I have a great mind to tender my resignation.

Pap. Perfidious rose-bud! you have nothing of the kind. Ah! Woman! woman!

Mus. Why, what's the matter with you, butterfly?

Pap. You know, you know. Ah! when the fabric of a man's felicity is assailed, he's very likely to keep a sharp look-out. Rose-bud—you're affectionate insect sees himself about to be crushed by the rude hand of destiny.

Mus. Don't be absurd, butterfly! what are you talking about?

Pap. Delicious, but distracting mouthful of feminine deception. Do you suppose I didn't see this great gray moth of an intendant, this new country fly, buzzing about you, and looking awkward love out of his dull horny eyes.

Mus. You saw all that, did you—and if the man chooses to admire me, can I help it?

Pap. Ah, rosebud, when I wear you in my breast, as you have promised I shall one of these days, let the nose beware that ventures near enough to scent the perfume.

Mus. How poetical our butterfly has become. I have no time to listen to such nonsense. The Viscountesse is preparing for the reception, and I must go to her.

Pap. Won't you bless your insect by telling him your heart is his, before you leave?

Mus. Well, yes—I believe so! there, go along, I've told you so a thousand times.

Pap. [*Capers about.*] Then a fig for all the moths and flies! my wings expand—I rise above them—up, up, among the sun-rays and the cupids, to warm myself a while, and then to settle down upon these dewy rose-leaves.

[*Kisses her.*]

BARON DE TROP enters.

Bar. Don't let me interrupt you, Visconte. [*MUSCADINE and PAFILLON sneak off.*] I believe I'm early—always like to be in-a-time; deuce take those spectacles! pray excuse me, I must go back. [*Going, encounters LA TOUR, who enters.*] How do you do! I'm glad to see you. [*LA TOUR withdraws hand.*] Ah—ah! yes, bless me, I don't recollect! who have I the pleasure to address?

La Tour. The Visconte's Intendant, Baron.

Bar. Is it possible? well—I declare, so it is. You didn't happen to see a pair of spectacles, but I forgot, they must be at my hotel! good morning. [*Exit.*]

La T. Ah! here comes my dear Cecile, looking like an angel, as she is. [*Goes to meet CECILE, who enters.*]—*He looks around, then embraces her.*—Oh, how my rustic heart glows to see thee a great lady. Our dear dead mother said it would be so—aye, and I'll bet our old silver-haired father, at home, weeps tears of joy, at this very moment, just as I do

Cec. Bless you, my good brother, for all your love and kindness to me. I am indeed happy, happy beyond expression; not for the rank to which heaven's providence has elevated me, but for that richer gift, the noble and true heart which would make any station glorious. It pains me, though, to see you, my brother, in this habit and condition, even for a time, and to know that while my lightest thought is anticipated, you may be subject to some slight.

La T. Ha, ha! my simple sister, you seem to think that the drawing-room department is the controlling power. Not a bit of it; the kitchen is the head of the domestic kingdom. I have been in my present situation just long enough to know where the real authority lies, who distributes the patronage, and absorbs the revenues. By St. Lawrence of the Gridiron! but if my lord, the Cardinal Minister wished a lesson in diplomacy, he could'nt do better than consult a congress of cooks; no, no, thank you, I am the head of the lower house, and though the upper one may have the responsibility of supplying the finances, we have the profitable amusement of making it fly among our favorites, with a liberal percentage on the outlay.

Cec. Yet still I would much rather see you near me, in your proper character.

La T. In good time, dear Cecile. I think I may be of use where I am, until the country rust rubs off a little. Sapristic! I should be as much out of place among these silken lordlings, as a beetle in a bee-hive, and might get more sting than honey. My gentility is in the rough just at present, we must have it cut and polished by degrees.

Cec. Ah, Joseph, I don't wish to see you changed a morsel, but be always, what you have ever been to me, my own true, honest-hearted, simple country brother, and good friend.

La T. Tete de St. Denis! there's no fear of such a change as that; your fine, courtly braveries can't alter me so foolishly as to wear my

gizzard outside, like a trussed turkey; no, no, Cecile, if you remain, as I am sure you will, the ornament and honor of our humble name, I'll be contented, cloud as I am, near your brightness, to keep my sunny side hidden from the world's eye.

Cec. My own dear, dear Joseph!

They embrace as DE TROP enters.

Bar. I've got them—eh! Bless my soul! phew! isn't that the Intendant?—and—mercy on me! the bride! I'm paralyzed!

[Gets behind wing.—He is unseen by CECILE and LA TOUR.

Cec. Fortune has blessed me, indeed, in your devoted love, dear Joseph. Believe me, I am grateful for it, and happy beyond thought.

Bar. *[Aside.]* Joseph, eh!—*prenez garde.* Viscomte Potiphar.

La T. Ha, ha! I laugh, Cecile, to think how little the fools and foplings that flutter round, know of the strong link that binds the radiant mistress and her humble servant, and how, amidst the brilliancy and joy of this night's fete, one heart they little can suspect, will throb with pride and happiness, made more intense from its very secrecy and self-enjoyment.

Bar. *[Aside.]* Bravo! Monsieur Joseph! *your* cloak is not in danger, it would seem.

La T. I think I hear the visitors begin to arrive. It will be necessary for us to part, Cecile, and wear a little time our separate characters, or we may have that pur-blind, Baron blundering upon us.

Bar. *[Aside.]* Ah! that's pleasant—but there's a proverb about listeners—I ought to have known it.

La T. And so Madame La Viscomtesse, I humbly kiss your hand.

Cec. Monsieur L'Intendant—au revoir. *[Exeunt, laughing.]*

Bar. *[Comes forward.]* Well, I'm petrified! I think I may venture to go so far as to say pulverized. I can't be mistaken this time—for I've got my spectacles. Alas! for us open hearted, credulous, and unsuspecting men. Who are we to trust? a fellow smuggled into the house as a servant! I thought there was a mystery in his manner! but something must be done—honor, friendship, propriety, urge me to rush instantly to the Viscomte. I will—no, I won't—it would be a pity to interrupt the fete; they do say the cuisine is irreproachable, and the cellar marvellous! time enough, but I must keep my eyes—I mean my spectacles about me. The scoundrel! I won't give him any quarter, after supper. *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV.—*The reception room in the Hotel de Rosiere, magnificently decorated.*

The VISCOMTE and VISCOMTESSE discovered receiving the company.

LA TOUR, with wand, as intendant, announces.

Music.—DE TROP blunders in putting the guests in confusion.

Bar. *[Introduced.]* I beg ten thousand—I—ah, that is to say—what superb nonchalance! it's beautiful to look at.

Vis. You seem agitated, Baron.

Bar. Oh dear, no. Why should I? what is it to me? A little preoccupied—a kind of surprise, just now—that's all. Poor Potiphar! [*Goes towards FRELUQUET and MERLUCHE.*] Ah! I'm very glad to see you looking so well—ah—why it is'n't you—I mean—where the deuce are those spectacles? just now, when I want them most of all.

Fre. How are you, Baron?

Bar. Oh! there you are—you are very kind. I'm really very glad to see you—you're looking uncommonly well—never saw so great an improvement. Who is that? [*To MERLUCHE.*]

Mer. Why, don't you know Freluquet, the lady-killer?

Bar. To be sure—delighted—thought it was you.

Fre. Have you been introduced to the Viscomtesse, Baron?

Car. Yes, I believe—that is—I hardly know—oh! you mean the bride?

Fre. Precisely. Is she not charming?

Bar. Well, I think not—I mean— Oh! if I dared only tell them. Hush! I know something!

Fre. What, about the Viscomtess?

Bar. Exactly—and—oh!—but never mind—all I shall say is—wait—wait!

La T. [*Announces.*] Le Marquis de Mousseron! Monsieur De Meschin! and the Count Alfred de Senneville!

They enter.—LA FORCE as the MARQUIS.

De S. Pardon me, my dear cousin, for being so late, but my friend De Meschin, and I had an appointment which it was impossible to avoid.

De Mes. But which we ended as rapidly as we could, Viscomte, that we might have the pleasure of being presented to your lovely bride. Apropos—I prevailed upon our friend, the Marquis, to accompany us. Allow me to introduce him. Viscomte de Rosiere, the Marquis de Mousseron.

Vis. I am happy to see you, Marquis—let me present my wife.

[*LA FORCE bows, and seems to recognize CECILE, but with a slight gesture.*]

La F. Madame Le Vicomtesse, pray accept my most sincere congratulations.

Vis. [*Slightly agitated.*] You and my wife have met before, Marquis, it would appear?

La F. Eh! pardon me—I was thinking of—what did you observe, Viscomte?

Vis. [*Quietly.*] I said that your look seemed to infer that you had met elsewhere.

La F. Oh! dear, no, it's quite a mistake, I assure you. I confess a slight resemblance somewhat startled me, at first—but pray don't let it disarrange your festival. I was wrong to recognize, that is to betray any emotion at the fancied similitude. I beg a thousand par-

dons of the lady, and I entreat you, sir, to think no more of this absurd interruption. [*Aside to CECILE.*] Don't be alarmed, my dear, the secret's safe with me.

Cec. Secret! what do you mean, sir? I have no secret, nor do I know who you are.

La F. [*Aside to her.*] Imprudent woman! you will betray yourself.

Vis. You must be well aware, sir, that this conduct demands an explanation. Be pleased to tell me, explicitly, if you have known this lady before to-night, or not?

La F. I pledge you, my honor, my dear Viscomte, nothing was further from my thoughts than to wound in the remotest degree, her ladyship's susceptibility.

Vis. Am I to understand, sir, that you will not answer my question?

La F. You surely understand, Viscomte, that a man of honor must yield nothing to compulsion. I will be judged by your friends if I have done aught to justify your request to me. You can't imagine that, even if I did know anything detrimental to her ladyship's fair fame, I should be such a dastard as to avow it.

Vis. This is mere special pleading, sir. Will you oblige me with a definite answer! I ask it courteously, and as my simple right.

La F. In that case, sir, I have no hesitation in saying, no! this lady and I have never met before.

Vis. You have! you have—I can't be deceived; 'tis but your obligation and sense of honor urges you to the denial, but there is a tone of irony in your words, that sufficiently contradicts their import.

La F. If your overstrained sensibility should so construe my words, you must allow that I am not to blame.

Vis. The truth, sir, the truth! I will hear it at all hazard—I make no issue with you, whatever it may be—Cecile.

Cec. Oh! my husband, my true lord and love! have pity on me, and protect me; I know not what I say or do,—bewildered, stunned, most innocent of any wrong in thought or deed, and yet this man addresses me with words that burn like wounded shame; and as I live and breathe, I know him not.

La F. Did I not say so? now, I trust you're satisfied.

Vis. No, I am not! you've set my heart upon the rack, and said too much, or else too little. There is a secret, and I must know it.

Cec. I fear not what he says, secure in my own innocence, and in the might of Heaven's justice, I can defy the tongue of slander.

La F. Since you assume this lofty tone, Cecile La Tour—

Vis. Ha!

La F. My courtesy is veiled by indignation, and I think only of your treachery to me.

Vis. To you! what does this mean?

La F. Simply that I had a prior right to her affection, if not to her constancy, for though the church's ceremonies were by chance

omitted, her ladyship did me the honor to share my name before she dreamt of wearing yours.

Tableau of astonishment.—CECILE screams and falls into LA LOUR'S arms, who has pushed LA FORCE aside.—BARON DE TROP looks for his spectacles.

END OF ACT SECOND.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A small, poorly furnished apartment.*—CECILE discovered.

Cec. [Weeping.] And so ends my day-dream of happiness—in misery, humiliation and despair! Ah! what heedless fault have I committed, that the chastisement should be so terrible? Whose path have I crossed, that he should seek a revenge so cruel? Born among the woods, my humble birth could have disturbed no ambition, deranged no calculation; too weak to fear a rival, too simple to deserve an enemy. Infancy, childhood, and youth passed in peaceful quiet. At last came womanhood—then love—then wedlock—a brief joy, thus quenched in sudden darkness! Denounced by one whose face I have never seen—spurned by my husband—and, I fear, abandoned by my brother! Looked upon as an outcast by the uncharitable world, which ever takes for granted that which cannot be disproved, however infamously false—and yet unable to denounce the lying tongues and coward hearts that worked this cruel wrong! Joseph, my brother! do not thou forsake me, in my soul agony! He promised to come to-day—will he keep his word? Oh, yes, I am sure he will! Hark! I hear a footstep—'tis he. [*A knock at door.* Come in!

Enter BARON DE TROP.

Bar. I wonder whether this is the place? I've left my spectacles at home, so I should'nt know her from the princess royal. How d'ye do? Can't see you—I suppose it's you—how are ye?

Cec. The Baron! Oh, innocence, where is thy safeguard. Since the blush of shame burns in my cheek as fiercely as though it was deserved.

Bar. They said the sixth story, this may be the seventh. I never can keep the run after the third—it's very awkward, I'm sure.

Cec. What may be your business with me, sir?

Bar. I don't think it's she—the one I want has a more oleaginous brogue, a rich Strasburgian mellowness of language. I wish I knew. There is a way of finding out whether a person is the one you want, I

wish I could remember—it can't be measuring her height—oh! I know, I'll ask her name. That's it, I am sure that's it. [*Aloud*] You'll excuse me, I know, ma'am—but would you be good enough to tell me if your name is—bless me! I've forgotten it—oh! I recollect—if your name is Savonnette?

Cec. It is not, sir.

Bar. I *knew* that was the way of finding out. Then you are not my washerwoman? Good gracious! I'm quite shocked—I'm sure.

Cec. There is a person of that name up stairs, I believe.

Bar. [*Horror-struck.*] Up stairs! Eight stories! Why, she must live on the roof! You see, ma'am, I don't mind telling you—you live so near her—the last batch of—what shall I call it—I don't like to say clean clothes—regenerated haberdashery we'll call it—was not altogether complete. Mrs. Savonnette's dozen's are quite apt to consist of eleven pieces. In short—there was an article of—drapery missing. I tell you these little details, for I knew you'd be interested. Up stairs, you say? Bye, bye—I'll let you know if I find it.

Going.—Meets LA TOUR, who enters.

How d'ye do?—Can't see you—suppose I know you—no matter whether I do or not—good bye! [*Exit.*]

Cec. Oh, brother, how glad I am to see you!

[*LA TOUR repels her.*]

Bar. [*Looking in.*] Is this ladder the stairs?

La T. Get out, sir!

[*BARON shuts door hastily.*]

Cec. Oh! Joseph! Speak to me—speak to your wretched sister! [*A noise heard without as of some one falling down a ladder.*] The poor man must have hurt himself.

La T. He may break his neck if he likes. Do not touch me Cecile!

Cec. You do not—you cannot believe me guilty?

La T. I have not come here to listen to your denials, or to be moved by your tears. I have come to make arrangements for your future life. I go back to the country to-morrow.

Cec. [*Tremblingly.*] Alone?

La T. Alone.

Cec. And you leave me here by myself? Will you not take me home?

La T. Henceforth you have no home.

Cec. Then you do believe me guilty! The thought is unworthy of you, Joseph.

La T. Such observation was to be expected, madam. With a tarnished soul, you possess a ribald tongue.

Cec. Oh, forgive me, Joseph—I know not what I say. My heart is wrung with anguish—no wonder that my lips speak bitterly.

La T. Enough of this. Listen—your husband, as you are aware, has made no provision for your support. I respect and esteem him for it—it proves his nice and delicate sense of honor. [*A knock at door.*] If that is the Baron again, I'll hurl him down stairs.

[*Goes to door.*]

Enter PAPILLON.

Cec. Edward's servant? what can he wish with me?

Pap. My master sent me with this letter to you, madame, and bade me wait for an answer. [*Aside.*] Poor lady!

La T. Read it, madame.

Cec. I cannot; my tears blind me! [*Weeps.*]

La T. My eyes are free from the result of penitence or shame. [*Reads letter.*] "Madame, I appreciate the motive which has led you to withdraw from beneath my roof, but it is not my intention to permit you to depend upon the sympathy of strangers, or upon the bounty of your brother. I cannot allow one who has borne my name, even though she has dragged it in the mire, either to suffer for the necessities of life, or to be compelled to descend to labor to obtain them. Inclosed is a sum of money, which will be renewed at proper intervals. In whatever scenes you may pass your future years, I trust you will school yourself to forget the hour in which you crossed my threshold. Happy would it be for me could I look forward to the same sweet oblivion. Edward, Viscomte de Rosiere."

Cec. And he believes it!—He never loved me! [*Weeps.*]

La T. [*Folds letter.*] Return this to your master, and say it is all the answer it deserves.

Pap. [*Embarrassed.*] Madame, Muscadine gave me a message to give to you. If you would condescend to care what a chambermaid feels, or says—

Cec. Tell me, good Papillon; what message could Muscadine send to one so lost as I?

Pap. Muscadine says that she and me—were going to be married next week—but now, after what has happened, she's going to put it off a year.

Cec. Kind Muscadine! But tell her not to make herself and you unhappy, because I am so. One in a household is enough.

Pap. Oh! Muscadine doesn't believe a word of it, ma'am. [*Going, whimpering.*] I don't believe a word of it! [*At door, blubbing outright.*] We don't any of us believe it in the kitchen! [*Exit.*]

La T. And now, madame, listen to my determination.

Cec. Oh! do not act rashly, Joseph, my brother, my last and only friend on earth. I shall endeavor to speak with calmness, even amidst my sorrow and indignation. Reason may serve me when affection has failed. This man, this vile accuser—did you ever see him before?

La T. Men of his stamp are fertile in disguises. He may have worn a mask then, or he wears one now.

Cec. Was I ever absent from your home?

La T. I know not. The nights are sometimes long, and those who toil in the fields by day are apt to sleep soundly then. I labored hard and rested well—I know not.

Cec. Did you ever detect the blush of guilt upon my cheek?

La T. The guilty never blush. An end to this. Your perfidy was but too well established. I am resolved.

Cec. One moment, Joseph. For ten years, this little cross—my mother's dying gift—has never left my neck. Upon that cross, I swear—

La T. Degraded woman! would you profane that holy relic with a false oath?

Cec. [*Breaking from him.*] Oh, believe my words, or I shall go mad! I am innocent!—your sister swears it, Joseph, on our mother's cross!

La T. [*Snatching the cross.*] Sister no longer—wretched woman, stubborn of heart as you are false and worthless, from this time forward I never see you more!

[*CECILE falls upon her knees — LA TOUR staggers towards door. Closed in.*]

SCENE II.—*Interior.*

Enter PAPILLON and MUSCADINE, meeting.

Pap. Well, Muscadine, I've seen her.

Mus. Did you give her my message?

Pap. Yes, and she said you were a kind, good girl, and that I was a beautiful and estimable young man, and that we mustn't wait to get married.

Mus. Oh! she said that, did she?

Pap. Yes, she said there was no reason why you should be wretched because she is.

Mus. Well, I declare! Do you suppose it would make me wretched not to marry you?

Pap. Why not?—it makes me wretched not to marry you, Rosebud. Oh, what a life I lead! I sleep like a log all night, and I don't do any work in the day. My appetite is quite unnatural; the cook says I eat like an earthquake, and the butler complains that I drink like a whirlpool. I counted my pulse yesterday—how much do you think? 163 in the shade! I'm almost sure I shall die young, or, if I don't, that something frightful will happen to my mind.

Mus. Oh! I don't want to marry a man that's got anything the matter with his mind.

Pap. Oh, there hasn't anything happened to it, yet—it's bubbling with intelligence at present, and to test it, last night, I wrote a sonnet to your cruelty.

Mus. A what?

Pap. A sonnet—so called by us poets, because it only has seven lines. Some people like fourteen, but servants, with a proper sense of their position, never puts but seven.

Mus. Well, what do you do when you can't finish in seven lines?

Pap. Then we break off where we are, and leave the rest to luck. I'll read you what I wrote. [*Opens a paper and reads.*]

Oh, Muscadine—Oh, Muscadine,

Why are you so obstinate?

Mus. Obstinate?

Pap. Yes, this sonnet being in long metre, you have to say obstinate, or else it won't rhyme. Us poets call that sort of thing a poetical licentiousness.

Mus. Yes, poets always are licentious, they say. Go on.

Pap. Oh, Muscadine—Oh, Muscadine,
Why are you so obstinate,
I do so wish you'd marry me,
That I can't wait a min-nit.

Mus. You'll have to wait a good many minutes tho', I'm thinking.

Pap. Good gracious, Musk, can a poet be licentious or not? Don't interrupt. [Reads 2d verse.]

Oh, Muscadine—Oh Muscadine.

You really hadn't orter,

For if you would but marry me— [Folds up paper.]

That's all. I think there's mind there.

Mus. But there's no end to it.

Pap. I can't help that—I can't offend the rules of poesy, can I? One line more, and it wouldn't have been a sonnet.

Mus. What would it have been?

Pap. Well, it would have been a roundelay, or a doggerel as the case might be.

Mus. A dog-gerel?

Pap. Some poets say catterel.

Mus. Let me see if I can't make a doggerel of it.

Oh, Muscadine, Oh, Muscadine,

You really hadn't orter,

For if you would but marry me—

I'd keep you in hot water!

There's a poetical finish for you, that has the peculiar advantage of being perfectly true. [Exit.]

Pap. Well, the hottest water will cool in time, and when we're married I'll take pretty good care that she doesn't boil over, very often! at all events I'll set my sonnet to music. How I should like to hear old Capuchin, the priest, say, one of these days—'the choir will sing two verses of Mr. Papillon's doggerel, omitting the last line.' Decidedly. I think my chances are looking up, [feeling his wrist.]—and my pulse is coming down. [Exit.]

SCENE III—*The Cabaret*—[As before.]—PAPA CHAUVE SOURIS, TREBUCHET, &c., discovered. LA TOUR at table, alone.

Papa. [To TREBOUCHET, who is about to drink.]—Stop! put that down!

Tre. Well! I was going to put it down?

Papa. No drinking 'till the hero comes, then we'll drain a glorious bumper together! there'll be nothing to pay for any of you to-night.

La T. [Aside]—In this low den, the most obscure that I could find, let me in drink forget myself and my disgrace, at least for a time.

Papa. He's coming in his new magnificent wardrobe, to do honor to the occasion! oh, he isn't proud, don't be afraid, he's one of us yet! here's to him. [About to drink.]

Tre. Here! stop—now you put that down!

Papa. It's the force of habit—I swear I forgot.

La T. Well, as I came to drink, I think I may as well be served, [Rapping upon table.]—Here! host

Papa. Sir! hallo! a stranger?

La T. Have no fears of me, my friend! however desperate may be the fortunes of my associates, they may well be envied when compared with mine! so let me have a bottle of your strongest and best. [*A guest gets under his own table, and unperceived indulges in private libations.*]

Papa. With alacrity sir! outside of law or in, you may drink in safety here, only I must beg you, out of deference to the object, in which this little family party is assembled, to abstain from imbibition till the guest of the evening is among us. A kindred spirit, sir, a congenial soul; in short, in the language of the sages, he's "the Ulysses of rognery, and the Ajax of law despisers." [*Goes for wine.*]

La T. Who may this classic scapegrace be? he must come soon, at any rate, or I shall begin the revel alone. The thought will sometimes haunt me that I have treated poor Cecile too harshly! pshaw! this lethean draught will drown conscience as well as memory.

Pap. [*With wine.*] Here it is, sir! but be good enough to bear in mind the little recommendation I just gave you. I place this goblet and this tankard under the guardianship of your sacred honor.

La T. [*Aside.*] This is a droll world! shame in the cottage and honor in the stews.

Tre. [*At door.*] He's coming! he's here! gentlemen, His Majesty, the King of the Galleys, otherwise known as His Grace, the Marquis de Mousseron.

Enter LA FORCE.

La T. Ha! what's that?—he here, in this den of thieves. [*Aside.*]

La F. Gentlemen, I see by your arid lips and parched expressions, that you have not wet your fiery throats; as you are not, as a class, used to self-restraint of any kind, I deeply appreciate the compliment. But I will not keep you waiting. We will open the ceremonies with a toast! let us drink to the health of—[*laughing*—]Her Grace—[*exploding*—]the Marquise de Mousseron. [*They drink.*]

La T. [*Aside.*] The scoundrel!

La F. Another to the phoenix of idiots, the Vicomte de Rosiere! another to the prince of paymaster's, Alfred de Senneville.

La T. [*Aside.*] What's this? what's this? down, throbbing heart.

La F. Ah! gentlemen, what a night it was! how I regret that your social position forbids your mingling in such festive scenes. My thoughts were upon ye, comrades, throughout that eventful evening, and I said to myself, "if I had but half-a-dozen of 'em with me, what a fingering we'd have among the spoons!" oh! the agony it was to behold the silver, and the gold, and the precious stones, the diamonds pendant from delicate ears, that, with a snatch I could have torn from the yielding flesh; the rubies encircling slender wrists,—rubies glowing and palpitating as with hot, living blood; emeralds and topazes sparkling upon patrician fingers, that other fingers, *these* for instance, might have loosened with a touch; to behold all *this*, and be obliged to restrain myself. What agony to feel all the greed of the thief, and be forced to wear the nonchalance of the peer; to muffle the iron hand within the velvet glove. I hope *you* may never be placed under such a trial, *you* couldn't stand it.

Tre. Of course we could'nt! I couldn't for one.

La T. The galleys for life, if you were caught. There was one moment when I thought I couldn't stand it. When he presented me to a grand lady under circumstances which rendered it proper that I should kiss her hand. I bent over her jeweled wrist! A string of milk-white pearls ran round and round, in accumulating strands, her lovely arm. My lips touched them—my breath clouded them—I could have plunged my fangs into the priceless mass, torn asunder the delicate thread which bound them, and swallowed a hundred of them raw! Do you think I did it? No; though my heart thumped, and my eyes glistened! I raised my head—drew out my handkerchief—so—and spoke in the following style: [*Imitating manner of an exquisite.*] A charming evening, Duchess, though it looks consumedly like rain.

La T. [*Aside bitterly.*] And this despicable wretch is my sister's—Oh, Cecile!

La F. But the evening was not altogether lost, after all. I had my eyes about me. I peered into store-rooms, cupboards, pantries. I know where to lay my hand on the soup-ladle in the dark—solid silver and two feet long. I saw the golden tea-service, gleaming in its rosewood prison. I know where to plant the ladder, and where to tie the wire. I'll bring back twenty brimming bags of plunder!

Omnès. Bravo! Bravo! [*All drink.*]

La T. [*Aside.*] The blessed chance be thanked that led me here!

[*Pretends to drink, but throws wine away and listens earnestly.*]

La F. There's only one thing that I regret! Oh, I know I'm a fool and a baby—none of *you* would have had such scruples—but when it came to the *business* of the evening, that for which I was paid—well it went against the grain—although I deemed myself all-conscience proof—and I felt a coward and a knave, as I stood up before the assembled guests, and with craven heart and lying lips, traduced a virtuous and unoffending woman!

La T. [*Starting up.*] Great heavens! [*Restraining himself.*] No, no! let me listen—let me listen.

La F. I had never seen her since the hour I was born.

La T. [*With cross.*] Oh, Cecile! my poor sister! pardon—forgive me. [*Kisses cross.*]

La F. Would any of *you* have done it?

Treb. No, we ain't none of us such a coward.

La F. Ha! who said coward?

Treb. I said we were all too great cowards.

La F. Oh! but enough of this. I shall have forgotten it in a week. Now, who goes with me to Rosiere's to-morrow night? I want a bold heart and a cool head. Who volunteers?

La T. I do!

[*Advances.*]

La F. Hey! Who's this?

[*General surprise.*]

La T. An apprentice in *your* noble art, great king of the galleys! I'll be your companion in this enterprise. You've been indiscreet, your majesty, and have no alternative—you *must* confide in me! I'll prove it in an instant—look in my face—do you not recognize me?

La F. Hold! now that I think—yes—the Viscomte's Steward—De

Rosiere's confidential agent! Friends!—Treachery!—a spy in the camp!

[General movement.

La T. Stay, stay! I haven't come here, one against a dozen, to show light. I'm not an ass, though I am a Steward! There, there, put your stiletto's back, my boys—put 'em back. So, ah! now your majesty, a word in your ear.

La F. Well sir, explain, if you can.

La T. [His assumed manner indicating avarice and villainy.] How singular it is, that I should have sought this place for the very purpose you have broached? You know where to lay your hand upon the soup ladle, two feet long—I know where to lay mine upon the soup tureen, two feet deep!

La F. [Suspiciously.] Ah!

La T. You know where to plant the ladder, and ply the wire. What's the use of ladder or wire—if you know the pass to the wicket, and have got the key of the safe?

La F. Well, what's all this to me?

La T. Well, it's this to you: I'm tired of petty larceny and false entries in my books—I don't make enough to pay for red ink. In short, I'd as soon steal on a grand scale, as speculate on a small one. That's why I came here to-night. We'll share the danger and go halves in the plunder. Is it agreed?

La F. Hum!—I don't know. What security can you give?

La T. This. [Gives a key.] The way into the strong box! I keep the key to the postern. Then neither can do anything without the other. Is it a bargain?

La F. [Gazing at key.] This is the key of the strong box? My lips water! How much is there in it?

La T. A quarter of a million at least.

La F. Stop, you dazzle me! A quarter of a million! Trebuchet! Bring the skull and the glass!

Papa. Hist! The patrol is in the street! Keep close! Keep close!

Treb. Here's the skull—swear and be quick!

La F. You have entered this place of your own accord, and must be bound, body and soul, to our fraternity. This boney goblet once held the brains of a traitor, who perished in his treachery. You must swear!

[Gives skull to LA TOUR.

Papa. They are coming this way! They have entered the yard! Every one for himself!

[General confusion.—The GUARD enter.—A fight between GUARD and the THIEVES.—LA FORCE and LA TOUR, the latter carrying the skull, escape by trap-door.—The THIEVES are overpowered.—Picture.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*CECILE'S Apartment, as before. A couch—a pan of charcoal burning on one side of stage. Music.*

CECILE discovered on couch—she rises.

Cec Will oblivion never come, or have I left some crevice that yet may admit the life-sustaining air? No, all is close; and still the long sleep I yearn for will not shroud me in forgetfulness. Oh, husband! brother!—both so dearly loved, and both so cruel and unjust—may heaven keep ever from your knowledge the great wrong that you have done, for I forgive you from my soul! You were deceived by that most wicked lie, and with my last breath of life will I pray that you may never feel such remorse as would await the truth's discovery! The air is laden with the stifling vapor; it circles cloud-like through the place; a strong, pungent odor fills my sense with every inspiration, and yet the stubborn flame within will not be quenched! Why is it so hard to die? Oh, for some quicker means! To live with the dead fellowship of a corrupted name—no, no! Come, merciful darkness—come! Ha! there's a gasp—a blinding flash across my eyes, that now dilate with pain! It has arrived—the wished-for moment! Yes, my brain reels, and now the clouds are heavenly bright!—and see! it is, it is my mother! She smiles upon me, for she knows my truth and innocence! I come, mother! I come!

[Sinks on couch.]

LA TOUR *knocks violently at door, which is barred across, calling, "Cecile! sister! it is I!"—finally, the door is burst open, and LA TOUR rushes in.*

La T. What mean these suffocating fumes? Cecile, my sister! Pah! I shall stifle here! *[Sees pan of charcoal.]* Powers of mercy! what do I behold? I have murdered her—her pure and sensitive heart was broken by my brutal words! *[Dashes open the window and throws out the pan of charcoal, then bears CECILE to open window.]* My sister! my innocent, true, noble girl! Oh, heaven! let not my soul be cursed eternally by this fearful crime! Ha! she revives! Yes, God be thanked! the life-blood rises to her pale cheek. Don't tremble, my poor, wounded dove; a brother's arms are clasped around thee!

Cec. *[Reviving, looks at LA TOUR, slowly recognizing him, then breaks away, hiding her face in her hands.]* Come not near me! Oh! why did you recall me to the hated world again?

La T. To bid thee live for honor, Cecile! To bring thee back the symbol of your purity and truth, our mother's dying gift! *[Puts cross on her neck.]* My sister!

Cec. It is! and now the sudden life leaps to my heart! Oh, brother! let me weep! These are the first tears that I have shed. They

do not flow from shame, my brother, for I am innocent—indeed I am innocent!

La T. I know it, darling—I know it! Calm thyself. It was a foul plot; a base, malignant slander. But I have discovered, and in time shall expose the villains who concocted it. Nay, it is I who should drop tears of anguish for having doubted for an instant your true heart. Take courage, dearest, and prepare thyself, for he is coming, repentant as myself, to retake thee to his home and love. I hurried on before—forever blessed be the impulse that urged me here! I shudder now to think of the dark fate that hung on those few moments!

Cec. [*Hurriedly.*] Hark! 'tis his footstep, brother. Will he restore to me his love and confidence? Deceive me not, for if the slightest shadow of suspicion yet remain, 'twould haunt me like an ever-present fear.

La T. There's not a trace, a particle; your purity and truth established clear as the summer sky. Be all thyself—he's here.

Enter VISCOMTE DE ROSIERE—*he rushes to* CECILE.

Vis. My love, my angel wife—forgive!

Cec. [*Falling into his arms.*] My husband!

Tableau.

SCENE II.—*Apartment at* DE ROSIERE'S.

Enter BARON DE TROP, *spectacles on his forehead.*

Bar. I must have left them here. They're not at home, and I'm sure I had them when that scene took place. I'll buy a dozen pair, and hang them around my neck. [*Goes through door.*]

Enter PAPILLON and MUSCADINE.

Pap. Well, Rosebud, thanks to the variegated composition of thy immaculate sex, we're bachelors again. Another revolution! The imperial rule is at an end, and we return to our republic. Know'st thou what a republic is, Mignonette?

Mus. No; do *you*, Butterfly?

Pap. Well, yes; as much as any true Frenchman does, I believe.

Mus. What is it? Is it good for us?—if not, I don't care anything about it.

Pap. Well reasoned, Marigold; that's good world-argument. You won't lack companions in that school of philosophy. But to speak sagely, your republic is a plain thing of many masters and few servants, while your pure monarchy is a glittering thing of many servants and one master.

Mus. Well, give me the one master, say I.

Pap. Being a servant, yes, my cauliflower, but if thou could'st be mistress, what then?

Mus. Wouldn't I let them know who they had to deal with.

Pap. Human nature, my Geranium; by the feet of Hercules, you speak like an oracle.

Mus. Do I? well, I didn't know it.

Pap. So much the better. Those seldom do, whose words are worth remembering.

Mus. But tell me, butterfly, is there any difference between that: what is it—republic, you speak of, and our own, thingamy, you know?

Pap. Not much, a sort of backward reading of the sentence that's all. In one there is a king of a nation, in the other a nation of kings.

Mus. What! are all the men kings?

Pap. Absolute sovereigns.

Mus. And what are the women in this blessed state of affairs?

Pap. The women! Snowdrop? oh, they are—

Mus. Queens, of course!

Pap. Well—not exactly! they are, as they always were, and always will be, secret agents, advisers and instigators, darling creatures and affectionate institutions generally, but in and through all, the absolute and irresistible movers of circumstance, the unseen influences that work the world's machinery, while the befooled, self-satisfied lesser half, flatters himself that it's all his doing!

Mus. Oh, butterfly! in the name of our weak species, let me make you my best curtsy.

Pap. Stop! be quite sure that it is a compliment before you agitate yourself.

Mus. To tell you the truth, I don't quite know whether it is or not, but this I do know, I'm very glad we've got the house to ourselves once more.

Pap. Yes, and I'm very glad the moth of an intendant you so bewilder with your flaming eyes, to the great discomfort of your insect's internal anatomy, has fluttered himself off.

Enter LA TOUR.

Rather mysterious that he should vanish at the same time as her ladyship!

La T. Silence, fool!—bridle your tongue, my friend, or else your bones will answer for it!

Pap. Upon the honor of a gentleman's gentleman, we meant nothing, did we, primrose?

Mus. [*Crossing.*] Nothing but the fear that we had lost your amiable society, Monsieur.

Pap. [*Turning her round.*] There that will do; those perfidious eyes are at work again! Monsieur, we take our leave, delighted to welcome you back!—[*As they retreat ceremoniously, they come suddenly against DE TROP, who enters.*]—

Bar. Thank you; don't mention it—I beg your pardon! who the deuce is it? [*To LA TOUR.*] Ah! how do you do—you are looking better than ever!—eh! no, why bless my soul, master Joseph, is it you—I could never have supposed, really, after what I saw, lucky fellow, I mean wicked rascal—don't be alarmed, I haven't said a word

—won't say a word—no affair of mine, you know, eh, Joseph? I wish I had my spectacles: I'd like to see the scoundrel's face! do you know what's become of 'um, eh?

La T. Baron, can you take a hint?

Bar. Well, if I can see it at all, plainly—yes!

La T. I don't think you can misunderstand mine. Baron, you are a foolish, prying mischievous old male gossip, with just brains enough to pick out and remember the scandalous parts of the current conversation, invention enough to heighten their worst features, and industry enough to circulate them through the community of merciless tale-bearers and tattlers of which you are a shining example; now listen to me, Baron! if I ever hear that you have dared to utter a syllable against the wife of the Viscomte de Rosiere, I'll take the liberty of making your ears as dull as your eyes, and deprive your slanderous tongue of both it's accomplices, by *slicing them off!* have I made myself perfectly intelligible?

Bar. Perfectly, I must confess.

La T. Then, Baron, I have the honor to wish you a good day.

Bar. Sir, I'm your most humble servant.—[*Exit LA TOUR.*] I believe I'm awake—but upon my life I hardly know; was there ever such a dangerous ruffian; cut my ears off—and for what—for speaking against her; how can I speak for her after what I saw? faith, I won't hold my tongue, and why should I? I won't be intimidated by this impudent varlet; didn't I see enough to convince me of her infidelity.—Oh Lord! I thought I heard him coming back!—[*Claps hands on his ears.*] Good gracious; that's strange! why, here are my spectacles, I declare, after all; who could have possibly put them there, for I'll take my oath I didn't; I'll keep an eye on this fellow, the Viscomte must know what a model Intendant he's blessed with.
[*Exit c. door.*]

SCENE III.—*Reception Room, as before—Night. Partially lighted. Window, practicable, at back.*

LA TOUR and VISCOMTE discovered.

La T. It will soon be time for me to expect my rascally accomplice. Have you removed the most valuable of your things?

Vis. Yes, there is nothing left of consequence.

La T. I have prepared a fine trap for his roguishness. Here is a brave package of worthless money, a dazzling quantity of copper ronzous, and a brilliant display of invaluable jewelry, that will make his eyes dance.

Vis. But how do you wish us to proceed? Shall we secure him in the act of robbery?

La T. By no means. We must both escape. I mean to disgrace and discomfit the whole villainous batch together. I have it all planned. Hark! a stealthy footstep. [*Goes to keyhole.*] Confusion! it's that malapropos Baron. He's watching me. Never mind, let him come; we may need a witness. Away, and leave him to me!

[*Exit VISCOMTE.*]

BARON DE TROP enters cautiously, sees LA TOUR just opening escription and looking round as if fearful of being seen.

Bar. As I'm a live Baron, the rascal is robbing his master.

[Hides behind screen.]

La T. Pshaw! there's nothing here, after all. It's well that owl of a Baron didn't suspect me, or I would have silenced him pretty quickly. [Drawing knife. BARON grimaces.] Hold! how do I know there is not somebody concealed in the room at this moment? If so, he had better go to his prayers.

[Looks under table. As he crosses, BARON gets under the same.]

Bar. Good heavens! I'm goose-flesh all over.

La T. [Aside.] I think I shall cure you, my friend, of prying—ha! ha! All right; there's no one. Now for our job. [Goes to window.] Hist! are you there?

La F. [Without.] All right.

Bar. Gracious me! there's another. I wish I were in the bottom of a well! An icy stream is running down my back-bone!

Enter LA FORCE, through window. BARON sees him.

Hang me if it isn't the Marquis! Here's atrocious villainy! What shall I do? Cry out and have an indigestible supper of cold steel? No, I'll watch the scoundrels closely.

La F. Is all safe?

La T. Safe as the Bastile.

La F. Phew! don't mention that establishment. Then let us be quick about the business.

La T. The deuce take the luck! I'm afraid we shall get but little for our pains. I can see no trace of money.

La F. Malediction! you don't say so! Ha! here it is, [aside, while LA TOUR'S back is towards him] in heaps—prodigious heaps! [Aloud.] No money—that's too bad; but let us take what we can find, at all events. [Stuffs the money, &c., into his pocket, slyly.]

La T. [Aside.] Honor among thieves is a doubtful axiom. The vagabond is robbing his associate.

La F. [Stumbling upon BARON'S feet, who utters an exclamation of pain.] Ha! a spy! Who is it? [Drags out DE TROP.] I'll make short work with you, my intrusive friend! [Draws knife.]

Bar. [On his knees.] Mercy, good Marquis! mercy!

La F. What, that you may use your tongue against us? No, your hour has come.

La T. Hold! we'll have no bloodshed. The Baron is discreet; he loves his ears too well to put them in jeopardy.

Bar. I'll make a vow of perpetual silence; only spare my life!

La F. Remain where you are then; if you move a step, or utter a sound, your doom is sealed; but first we'll trouble you for whatever loose valuables you have about you! a purse, not over-full, and a pair of gold spectacles.

Bar. Don't deprive me of those! ah! there they go again; gracious me; here's a situation for a nobleman. [LA FORCE threatens.] There! I've done.

La F. Now, by your leave, we must make sure of your silence.—
[*Takes cloth from table and binds it round DE TROP'S head.*] Remember, the knife is at your throat if you stir. [*To LA TOUR.*] It's useless to continue our search, let us be off with what we have secured.

La T. Agreed! though it's cursed hard fortune not to have found the money. [*They exit through window.*]

Bar. For Heaven's sake, take off this bandage; phew—I'm smothering! I believe the villains have gone; help—murder—robbery; hollo—there: I'm dying, stifling; murder!

Enter VISCOMTE, PAPILLON, MUSCADINE and SERVANTS.—They remove cloth from DE TROP'S head.

Vis. What's the matter, Baron?

Bar. The matter!—oh, it's frightful; only think.

La T. [*At door.*] Beware!

Bar. Good Lord! [*Drops on his knees.*]—My ears; that scoundrel's impudence is majestic!

LA TOUR and VISCOMTE exchange glances.—Tableau.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Drawing room at the VISCOMTES. —Elegantly furnished.—Morning.*

Enter PAPILLON from side door, L. H.

Pap. By the manes of Proteus, but this is a most mutable household! We have had another revolution already—such a thing was never known before. The Empire is re-established firmer than ever, to judge by the affectionate attitude of the high contracting parties.

Enter MUSCADINE, R. H., with a salver of chocolate.

Pap. Well, my female minister of the interior! I see you have given in your adhesion to the new order of things!

Mus. Yes, I thought I'd follow the example of my betters, and keep my place through all changes.

Pap. You improve, Primrose! Imbued by our reflected light, you grow profoundly political—and have touched the very heart of statecraft! Administrations are variable—but salaries fixed, and it's only your rusty weathervane that won't turn whatever way the wind may blow!

Mus. But is it true, butterfly, that the house was robbed last night?

Pap. Yes, I believe our treasury was slightly dipped into, and by

non-official fingers, too. A shameful departure from established usage, should it so turn out, but I'm inclined to think your Monsieur Moth knows something of the matter, and has but duly exercised the privilege of place. [A bell heard.]

Mus. Good gracious! that's my lady's bell, and you have kept me here talking nonsense until I do believe her chocolate is cold. I never saw such a torment as you are. [Exit L. door.]

Pap. Bravo, Mignonette! Faith, your sex is famous for shifting the responsibility. I don't believe one of you ever made a mistake in your lives that everybody wasn't to blame but yourselves. And yet, I don't know that it's your fault, either. We all know that fire will burn, still, while the world holds human people men will be found scorching their fingers by playing with the flame!

Enter VISCOMPTE.—He sits.

Vis. Papillon!

Pap. Monseigneur!

Vis. I expect the Count de Senneville and some of his friends to call this morning. If they should question you about my affairs, before I see them, you will oblige me much by being ignorant of everything that has recently transpired.

Pap. I trust, Monseigneur, I know my duty too well not to have done so, untold.

Vis. I believe I can rely upon your discretion. You are an impudent puppy—but a faithful one, I believe.

Pap. Oh, Monseigneur! [*Bows.*] I don't know which is the greatest compliment of the two.

Vis. Enough! Remember my desire.

Pap. Implicitly, Monseigneur! [*Aside.*] The calm before a domestic tornado, or I know nothing of this human barometer.

[*Pointing to his own face. Exit, c. door.*]

Enter CECILE, L. H. door.—VISCOMPTE rises to receive her.

Vis. Ah, dear Cecile! My heart is still laden with remorseful shame for the unmerited and cruel past.

Cec. My husband, think no more of that! The present joy now fills me with such abundant happiness, I almost bless the vanished cloud, whose blackness makes more beautiful the sunlight of to-day! I have but one apprehension—an undefined, but conscious dread of ill to you. I know your sense of honor, and the strong impulse of your love will urge you to avenge the injury done to both through me; but I implore you, let it not be with danger to yourself.

Vis. Fear not, Cecile! The wrong shall be requited to the uttermost, and with the ignominy that it demands. The felon perpetrators have removed themselves beyond the pale of honorable thought—I will not sully the proud name we bear by stooping to their degraded level.

Cec. It wanted that assurance only, to banish the last shadow from my soul. Now all's forgotten, but the deep gratitude I owe to heaven for its merciful interposition!

Enter BARON DE TROP.

Bar. Excuse me for breaking in on you so early—you will—you must, my dear friend, when you hear what I have to say. The rascal is not here now, so I can tell you all without—without danger. Do you know who robbed you last night—you'll gasp with surprise when I tell you. It was the very identical marquis who established a claim to—[*Sees CECILE.*] Bless my soul!—it can't be—what the deuce have I done with—ah! I remember—the scoundrel stole them. [*Aside to VISCOMTE.*] Tell me—I can't see very well—is that—

Vis. My wife, Baron. You know her, do you not?

Bar. No—I mean yes! upon my life I believe—why it is. My dear madam, I'm delighted to see you looking so well. [*Aside.*] Of all the distractingly enigmatical establishments it was ever my lot to encounter this is by far the most puzzling.

Pap. [*Announcing.*] Le Chevalier De La Tour!

Enter LA TOUR, C., handsomely dressed.—Light perriwig.

La T. My dear sister!

Cec. Dear, dear brother!

[*VISCOMTE shakes hands with LA TOUR.*

Pap. [*Aside.*] By the bones of Machiavelli! the Empire is a success for the present. [*Exit.*

Vis. My brother-in-law—Baron de Trop.

Bar. Proud of the honor, sir; delighted to see you looking so well. [*Aside.*] I wish I had my spectacles.

La T. Baron, I am happy to meet you.

Bar. Thank you, sir, thank you. But to return to our mutton. You know I saw all that occurred last night. The villains almost strangled me—there were two of them. Now can you guess who they were?

Vis. I think I can.

Bar. Never, never in the world! I'll tell you—

La T. [*At back.*] Beware!

Bar. [*Clasping his ears.*] Good gracious! my ears! [*As he looks around, LA TOUR drops down on the other side.*] That was one of them, I'll swear. [*Aside*

Vis. Well, Baron, go on.

Bar. I believe I wou't say anything about it just now. [*Aside.*] I'll trap this fellow—I'll first buy a pair of spectacles, then bring a company of the city guard, and search the house from top to bottom. [*Aloud.*] Good day, for the present—I just recollect an appointment. [*To LA TOUR.*] Don't let anybody out of the place until I return, not even your brother-in-law. I have my reasons—there's something wrong.

La T. I'm very much obliged to you, Baron.

Bar. Why, you're not—ah! yes—I see! Good morning! [*Aside.*] It's the man himself, I'll swear to it. [*Exit.*

La T. The poor Baron! I don't wonder that his limited stock of brain is somewhat distracted by the confusion of the last four and twenty hours.

Vis. Have you made all your preparations?

La T. Entirely.

Cec. And with safety to yourself, Joseph?

La T. Distinctly.

Vis. Then I suppose we had better entrust to you the details of the denouement?

La T. Exactly.

Vis. Come, Cecile, I think we may safely leave the establishment of your honorable name in the hands of your devoted brother.

Cec. Willingly, and with my whole heart.

[*Exit with VISCOMTE.*]

La T. [*Rings bell.*] All goes well. I think I have laid my plans effectually. This Papillon must be entrusted with something of our secret, for we shall need his assistance at a critical moment.

Enter PAPILLON.

Pap. Did monsieur ring?

La T. Yes, friend Papillon, I did.

Pap. Monsieur knows me it would seem?

La T. Thoroughly—and will give you proof that I believe you to be an honest sort of scamp. Do I mistake in supposing that you would gladly aid in exposing the villainy which has assailed the Viscomte's name and the honor of his wife?

Pap. I would risk my life in such an endeavor!

La T. Give me your hand—I thank you! Now, listen. There will arrive, privately, at this house, a detachment of the police guard. See that they are quietly disposed of so as to command this apartment, and when I say the word, admit them. Do this properly, and I'll promise you that the great gray moth shall never flutter near the butterfly's rosebud any more.

Pap. What is it I hear?

La T. Do you not know me, Papillon?

Pap. Monsieur's voice is familiar.

La T. Look in my face.

Pap. Joseph, the Intendant! by all that's miraculous!

La T. The same, and the brother of your slandered mistress, who has sworn to be avenged upon her base calumniators!

Pap. Pardon, Monsieur, for all my little unwitting impertinences. If I had but known—

La T. There is nothing to pardon. Act like a true and honest man now, and have no fears for the future.

Pap. Monsieur may depend on me.

[*Exit C.—Bell rings.*]

La T. They're coming! the end approaches! Now, villainy, I have thee in the toil!

[*Exit R.*]

PAPILLON *ushers in the* COUNT ALFRED DE SENNEVILLE, FRELUQUET, MERLUCHE *and* MESCHIN, *with an* ADVOCATE, *who sits at table.*

De S. Stay, Papillon, where is the Viscomte?

Pap. [*Simply.*] Can't say, monseigneur.

De S. Is he not at home?

Pap. Don't know, monseigneur.

Fre. Valuable domestic, that!

De Mer. Superb!

De Mes. A perfect treasure!

De S. Your master is about to leave the city, I presume?

Pap. Possibly, monseigneur.

De S. Is there any person here to represent him in this business?

Pap. Probably, monseigneur.

De S. Who is it?

Pap. Hav'nt heard, monseigneur.

De S. You can tell us, at least, what disposition he has made of that unhappy lady, your late mistress?

Pap. Not in his confidence, monseigneur.

De S. Pshaw! Retire!

Pap. Certainly, monseigneur.

[*Exit.*]

De S. I don't know whether this is imbecility or impertinence

Fre. It's sufficiently amusing, any way.

De S. My good cousin's message is somewhat ambiguous. What settlement can it be, at which the presence of an advocate is necessary?

Fre. My dear friend, I can divine it instantly. Disgusted with society in general, and with this establishment in particular, he means to restore your rights and surrender it to you.

De Mes. That's evident enough.

De Mer. Beyond a doubt.

De S. By Jove! I hope so. We could pass our time here agreeably enough.

Fre. A delightful retreat, and not expensive.

Enter PAPILLON, announcing.

Le Chevalier D^e La Tour!

Enter LA TOUR, with a horsewhip.

De S. Who the deuce is this, I wonder? Some relation to her ladyship, from the name, perhaps.

La T. Your pardon, sirs. Is the Viscomte de Rosiere of the company?

De S. He is not monsieur.

La T. Are you his friends?

De S. We have that honor.

La T. I could wish it had been otherwise.

De S. How if we were not?

La T. I might solicit your advice upon a matter of importance.

De S. Between ourselves, then, you may speak freely here.

La T. Briefly, then—I am the brother of her who was called Cecile La Tour, a plain gentleman of Normandy, ignorant of city customs, but resolute to avenge the insult done to her name and mine.

De S. [*Aside to rest.*] Could we but urge this lout to fight him, it would open another chance. [*Aloud.*] Sir, believe me we all sympa-

thize with you in the injustice done to your sister, and will aid you in any way to obtain redress.

La T. Thank you—you are very kind, but as I said before, I am unused to the method of proceeding in such a case, and would be glad to learn it from this honorable company.

De S. Nothing so easy, my dear friend; you know, of course, from whence this indignity proceeds?

La T. Most assuredly.

De S. You must insult him in some deadly manner, and before witnesses, so that he must fight, and then—the rest is simple.

La T. Insult him, but how? Let me know the most degrading way?

De S. Call him a liar!

La T. Ah!

De Mer. Or a cowardly poltroon.

Fre. A base, dishonorable rascal.

De Mes. Or lash the hound across the face with your whip.

La T. I thank you, sirs! It's just the course I would have taken, and so to begin—Count Alfred de Senneville, you are a liar! An infamous and most unmitigated villain! Maurice de Merluche, you are a cowardly poltroon! You, De Meschin, a base, dishonorable rascal! And you, sir, a contemptible, degraded hound!

[Cuts him across face with his whip.]

De S. Your life shall answer for this mortal insult! Dastards! do you fly from a single man.

Enter LA FORCE, C. D.

Ha! La Force! Your knife! Cut down, you ruffian, or we are lost!

La F. Softly, Messieurs! A man of honor likes to know what he fights about—the odds appear to be sufficiently in your favor. as it is, and "mort de diable," I have enough of the old feeling left to plant me on the weaker side!

La T. *[Aside to LA FORCE.]* That touch of virtue saved you from the galleys.

La F. What's that?

La T. *[Aside.]* Silence! We robbed this house together last night—a free confession, and you shall escape!

La F. Outmanouvred! Sir, I bow to your sagacity, and accept the conditions! Messieurs! the game's against you, so you may as well give up your hands.

De S. But not without our revenge. We are four to two! down with them! *[They rush towards LA TOUR and LA FORCE.]*

Enter from C. D., the VISCOMTE and CECILE.—They all retire.

Vis. Hold! Alfred de Senneville, would you add bloodshed to your discovered crime?

De S. Away with such cant! Disgrace surrounds us on all sides! The only chance for safety is to cut a passage through! Come on! for shame. Even cowards fight, when they're at bay!

La T. Measureless villain! Had you shown the slightest sem-

blance of contrition, I would have entreated lenity, but now, I leave you to the laws you have outraged! Within there, Papillon!

Enter PAPILLON with Officer and a detachment of Guard.

De S. Ah! now the game is up, indeed!

Officer. Gentlemen, your swords! [*They deliver them up.*] I must request the honor of your company.

Fre. Where?

Officer. To the Bastille!

De S. Think not that I shall forget; there will yet come a time.

[*They are escorted off.*]

La F. I presume that I make no mistake in supposing this amiable domestic circle would feel itself more at ease, if I were permitted, most respectfully to retire. I dare not hope to be believed, even if I should say that I repent the share I had in this foul work, or promise to amend my sorry life; a withered leaf tossed here and there upon the winds of destiny, necessity more than inclination has hitherto drifted me into the foulest corners of the social world; let those whose lot has been more fortunate, be grateful to the good fate which lifted them above temptation, rather than too hastily condemn the world's luckless ones who have fallen by the way.

La T. You shall have an opportunity to retrieve your lost position, if you will. Courage, like charity, covers a multitude of sins; and I owe you something for your timely support.

Enter DE TROP, with guards.

Bar. How do you do—how do ye do—glad to see you looking so well! where is he? ah! there he is, secure him.—*Goes to VISCOMTE—guards follow.*—Give me back my spectacles, you thieving rascal. I accuse this man of robbery and intended murder! he tried to strangle me!

La T. [*Aside to LA FORCE.*] Fly! we shall meet again.

La F. I will, good friend: filled with a new-found hope—I little thought would bless my heart again. [*Exit.*]

Bar. To strangle me, the rascal.

[*Shaking VISCOMTE.*]

Vis. Would you return the compliment by choking me!

Bar. Eh! bless my soul; what a singular mistake for me to make, it's all from the want of those cursed spectacles; ah! there he is in earnest; don't attempt to deny your guilt; I saw you in the very act. [*Crossing to LA TOUR.*]

Cec. Why that's my brother, Baron!

Bar. Your what!

Vis. Her brother, and my best and truest friend! you must be dreaming, Baron.

Bar. Gentlemen, you can go!—[*To guard, who exit.*] I haven't the slightest doubt but that I *am* asleep and dreaming; if I knew the actual position of sublunary affairs I'm in bed this moment and most probably snoring.

Vis. The dark hour has passed, my dear wife, and the bright morning breaks upon our destiny, giving assurance of a happy future.

Cec. Oh, may it be as cloudless as our present joy ; for me—I have but one regret, that I should have forgotten even in thought, and for a single instant, that the unerring hand still held the balance, and howsoever the world's tempest may assault the truthful heart, it must in time outride the storm. [CECILE is led forward by VISCOMTE.

EPILOGUE.

Cec. If some sad phases of that city's life,
When with such scenes it's chronicles were rife,
Have been depicted, they may well contrast
The purer present, with the vicious past.
Thus ends my task, and I have but to say,
Think of the *will*, and gently scan the *way*.

VISCOMTE comes forward.

Vis. I have obtained forgiveness here, it's true, [To CECILE.
To make it perfect now remains with you. [To Audience.
Indulgence grant me for all errors past,
My first offense and possibly my last.
Give me but credit for my loving heart,
And blame the authors for the jealous part.

Pap. My Rosebud wishes just to say a word.

Mus. Now, Butterfly, how can you be absurd ?

Pap. What, not the *last* one—'tis your sex's right.

Mus. Well, then—I'll simply say, kind friends, good night.
I hope my service pleased you, in which case
Please recommend me to some other place.

La T. You must be wearied by so many rhymes,
To bore you now would be the worst of crimes ;
I'll hint, perhaps you've heard the sentiment before ?
I've done my best—the best can do no more.
If you're content, it's probable you'll show it ;
The critic's view—to-morrow we shall know it.

Bar. Who are they talking to ? Why, what a sight !
I do believe—why, yes, it is—I'm right.
I see before me those familiar faces,
Who always, when such acts take place, take places.
Friends to our art, and to the artist's weal ;
With liberal hands, and hearts that pity feel,
When helpless sorrow makes it's sad appeal.
I wish I had my specs—I then could tell—
No matter—glad to see you looking well.
Well pleased, I mean, for if our effort gains
Approval here, your pleasures are our pains—
I don't mean painful pains—but here, heart-deep,
I'll try and—bless me—I must be asleep.
Yet may we hope, whatever be my lot,
That you've been wide awake though I have not.
And now, farewell—

Enter LA FORCE.

La F.

One moment, if you please.

What strange, anomalous remarks are these
I hear of? Have you made a jump in fine,
At once to sober eighteen fifty-nine?
Alas! then, all our chronologic acting
Will be confused, amidst these dates distracting.
But I suppose concession must be made
To sovereign custom, by the scribbling trade;
And the legitimate is now-a-day
No matter what—provided that it pay.
So pardon this with every other failing,
Let not our *hopes* at least be unavailing;
Since 'tis with you alone remains the power,
To bring the DAWN to many a DARK HOUR.

THE END.



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