

LES FRÈRES CORSES;

OR,

THE CORSICAN BROTHERS

A DRAMATIC ROMANCE,

IN THREE ACTS AND FIVE TABLEAUX.

Adapted from the Romance of M. DUMAS,

BY

MM. E. GRANGÉ ET X. DE MONTÉPIN.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,
WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND,
LONDON.

909359

*First Performed at the Théâtre Historique, Paris;
August 10, 1850.*

CHARACTERS.

Fabien dei Franchi	} (Twin Brothers)	M. M. FECHTER.
Louis dei Franchi		
Fabien dei Franchi		M. BERTHOLLET.
Louis dei Franchi		
M. Château Renaud	.	M. EMMANUEL.
M. Alfred Meynard	.	M. PEUPIN.
Le Baron Giordano Martelli	.	M. BOUNET.
Le Baron Montgiron	.	M. LIGNÉ.
Gaetano Orlando	} (the heads of two Corsican Families)	M. GEORGES.
Marco Colonna		M. BOUTIN.
Griffo (a Domestic).	.	M. PAUL.
Antonio Sanola (Justice of the Peace)	.	M. VIDEIX.
A Woodcutter	.	M. BARRE.
Tomaso (a Guide)	.	M. DESIRÉ.
A Surgeon	.	M. SERRES.
Mdme. Savilia dei Franchi	.	Mdme. LETOURNEUR.
Emilie de Lesparre	.	MATHILDE.
Esther	} (Ladies of the Ballet)	MARIE BOUTIN.
Grain D'Or		FERRANT.
Pomponette		MARTHÉ.
Marie (an Attendant)		HUMBLET.
Domino	.	

Male and Female Corsican Peasants, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dancers, Servants, &c.

*The Incidents of the First Act in Corsica, and of the Second Act
at Paris, are supposed to occur at the same time. Third Act,
The Forest of Fontainebleau.*

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*Cast of Characters, and Copy of the Bill, when first
Performed at the Princess's Theatre, London,
Feb. 24, 1852.*

M. Fabien dei Franchi	}	(<i>Twin Brothers</i>)	}	Mr. C. KEAN.
M. Louis dei Franchi	}		}	
M. de Château-Renaud	.	.	.	Mr. ALFRED WIGAN.
M. Alfred Meynard	.	.	.	Mr. G. EVERETT.
Le Baron de Montgiron	.	.	.	Mr. JAMES VINING.
Le Baron Giordano Martelli	.	.	.	Mr. C. WHEATLEIGH.
Orlando	}	(<i>the heads of two</i>)	}	Mr. RYDER.
Colonna	}	(<i>Corsican Families</i>)	}	Mr. MEADOWS.
M. Beauchamp	.	.	.	Mr. STACEY.
M. Verner	.	.	.	Mr. ROLLESTON.
Griffo (<i>a Domestic</i>)	.	.	.	Mr. PAULO.
Antonio Sanola (<i>Judge of the District</i>)	.	.	.	Mr. F. COOKE.
Boissec (<i>a Woodcutter</i>)	.	.	.	Mr. J. CHESTER.
Tomaso (<i>a Guide</i>)	.	.	.	Mr. STOAKES.
A Surgeon	.	.	.	Mr. DALY.
Servants	.	.	.	Mr. HAINES and Mr. WILSON.
Madame Savilla dei Franchi	.	.	.	Miss PHILLIPS.
Emilie de Lesparre	.	.	.	Miss MURRAY.
Marie (<i>a Domestic</i>)	.	.	.	Miss ROBERTSON.
Coralie	}		}	Miss CARLOTTA LECLERCQ.
Celestine	}	(<i>Ladies of the Ballet</i>)	}	Miss DALY.
Estelle	}		}	Miss VIVASH.
Domino	.	.	.	

Ladies, Gentlemen, Masks, Dominos, Debardeurs, Grotesques,
Servants, Male and Female Corsican Peasants, &c.

ACT I.

Hall in the Chateau of Mde. Savilla dei Franchi,
At Sullacaro, in Corsica.

ACT II.—SCENE 1.

INTERIOR OF THE OPERA HOUSE, PARIS,
During a Masqued Ball and Carnival.

SCENE 2.

LOBBY OF THE OPERA HOUSE.

SCENE 3.

SALOON IN THE HOUSE OF MONTGIRON.

ACT III.

GLADE in the FOREST of FONTAINEBLEAU.

COSTUMES.—DATE, 1841.

FABIEN.—*First*—Round dark velvet jacket, trimmed with white metal buttons; and breeches (supported by a single broad brace) reaching to the knee; buff boots or leggings; fleshings seen between the knee and leggings; silk sash; conical hat, with feather. *Second*—Black suit and cloak.

LOUIS.—*First*—Black trousers; shirt, with sleeves rolled up. *Second*—Full evening dress. *Third*—Same as first dress.

RENAUD.—*First*—Drab trousers; shirt with sleeves rolled up; short beard and moustache. *Second*—Full dress. *Third*—Drab trousers; over-coat for travelling.

MONTGIRON.—*First*—Evening dress. *Second*—Travelling dress.

MARTELLI and GENTLEMEN—Evening costume.

MEYNARD.—*First*—Travelling dress. *Second*—The same, with cloak.

ORLANDO.—Coarse serge shirt; breeches and leather leggings.

COLONNA.—Square-cut coat; breeches; shoes and stockings.

GRIPPO.—Plain round velvet jacket; breeches and leggings.

TOMASO.—Ditto.

JUDGE.—Official robe over coat, breeches, stockings, and shoes.

MASQUERADERS.—Character dresses of a marked and varied description.


SAVILIA.—Black velvet dress.

EMILIA.—Spanish dress of black satin, high comb, fan, and mantilla.

MARIE.—Stuff dress, apron, coloured stockings, and shoes.

DOMINO.—A fancy domino and mask.

Time in Representation, Two Hours.

 This Drama is the Property of Mr. T. H. LACY, and must not be Performed without his written authority.

THE CORSICAN BROTHERS.

Act I.

SCENE—*Corsica ; the Village of Sullacaro, Province of Sartène, at the House of Madame SAVILIA DEI FRANCHI—The principal Apartment of the House ; a large Chimney-piece R., surmounted by a trophy of Carabines suspended from the horns of a Moufflon—At the back, C., the door of entrance ; at the two sides, lateral doors.*

At the rising of the Curtain, MARIE is seated on the left, and sings while she spins.

MARIE. (*sings*) From Alerie to Sartène,
The road is good and fair ;
But scarcely the plain
Does the traveller gain,
When all is death-like there.
A little plot of laurel-rose
Makes all this valley's charms ;
By the streamlet that flows,
How sweet to repose
In my Peppino's arms !

During the rittournello of the first verse, a knocking is heard at the door.

MARIE. (*rising*) I thought I heard somebody knock. (*knocking again*) Yes, I was not deceived—(*calling*) Griffio, Griffio !

Enter GRIFFIO, R.D.

GRIFF. Well, what's the matter now ?—is the house on fire ?

MARIE. No ! but somebody knocks at the door.

GRIFF. Go and open it, then.

MARIE. (*with fear*) It is rather too late, I thank you.

GRIFF. What ! afraid ?

Exit C. and L.

MARIE. (*putting her spinning wheel away*) Very likely, indeed ! Go and open the door to receive a pistol-bullet—or a stab from a knife—

Re-enter GRIFFIO.

—Well, who is there ?

GRIF. A French traveller, just arrived at Sullacaro, who demands hospitality.

MARIE. (*joyfully*) A French traveller!—you have not sent him away, I hope.

GRIF. Sent him away! Do we do such things in Corsica? On the contrary, I told him that Madame dei Franchi, our mistress, would do herself the honour to receive him.

MARIE. Well!—and this traveller is?—

GRIF. He has alighted from his horse—go and announce his visit.

MARIE. To whom?

GRIF. Why, to the Countess, to be sure—get along, you'll see him: he will sleep here, so you'll have plenty of time to look at him.

MARIE. That's right!

Exit, R.D.

Enter ALFRED MEYNARD and TOMASO, C. from L.

GRIF. (*at the back*) This way, your excellency, this way! A servant is gone to announce your arrival to the Signora Savilia, and in an instant she will be here to receive you herself. In the meantime, will you be pleased to take a seat?

ALF. Truly, my friend, I fear I am giving you a great deal of trouble—I am putting you to inconvenience.

GRIF. (*smiling*) Inconvenience! Ah, Sir, that is a French word we do not understand. In Corsica, the stranger does an honour to the house before which he stops. (*turning round*) Good day, Tomaso; put down his excellency's luggage. Don't trouble yourself, Sir, it shall all be carried to your chamber.

TOM. Your Excellency sees that I was right when I told you you had not made a bad choice when you fixed upon the Signora Savilia's house for your hostelry.

ALF. No, faith! I think not; it appears I may dispense with you now. Here are two pistoles; one for the mule, and one for the master—is that enough?

TOM. Quite! you pay me at the same rate as my beast.

Exit at back.

ALF. (*to GRIFFO*) But it is not entirely chance that has led me to the house of your mistress, my friend.

GRIF. Is your excellency acquainted with the Signora Savilia?

ALF. No!—I have not the honour; but I am the bearer of a letter of introduction and recommendation to her.

GRIF. Oh! you did not stand in need of that, to be made welcome.

ALF. Nevertheless, my friend, permit me to believe that in presenting from her son—

GRIF. (*quickly*) From Monsieur Louis?

ALF. Just so!

Enter SIGNORA SAVILIA DEI FRANCHI, R.

SAV. You come from my son, did you say, Sir?

ALF. (*bowing, c.*) Madame, you must think me very bold; but the custom of the country excuses me, and this letter—(*he gives it to her*) from Louis, authorizes me—

SAV. (*taking the letter*) Oh, Sir, you did not require this letter, to be welcomed in this house as you deserve to be. In Corsica, every traveller may, on entering a city or a village, throw the bridle on the neck of his horse, and alight where his horse stops—every door will open of itself, without giving him the trouble to knock. Once entered into the house, he will remain as long as he pleases; and when he departs, they who have entertained him will thank him for the honour he has done them. (*turning*) Marie, prepare the chamber Louis occupied before his departure. Griffio, carry our guest's luggage—and remember, that as long as Monsieur remains here, you are at his service.

GRIF.

and

MARIE.

} (*bowing*) Yes, Signora.

Exeunt GRIFFIO, C. and L., and MARIE, R.

ALF. My sojourn will not be long, Madame, and I will not abuse the hospitality you so kindly offer me—my journey draws towards its end—affairs of importance recall me to Paris, and to-morrow I shall have the regret of taking leave of you.

SAV. I leave you free, Sir, to act just as will be most convenient to you; nevertheless, I hope you will change your mind, and that we shall have the pleasure of your company a little longer.

ALF. (*bowing*) Madam!

SAV. At all events, you heard what I said to my servants; the house, as well as they, is at your command; use it, then, as if it were your own, and consider yourself as sincerely welcomed by the mother as you will be by the son, as soon as he comes in.

ALF. Ah! true, Madame! Monsieur Fabien your second son—

SAV. I have two children, Sir, but no first and second son. Between them there is no first and second—they are two brothers, that is all.

ALF. Louis told me of that, Madame. Your two sons are twins, I believe?

SAV. Yes, Sir; born at the same hour, at the same instant—

ALF. And they resemble each other very much, I think he told me, likewise?

SAV. You will judge for yourself, Sir, when you have seen Fabien.

ALF. And shall I soon have that pleasure?

SAV. Oh! according to all probability. He left Sullacaro early this morning, to go into the mountains, where he had an appointment; he cannot, therefore, be long before he returns.

ALF. I am anxious to see him, and shake hands with him on the part of his brother. But I beg, Madame, I may not keep you from reading that letter.

SAV. Thank you. You know what delight it always affords a mother to see the writing of an absent son. (*she sits on the right and reads to herself.*) My dear Louis, I see, is well—he recommends you to me as one of his friends—I trust you will do me the justice to tell him that I did not wait for his recommendation.

ALF. Oh! Madame! you have been a hundred times too kind! He shall know it, though I am sure it will not surprise him. If he

has not said much about himself in the letter, it is from seeing willing to leave me the pleasure of giving you all the information concerning him you can desire.

SAV. And your news is good, I hope?

ALF. Excellent, Madame! Louis was as well as possible when I left him; and—

Enter GRIFFO, R.

GRIFF. (*as he enters*) Madame, here is Monsieur Fabien.

SAV. (*rising*) Fabien! you see, Sir; I told you he could not be long. (*to GRIFFO*) Where is he?

GRIFF. (*pointing to the back*) There, close at hand; he is talking to our Justice of the Peace. (*to ALFRED*) Your excellency's chamber is ready; and when you please—

ALF. Thank you, I am not fatigued; it refreshes one to be well received.

He goes up towards the right, talking in a low voice with GRIFFO, to whom he gives his hat and cane.

Enter FABIEN, C. from L., carrying a carbine, which he lays down on entering.

SAV. (*going to meet him*) Come, Fabien, you are waited for here.

FAB. (R.C.) By you, my dear mother?

SAV. (C.) Yes, by me, and by some one else. How late you are, my dear.

FAB. (*in a low voice*) Oh! that Orlando is a true Corsican; I thought he would never comply.

SAV. (*the same*) But, at last?

FAB. (*with a sigh*) At last, dear mother, all is arranged, agreed; Orlando and Colonna have both promised to come here this evening, with their relations and friends, and as they have promised, they will come. But you said, mother, somebody was waiting for me?

SAV. Monsieur Alfred de Meynard, a friend of your brother's.

FAB. I met Tomaso, who told me we had a guest, and I hastened home to welcome him. (*going towards ALFRED, and offering him his hand*) Monsieur—

ALF. (*looking at him with astonishment*) Good heavens!

FAB. What excites your surprise, Monsieur?

ALF. What an astonishing resemblance!

FAB. (*smiling*) Oh! I understand you.

ALF. Really, really, I am tempted to ask you if it be to Monsieur Fabien, or to Monsieur Louis, that I have now the honour of speaking!

SAV. (*who is seated*) This gentleman brings us a letter.

FAB. (*in an agitated tone*) A letter, mother?—give it to me. (*he opens it*) Ah! it is three weeks since you left Louis! You can know nothing, then.

SAV. What is there to be known, Fabien?

FAB. Oh! nothing, mother! I only mean that it is too long since Monsieur has quitted Paris to allow him to give us any important news of my brother.

ALF. I request your pardon, Sir, for not having remitted you the

letter sooner; but having only one month to bestow upon my journey through Corsica, it was impossible for me to deviate from the itinerary of my guide Valéry. I first visited Bastia, Corte, Ajaccio—and, at length, here I am in the province of Sartène, at Sullacaro, having kept, as you see, my best visit for the last.

FAB. Allow me to ask you, Sir, how my brother was, when you left him?

ALF. If you ask as to his health, Sir, it appeared to me to be excellent.

FAB. Aye, that's as regards his physical health; but did he not appear to you sad, tormented, uneasy?

ALF. No, I left him working away hard for his examination, which he is about to pass through.

FAB. Ah! yes!

ALF. He appeared full of hope, and certain of success.

FAB. Then, you are not aware that he had, at that time, any cause for anxiety?

ALF. None. Have you any reason to believe the contrary?

SAV. (*anxiously*) My son?

ALF. Have you received lately any bad news?

FAB. Received?—no—at least, not in the sense you would attach to that word.

ALF. I do not understand you, Sir.

FAB. I mean to say we have received no letter from Louis.

ALF. You know the French proverb—"no news is good news;" I cannot therefore see anything you have to torment yourself about.

FAB. Yes, you may not see, but I—

SAV. I hope, Fabien, that nothing serious has happened to your brother?

FAB. (*going towards her*) Serious? no, mother—I think not—yet—

SAV. Yet, this inquietude, of which you spoke to me yesterday—these griefs that you supposed Louis was afflicted with—

FAB. Well, mother, I still entertain the same fears.

SAV. Nevertheless, you have had no other warning since yesterday?

FAB. (*after a moment's hesitation*) No—none.

SAV. If any serious danger threatens the life of your brother?—

FAB. (*with emotion*) Mother!

SAV. If your brother were—dead—you would know it, should you not?

FAB. Yes, for I should have seen him!

ALF. (*aside, and astonished*) He would have seen him!

SAV. And you would have told me?

FAB. (*saluting her on the brow*) I would have told you?—yes, dear mother.

SAV. (*rising*) Thanks, my child! The absent are in the hands of Heaven; the principal satisfaction is, you know your brother lives. Let us think, then, how we shall properly entertain the guest that he and good fortune has sent us.

She salutes ALFRED, who bows to her—FABIEN accompanies her to the door on the left, and she goes out.

ALF. (*looking at them, as she is going*) This is something strange! What can this brother be, who asserts that if his brother were dead, he should have seen him again? What can this mother be, who makes one son promise that if her other son be dead, he will tell her? Well, I am in the country of adventures, and this house seems to be a true nest of legends.

FAB. (*returning towards ALFRED*) You will excuse, Sir, I hope, our having thus intruded our family affairs upon you? But we cannot think you a stranger, since you are sent to us by our poor Louis. (*he sighs deeply*)

ALF. Pardon me, Sir, but——

FAB. Yes, you are at a loss to comprehend, I perceive. The last words exchanged between me and my mother appear obscure.

ALF. I confess it! You said you were without recent news of your brother?

FAB. True, Sir.

ALF. And, nevertheless, you appeared as uneasy as if you had received some—and bad too.

FAB. That is still true.

ALF. Well, since you are without any kind of news from him—what can possibly lead you to suppose that he is uneasy, suffering, tormented?

FAB. Because, during the last three days, I have been uneasy, suffering, tormented myself.

ALF. (*smiling*) Pardon me, that does not at all explain.

FAB. You know that Louis and I are twins?

ALF. Louis has told me so, Sir; and but now, Madame, your mother, did me the honour to repeat it.

FAB. You know, that when we came into the world, we were attached to each other in the same manner that those Siamese brothers were, who, some years ago, excited the curiosity of the Parisians?

ALF. No, I was not aware of that.

FAB. That is, however, the fact upon which depends that which is imaginative or preternatural in our situation. It was necessary to employ the scalpel to disunite us; but the moral adhesion has subsisted, which causes us, although far removed from each other, to have always the same body, the same heart, the same soul. The result of this is, that every moral and physical impression, a little stronger than ordinary, which either of us experiences, produces its reflection upon the other.

ALF. (*who has seated himself R.C. near the table*) Truly! truly!

FAB. Now, during the last few days that have passed away, without any motive whatever, I have been sad, restless, melancholy; I have felt severe pangs of the heart. It is evident to me, Sir, that my brother has suffered some violent grief.

ALF. And of what nature do you imagine this grief to be?

FAB. How can I tell? I have felt the effect, but am ignorant of the cause.

ALF. Some disappointment in his career, perhaps?

FAB. No, Sir, no—it is a grief of the heart.

ALF. (*smiling*) For my part, I always thought him to be more occupied with his studies than with the ladies.

FAB. Ladies! No, I don't believe him to be occupied with the ladies. I believe him to be in love with one woman, which is a very different thing.

ALF. (*rising*) And this woman? But I crave your pardon—I perceive I am endeavouring, very indiscreetly, to intrude into your brother's secrets.

FAB. Oh! not at all, Sir—that which I am about to relate to you, is very simple. About a year ago, the daughter of the General commanding in Corsica came to Ajaccio, to pass two months with her father. She was a charming person; young, beautiful, and amiable. My brother and I had both several opportunities of seeing her, and as all our sensations are alike, as we hate and love with the same heart, we both became deeply in love at the same time. Only, as each of us was aware of the other's passion, each endeavoured to subdue his own. I do not know whether I, for my part, succeeded; but Louis believed that I had, and redoubled tenderness, on his part, proved his gratitude. The General quitted Corsica, to return to France: his daughter followed him. Some time after their departure, my brother asked me if I should not like to go to Paris, to study the law, or to go through a course of medical instruction? It had always been agreed, between ourselves, that we never would leave Corsica at the same time; but that one of us would always remain with our beloved mother. I at once understood that he could not resist the inclination to follow the object of his love, and said that I had no desire to go to France. At this declaration I saw my brother's countenance become radiant with joy. Then, said he, I will go—Go, my dear Louis, I replied, go! And he went. As for myself, as you perceive, I remained at Sullacaro, which place, it is more than probable, I shall never leave.

ALF. You will never leave this village?

FAB. It appears strange to you, does it not, that a man should cling to such a miserable country as Corsica?—but what else can you expect? I'm one of those plants that will only live in the open air.—I must breathe an atmosphere impregnated with the life-giving emanations of the mountains, and the sharp breezes of the sea—I must have my torrents to cross, my rocks to climb, my forests to explore—I must have my carbine, room, independence and liberty. If I were transported into a city, methinks I should be stifled, as if I were in a prison. Everything, then, you see, is for the best; my brother will be an advocate, and I—

ALF. And you?

FAB. I—I will be a Corsican!

ALF. (*laughing*) Ha, ha! that's a characteristic reply, however! And you think that it is on account of this lady that your brother has experienced the grief of which you have sympathetically been sensible?

FAB. Yes! although he has never mentioned her in his letters—yes, it is on her account! (*placing his hand upon his heart*) He is still in love—or rather, he is more in love with her than ever; the wound is deep!

ALF. (*gaily*) Happily, Sir, that sort of wound, however deep it may be, seldom proves mortal; and, in my opinion, if you have no other subject of inquietude—

FAB. Sir, something has happened to my brother!

ALF. Something serious?

FAB. Serious?—yes, I fear so!

ALF. But you do not really think he is in any danger?

FAB. Oh!

ALF. That he is dead?

FAB. Dead? no! for in that case, as I told my mother, I should have seen him.

ALF. (*astonished*) You would have seen him? Permit me to say that that is again one of those expressions—

FAB. That is incomprehensible to you, and of which you have a great desire to ask an explanation—is it not so?

ALF. I confess it!—if, however, that explanation may be allowed to enter into a profane ear—

FAB. Oh! doubtless—but—

ALF. Pardon me, Sir, but I am progressing from indiscretion to indiscretion.

FAB. No, not at all; only you are a man of the world, and consequently your mind is rather incredulous. I am afraid, then, of seeing you treat as a fable a fact which belongs, it is true, much more to legendary lore than to history, but which, such as it is, has existed in my family these three hundred years.

ALF. If that be the only fear that stops you, allow me to reassure you. Nobody, in legendary or traditional matters, has more credulity than I have. There are, moreover, in this world, things in which I believe most firmly, and that is in things incredible!

FAB. Then you believe in apparitions?

ALF. Why not?

FAB. Oh! listen to me then, you are just the man for my tale. (*they both sit down near the table*) Well, this is a fact which is preserved among the Franchi, as a family tradition. It is now about three hundred years ago, that one of our direct ancestors died, leaving two orphan children, deprived of both father and mother. These two children, left alone in the world, were aware of their isolation, and loved each other with the whole amount of affection they could have felt for father and mother, if their father and mother had lived. This affection became proverbial throughout the country, and, as if to give it a sanction more holy still than the natural sentiment that united them, to give it the sacred sanction of an oath, they swore that nothing should separate them, *not even death*; and at the end of I know not what potent conjuration, they each of them wrote with his blood upon a parchment, which they exchanged, this solemn promise, this reciprocal engagement, that the first that died should appear to the other, at the very instant of his death, and afterwards, at all the momentous periods of his life.

ALF. Well?

FAB. Three months after the accomplishment of this mystic ceremony, one of the brothers, who was at feud with a powerful family of Corsica, fell into an ambushade and was killed—at that moment his brother, uneasy on his account, was sealing a letter he had just written to him; but as he was applying the seal of his ring to the still burn-

ing wax, he heard a sigh behind him, and turning, saw his brother standing with his hand placed upon his shoulder, although he did not feel that hand. Then, by a mechanical movement, he held out to him the letter that he had destined for him; the other took it sadly, shook his head, and stretching his hand towards the extremity of the chamber, he commanded the wall to open; the wall opened, and then the living brother beheld the whole scene of the assassination; he saw his brother contend with, and fall beneath the hands of murderers; and so perfectly did he see all this, that when he met with these men, whom he had never seen before, he not only recognised them, but he was further able to trace and bring to light every detail of their crime, from the profound obscurity in which the assassins believed they had buried it. Well, my dear guest, these two brothers, it appears, had engaged not only themselves, but all their descendants; for, from that period, apparitions have appeared, as well at the moment of the death of a member of our family, as on the eve of all remarkable events that are to happen to us.

ALF. But you yourself have seen no apparition?

FAB. No, not yet.

ALF. Then you may be sure that your brother still lives.

FAB. Louis still lives, that is true; but I greatly fear he is wounded.

ALF. How—by whom?

FAB. Imagine to yourself, that this morning, as I was going to the mountain—Silence! here is my mother—not a word of all this before her, I beg of you.

ALF. Oh, be sure of that!

Enter SAVILIA, GRIFFO, and MARIE, from R., carrying the supper, which they place on the table, R.C.

SAV. Gentlemen, when agreeable, the supper awaits you. (to FAB. and ALF.) Well?

FAB. Well, dear mother, here I am, and perfectly recovered. To table then! you understand, Monsieur de Meynard? (ALFRED hands MADAME to table—they seat themselves, MADAME C., ALFRED R., and FABIEN L. of table—GRIFFO and MARIE waiting) So, then, my dear guest, you were determined you would come and see Corsica? You have done rightly to hasten your visit, for in a very few years, thanks to the hand of progress and civilization, they who come to seek for Corsica, will not find it.

ALF. At all events, Sir, if the national spirit of the Sampiero and Paoli falls back before civilization, and seeks for refuge in some corner of the isle, it will certainly be in the province of Sartène, and in the valley of Tavoro, that it will find an asylum.

SAV. (smiling) You believe this, Monsieur?

ALF. Madame, it appears to me that I am here surrounded by a beautiful and noble picture of the ancient Corsican manners.

FAB. Yes, Monsieur, and yet, between my mother and myself, in the face of three hundred years of remembrances, in this old house, with its turrets and battlements, the French spirit has sought out my brother, has borne him away from us, has transported him to Paris, whence he will return—an advocate! (aside) if he return at all.

SAV. What did you say?

FAB. Nothing, mother—or rather, yes, I did. I say that he will live in Ajaccio, instead of dwelling in the old mansion of his fathers; I say that he will plead about boundaries, party walls, and feudal services. If he has talent, he may perhaps become his Majesty's procureur, and then will prosecute the poor devils who, in the phrase of the country, have made, or rather unmade a skin; he will confound the assassin with the murderer, as is the custom in France; he will demand, in the name of the law, the heads of those who have done what our fathers considered a dishonour not to have done; and, when, by means of speeches, gestures, sometimes lies, he shall have procured a head for the executioner, he will fancy he has served his country, and has brought his stone to the temple of civilization, as our Prefect says—oh Lord, oh Lord!

ALF. But you must perceive, Sir, that Heaven counterbalances all things, since whilst he made your brother a sectarian of the new principles, he has left you a staunch partizan of the old customs. In mathematics, it appears to me that two equal powers neutralise each other.

FAB. Me, Monsieur? Do I not, at this very moment, pay, as well as others, my tribute to the State? Am I not in a fair way to accomplish an action that my ancestors would have considered unworthy of them?

ALF. You, Sir?

FAB. Good Heavens!—yes, I! Perhaps you have heard that our peasants are divided into two factions?

ALF. Yes, that of the Orlandi and the Colonne: I was promised at Ajaccio I don't know how many murders, assassinations, way-layings, ambushes, and I confess that I had reckoned upon you for a little—

FAB. Well; there's the truth of the proverb—"You have reckoned without your host." Do you know what part I play among gun-shots, dagger-thrusts, and stabs with the knife? I am arbitrator!

ALF. Arbitrator!

FAB. You came among us to witness a vendetta; well! you will behold something much more rare—you will be present at a reconciliation.

ALF. A reconciliation!

FAB. Which will be no easy matter, I assure you, considering the point to which things are come.

ALF. And from what did this great quarrel originate, which, thanks to you, is on the eve of being extinguished?

FAB. Why, I confess I feel some difficulty in telling you that—the first cause was—

ALF. Was what?

FAB. The first cause was a hen.

ALF. (*astonished*) A hen!

FAB. Yes; about ten years ago, a hen escaped from the poultry-yard of one of the Orlandi and took refuge in that of one of the Colonne. The Orlandi claimed the hen—the Colonne maintained it was theirs. In the heat of the discussion, an Orlando was imprudent enough to threaten to summon the Colonne before the Judge of the Peace, and

put them to their oath. At this menace, an old woman of the Colonna family, who held the hen in her hand, twisted its neck, and threw it in the face of the mother of Orlando. "There," said she, "if the hen is thine, eat it." Upon this an Orlando picked up the hen by the claws, and raised his hand, with the hen in it, to strike her who had thrown it in the face of his sister; but at the moment he lifted his hand, a Colonna, who unfortunately had his loaded carbine with him, without hesitation fired, shot him in the breast, and killed him.

ALF. Good Heavens! and how many lives has this—ridiculous squabble cost?

FAB. There have been nine persons killed, and five wounded.

ALF. What, and all for a miserable hen?

FAB. Yes.

ALF. And it is, doubtless, in compliance with the prayers of one of these two families that you have interfered to terminate this quarrel?

FAB. Oh! not at all—they would have exterminated each other to the very last, rather than have made a single step towards each other—no, no, it is at the entreaty of my brother, to whom the matter has been spoken about in the Courts; I should like to know what business they have with this at Paris? It is the Prefect who has played us this trick—pretending that if I would speak a word, all this would finish like an old song, by a marriage and a copy of verses. Then they applied to my brother, who took the ball at the rebound, and wrote to me that he had given his word for me. What was I to do? I could not allow it to be said yonder that one of the Franchi had engaged the word of his brother, and that his brother had not done honour to the engagement. So that this evening the ceremony of the reconciliation is to take place—this evening—in this very place.

Bells are rung at a distance.

—Hark! do you hear?—there are the parish bells calling everybody to the ceremony!

Enter GRIFFO, R. D.

GRIFFO. Monsieur Fabien!

FAB. (C.) Well?

GRIFFO. (*aside*) There is a person wants to speak to you.

FAB. Who is it?

GRIFFO. (*aside*) Orlando.

FAB. Well—that's right—let him come in. (*going to R.D.*) Ah! come in, my dear Orlando.

Enter ORLANDO, dragged in by GRIFFO, R.D.

ORL. I beg your pardon—but, truly—

FAB. What?

ORL. Why—but—it is that—

FAB. Come along in!

ORL. Come in! come in! that's all very easy for you to say—but I shall be no sooner in—

FAB. Than what?

ORL. Monsieur Fabien—I must tell you then—you see, that it is very, very hard to make it up with an enemy—

FAB. Come, Orlando! I thought I had your word?

ORL. Certainly, you have it! But—oh!—if you had it not!—
 FAB. Come, Orlando, now is not all the advantage on your side? Reckon. Are there not five Colonne killed against four Orlandi?

ORL. Yes, I know that's a consideration; but it doesn't signify!—

MARIE. (*entering at the L.D., with the dessert*) Monsieur Fabien!

FAB. What do you want?

MARIE. (*aside*) There is some one asking for you.

FAB. Where?

MARIE. (*pointing to the L.D.*) There.

FAB. Do you know who it is?

MARIE. (*aside*) I think it is a Colonna.

FAB. Good! Bring him in! (*to GRIFFO*) Go that way, and fasten the door outside.

GRIFF. Ah, yes! I understand.

Exit c. and R.

FAB. (*who, during his whispers to MARIE and GRIFFO, has held ORLANDO fast by the sleeve*) I repeat, then, Orlando, that you are in a very good position.

ORL. But, he will bring his hen, at least?

FAB. Yes, he will bring his hen.

ORL. A white hen?

FAB. Oh! white or black.

GRIFFO *re-enters*.

ORL. White! white!

FAB. White then!

ORL. And alive?

FAB. Yes, alive!

ORL. In one word, nothing is done, if it is not alive.

FAB. It shall be alive!

ORL. And he shall hold his hand out first?

FAB. No, no; both together, that was agreed upon.

ORL. Yes, but I thought—

FAB. (*sternly*) Both together! What! shall it be said than an Orlando is wanting in memory, when the question is to recollect that he has passed his word?

ORL. (*with a deep sigh*) Ah! it's very hard, though!—By good luck, there are five Colonne killed against four Orlandi.

FAB. Come this way!

COLONNA *appears L.D., pushed in by MARIE*.

COL. Must I—positively?

During this time, ORLANDO has crept towards the door, and endeavours to get out; but finding it fastened on the outside, he resumes his confidence, and eyes COLONNA fiercely.

FAB. Parbleu! you must indeed!

COL. Why, you see there is one more Colonna killed among us than—

FAB. Yes, I know that; but there have been four Orlandi wounded for one Colonna!

COL. Oh! you know we count them for nothing if they are not dead.

FAB. But, there is no longer any question about all that. Have you the hen?

COL. (*as pretending not to know what is said to him*) The hen?

FAB. Was it not agreed you should bring a hen?

COL. Yes, it was agreed so.

FAB. Where is it, then?

COL. There it is.

FAB. Where?

COL. In my pocket.

FAB. And white?

COL. Yes, white!—it has a little black spot.

FAB. (*aside*) I must take the black spot to my account. (*aloud*) But alive?

COL. Why, I brought it away alive; but I can't answer whether it has died or not, by the way—I sat down upon it a little—and——

FAB. Let us see! (*to GRIFFO*) Go and fasten the other door outside. (*GRIFFO goes off c. and L.—COLONNA gives the hen to FABIEN*) The devil! it was quite time. Take this hen and wait.

COL. (*to FABIEN*) At least, since I brought the hen, he shall hold his hand out first?

FAB. Both together, that was agreed.

COL. Was it agreed?

FAB. Come, Colonna!

COL. (*with a deep sigh*) Ah! well, if it is agreed, a Colonna must keep his word!

FAB. (*to ORLANDO*) Who is your surety?

ORL. Andrea Mari.

FAB. (*to COLONNA*) And yours?

COL. (*in a confused manner*) My surety?

FAB. Yes.

COL. Why, I never thought of getting one.

ORL. (*R., turning round to go out*) Oh! if he has no surety, nothing is done.

FAB. (*C., holding him*) He has a surety. Monsieur Alfred Meynard, you will be surety for Colonna?

ALF. (*L.*) Willingly.

FAB. Open the doors, then, to all.

SAVILIA and ALFRED rise from table, and the door at the back is opened.

Enter the JUDGE OF THE PEACE, who carries several Olive Branches in his hand, and the MALE and FEMALE RELATIONS and FRIENDS of the two adversaries.

JUDGE. (*after taking his place at head of the table L.C.*) My friends, Monsieur Fabien dei Franchi has assembled us in this house, in which his ancestors have dwelt for three hundred years, to assist at one of those spectacles which delight the mind of man and the heart of God. (*the two adversaries grovel*) Receive then, each of you, this branch of wild olive, a symbol of peace, and swear forgetfulness of the past, and friendship for the future.

COL. Forgetfulness, if you please, but no friendship!

ORL. You hear!

COL. Why, it was not you that brought the hen.

FAB. (*giving a branch of olive, which he takes from the table*) Friendship for the future, Orlando!

ORL. We'll try.

FAB. (*the same to COLONNA*) You understand, Colonna, friendship for the future.

COL. I will, if I can.

FAB. That's all right! now, give each other your hands.

He goes to fetch ORLANDO, whom he brings forward to the middle of the stage, then goes for COLONNA—whilst he is bringing COLONNA, ORLANDO regains his place—he makes a sign to ALFRED, who leads ORLANDO forward on one side, whilst FABIEEN leads COLONNA on the other.

—Come, join hands!

JUDGE. (*reading*) "Before us, Antonio Sanola, Judge of the Peace at Sullacaro, Province of Sartène, between Gaetano Orlando and Marco Colonna—it has solemnly been agreed as follows: dating from this day, 22nd of March, 1841, the vendetta that broke out between them, on the 11th of February, 1830, shall cease. In faith of which, they have signed these presents in the presence of the principal inhabitants of the village, with their witnesses, M. Fabien di Franchi, arbitrator, the relations of the two contracting parties, and ourselves, Judge of the Peace."

FAB. Now, Colonna, the hen!

COLONNA makes a movement as if to strike ORLANDO in the face; but under the stern look of FABIEEN he restrains himself, and presents it with tolerable civility.

JUDGE. Now then, sign!

ORL. I don't know how to sign.

JUDGE. Make your cross, then.

ORLANDO, after many difficulties, is persuaded to make his cross—COLONNA, who contrives to write his name in a vile scrawl, resumes his place in high triumph at his superiority in penmanship over his rival—After this, the JUDGE requires the witnesses to sign—During this time, FABIEEN goes up to ORLANDO, who is examining the hen.

FAB. (*to ORLANDO*) Well, Orlando, now everything is settled—no more quarrels between Colonna and you?

ORL. (*aside*) Hum! the hen is plaguy thin, though.

The JUDGE folds up the document, and all exeunt, C., R. and L.

FAB. You see, my dear guest, how things go on now-a-days in Corsica, and will, I dare say, declare, that we are scarcely entitled to take our rank among civilized nations.

ALF. Oh, I am enchanted! I shall have something more fresh and extraordinary to relate than all my predecessors.

FAB. You will describe the affair to Louis, will you not, Sir? Tell

him all that passed before us, and how the brother acquitted the word of the brother.

ALF. Be assured I will not fail to do that.

SAV. It is getting late; you must be fatigued, Monsieur—Griffo, shew our guest to his chamber.

FAB. Please, mother, to let Marie perform that office—I have some orders to give to Griffo.

SAV. I will not allow either Griffo or Marie to conduct our guest to the door of his chamber; I will have that pleasure myself.

ALF. Oh, Madame, I cannot allow—

SAV. It was the duty of the ladies of the castle, of old; and in Corsica, you know, we are still in the sixteenth century. (*going up to D.R.C. of flat, first taking candle from MARIE*)

ALF. (*aside to FABIEN*) Good night! Do not forget I hold you pledged for the end of your history.

FAB. Yes, to-morrow!

ALF. Since you insist upon it, Madame. (*bowing*)

Exit SAVILLA, ALFRED, and MARIE, R.D.F.

FAB. Griffo!

GRIF. Monsieur!

FAB. You must get ready to go out.

GRIF. Where to, Monsieur?

FAB. Ajaccio.

GRIF. When?

FAB. Immediately.

GRIF. And what am I to do at Ajaccio?

FAB. Remain there till a letter arrives from Paris; when that letter arrives, get on horseback and come back full speed.

GRIF. Oh, Heaven!—have you any uneasiness respecting your brother?

FAB. Griffo, my brother is wounded; all we have to learn is, whether it be dangerous or not.

GRIF. (C.) Have you been warned, then?

FAB. (L.C.) Yes, this morning; listen, I tell you this to redouble your zeal—my dear Griffo, not a word to my mother, you understand?

GRIF. Not a word.

FAB. I have not related this to the traveller. This morning, as I was going to the mountain, I felt a sudden pain in my side, as if the point of a sword had passed through my breast; I turned sharply round, I looked in every direction—there was nobody; I placed my hand upon my breast—there was no wound—a pain, that was all. Oh, then, you may understand I was quickly convinced I had not been struck. Then my heart smote me, terror seized me, and I cried out—My brother!—some evil has befallen my brother! I looked at my watch, it was ten minutes past nine. (*he turns involuntarily towards the clock, which points to ten minutes after nine*) Heavens! what means that clock, that denotes only ten minutes after nine? It is later than that—the clock must have stopped! Griffo, can you tell why the clock points to just the same hour that my watch did? That clock!

Enter SAVILLA, D.R.F.

SAV. (R.C.) Yes, you are right—it is a very strange thing—I remarked it myself—the clock stopped this morning without any apparent cause.

FAB. (L.C., much agitated) This morning!—but—it has not been regularly wound up—mother?

SAV. Yes—and that is what I cannot understand; for it was wound up the day before yesterday.

FAB. Oh!—Louis!—Louis!

SAV. Dear child! what is the matter?

FAB. Nothing—mother—nothing. Good night, dear mother!

SAV. Good night, Fabien. (near L.H. door) (aside) Oh! I am sure there is something unknown and terrible hanging over us.

Exit R.D.

FAB. To horse—to horse—Griffo! not an instant's delay. For me, I will write at a venture to my brother; you must put the letter in the post as soon as you arrive, so that it may go by the steam-boat to-morrow; get ready, and return in five minutes for it.

Exit GRIFFO, C. and L.

FAB. This pain in my side—this coincidence between my watch and the clock. (throwing off his jacket) Nothing—nothing—notwithstanding—he remains in his shirt sleeves, and sits at the table on R., writing) “My brother, my dear Louis, if this letter finds you still alive, write to me instantly, if only two words to satisfy me. I have had a terrible warning—write to me!—write to me.”

He folds his letter and seals it, at the same time LOUIS DEI FRANCHI appears, rising from R.C. without his coat or waistcoat, as his brother is, but with a blood stain upon his breast—he glides across the stage—ascending gradually at the same time.

LOUIS. (laying his hand on FABIEN'S left shoulder, and heaving a sigh) Ah!

FAB. (turning round) My brother!—dead!

SAVILLIA appears at the door, R.H.

SAV. Fabien—(going over to him) who is dead? (terrified at his emotion, she sinks on her knees by his side, L.)

LOUIS. (with his finger on his lips and addressing FABIEN) Silence!—look!

He disappears—at the same moment the scene at the back opens and discloses an open clearing in the forest of Fontainebleau—at C. is CHATEAU-RENAUD, who is wiping his sword, and on the other, LOUIS DEI FRANCHI, upon the ground, R.C., supported by a SURGEON and his SECOND, who are rendering him assistance—two other GENTLEMEN in position R., realizing the group from the picture of “THE DUEL.”

Tableau.

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

Act II.

SCENE I.—*Interior of the Opera House, Paris; the Gallery between the Foyer and the Boxes.*—MASKS, DOMINOES, and OFFICERS, in ball costume, walking about, accosting each other and chatting; a FLOWER GIRL offering her bouquets—An animated Tableau of the Entrance to the Foyer of the Opera on a Bal Masqué night.—After a short time, LOUIS DEI FRANCHI is seen to enter on the r.; he advances, looking anxiously round, like a man who is seeking somebody.—During the scene, Ball Quadrilles are played from the back.*

LOUIS. (*stopping and looking at his watch*) It is nearly half-past one—one o'clock was the hour appointed—here, at the entrance of the Foyer. I cannot be wrong—this letter, to "M. Louis dei Franchi," is certainly for me! I have been twenty times round this gallery, examining closely every domino that passed, without finding the person I seek. Alas! perhaps it would be better if I did not find her. Perhaps I had better not have come at all. But do we always go where we ought? We go where destiny leads us; as a proof of which, I am come—I wait—and am dying with impatience to meet this mysterious unknown. Oh! Emilie! Emilie! to what torments do you condemn me! But I will seek and seek again.

*He goes up again, and disappears for a minute in the crowd.
At the same moment, MONTGIRON and the Baron MARTELLI arrive at the left.*

MONT. (*stopping to speak to several persons who appear with him*) Well, Gentlemen, it is understood thus—let every one pursue his present affair; but at three o'clock, you must be at my house to supper—is that right?

GENTLEMEN. At three—yes—yes—all agreed!

They shake hands with MONTGIRON and MARTELLI, and withdraw to the crowd.

LOUIS. (*returning, speaking to himself*) I search everywhere in vain—I cannot perceive—

MONT. (*who has left his friends, taken the arm of MARTELLI, and is about to cross the stage, meets LOUIS*) What!—why, it is Louis dei Franchi!

MAR. Louis!

* At the Princess's Theatre, this Scene is represented as upon the Stage of the Grand Opera. The Drop Scene, painted to give the effect of the covered Pit and front of the Stage, crowded by Masqueraders, and the Boxes and Gallery occupied by a full and splendidly-attired Audience. The animation and reality with which the action of this Scene is supported, is both admirable and NOVEL; and however excellent the Drama is in itself, a very considerable share of its popularity may be fairly attributed to the taste and GENIUS evident in its production.

LOUIS. Montgiron! (*much surprised*) and Martelli!

MONT. Yes, faith! the Baron Giordano-Martelli, a countryman of yours, I believe.

LOUIS. Yes, we are both from the province of Sartène, and friends from childhood.

MAR. My good Louis! give me your hand. (*they shake hands affectionately*) And your brother—that good fellow, Fabien?

LOUIS. I wrote to him, about three weeks ago, to introduce a friend, who proposed to visit Corsica. What, then, I suppose your regiment is not still in Africa?

MAR. Yes, it is; but I have obtained leave of absence.

MONT. Could they refuse anything to the hero of Mitidja?

LOUIS. Aye, I heard you had distinguished yourself, got a cross, and been made Captain?

MONT. At twenty-three, that's pretty well.

LOUIS. I learnt all this from the *Monsieur*, and with much joy, I assure you.

MAR. Thanks, my dear fellow!

LOUIS. How long have you been in Paris?

MAR. Only from this morning—just in time for mid-lent.

MONT. So you see, here he is at the Opera; mixing, anacreontically, myrtles and laurels.

MAR. (*to LOUIS*) And you—tell me what you are doing? What have you been about since our separation?

LOUIS. (*with an air of absence*) I?

MONT. He is in a fair way of becoming an advocate.

MAR. An advocate!

MONT. (*gaily*) Salute him, Captain! *Cedant arma toga.* (*to LOUIS*) Apropos, Louis, you are one of us?

LOUIS. One of you?

MONT. Yes, we sup to-night at my house—several friends will be there—Beauchamp, Favrolles, Château-Renaud.

LOUIS. (*quickly*) M. de Château-Renaud?

MONT. Do you know him?

LOUIS. By sight only—I have met him two or three times in the world—that's all.

MONT. He's a great favourite—his company's much courted—he is very skilful at most weapons—a man of fashion—a man of *bonne fortune*—though, between ourselves, he boasts of more than he really obtains.

LOUIS. (*eagerly*) You think so—do you?

MONT. Yes, I think he sometimes makes too free with the reputation of a woman.

LOUIS. (*aside*) If this were so!

MONT. Well, it's decided—you'll come—will you not?

LOUIS. A thousand thanks, my dear Montgiron; but, to my great regret, I cannot accept your invitation.

MONT. How! you cannot—

MAR. Why so, pray?

LOUIS. (*with embarrassment*) Because I expect some one here.

MONT. (*gaily*) Well, if you do, I believe it is pretty well under-

stood that everybody will have the privilege of bringing his *some one* with him. It is agreed that there shall be five or six carafes of water on the table, which will have no other destination than to hold fresh bouquets.

LOUIS. Yes, that's all pleasant and possible, but——

MONT. What more?

LOUIS. Well, if I must tell you, I do not feel myself in a state of mind to partake your pleasures.

MAR. I have observed your thoughtful, pre-occupied manner.

MONT. Are you suffering under any annoyance?

MAR. (*with interest*) Any sorrow?

LOUIS. Perhaps, yes.

MONT. Well, then, that's another reason for seeking to divert your thoughts. No doubt, it was with that view you came to the Opera.

LOUIS. You are deceived: I more probably came here to seek fresh sorrows.

MAR. My poor friend! I now understand; some coquette has made a sport of your love.

LOUIS. No! it concerns a poor woman I wish to save, who is bent on ruin.

MAR. And is it her you expect?

LOUIS. No! yesterday I received an anonymous letter, in which I was told that if I was curious to obtain certain information concerning the person of whom I was speaking, a friend (the world swarms with such friends)—a friend would communicate it to me, and they would give me a meeting at one o'clock, at the Opera, in the gallery of the foyer.

MONT. One o'clock! why it is past that now; this lady will not come, and in your place, my dear fellow, I would forget this adventure, and come to supper.

MAR. Montgiron is right—come with us.

MONT. There will be plenty of nonsense afloat, and that will cheer you.

LOUIS. No, gentlemen, no! a hundred thanks for your pressing kindness, but I must remain here.

MONT. Well, if so, it must be—say no more about it.

MAR. But this person must have furnished you with some sign or token by which you might recognise her?

LOUIS. Yes, she wrote that I should know her by a bouquet of myosotis, which she would hold in her hand.

MAR. A bouquet of myosotis!

MONT. (*observing a DOMINO with a bouquet of myosotis, who has just entered*) Well, look yonder, my dear Louis—that domino, is not that the one you expect?

LOUIS. These flowers are——

MONT. She appears to observe you—she is coming towards you.

DOM. (*who has approached LOUIS by degrees, touching his arm*) M. Louis del Franchi!

LOUIS. (*aside*) It is she! (*aside to DOMINO*) You wish to speak to me?

DOM. (*aside*) Of Emilie, yes—but there are too many people here. Offer me your arm.

LOUIS (*to MONTGIROU and MARTELLI*) I must leave you, my friends.

MAR. But you are not going to leave the ball yet—we shall see you again?

LOUIS. Yes, to-night, perhaps, or to-morrow. (*going off with DOMINO, R.*) Oh, kind heaven!—what am I about to learn?

MAR. (*looking after him*) Poor fellow! I am sadly afraid he is entangled in some very unpleasant affair.

MONT. (*laughing*) Bah! love's sorrows; we have all passed through them; he will be consoled in a very few days.

MAR. This woman with whom he seems so infatuated—do you know who she is?

MONT. No, truly. Devil take me if I had an idea he was in love. He is an impenetrable fellow—our friend, dei Franchi, there. He is not a bit like that boaster de Château-Renaud.

REN. (*who has just entered from L.U.E., coming forward*) Ha! did you speak?

MONT. (C.) Ah!—are you there?

REN. (L.C.) Yes—I was passing. Good evening to you, Montgiron.

MONT. Good evening! Are you amusing yourself here?

REN. For shame! For what do you take me? Does any one amuse himself at the Ball at the Opera? It is a pretext for supper, that is all. But your pardon—you were conversing with this gentleman—I interrupt you.

MONT. Not at all! besides, I was speaking of you.

REN. I know you were.

MONT. The deuce you do!

REN. That makes me think I may intrude.

MONT. Oh no!—stay where you are. (*to MARTELLI, presenting RENAUD*) Monsieur de Château-Renaud. (*to RENAUD*) The Baron de Giordano Martelli, Captain in the First Regiment of African Chasseurs. (*they bow*)

REN. (L.) Well now, gentlemen, what were you saying about me?

MONT. (C., *laughing*) No good. I promise you.

REN. I can very well suppose that—but still—

MONT. Well, I was repeating to Martelli what I had but a moment before said to another friend, Louis dei Franchi.

REN. Louis dei Franchi? Ah! that gentleman is here, is he?

MONT. I was saying you were accustomed to boast a little too lightly of your conquests—of those you did make, and even of those you did not.

REN. Ha, ha, ha! And à propos of which of my real conquests—or my imaginary ones—did you ground that opinion upon, my kind friend?

MONT. Why, à propos of all in general!

REN. The devil! Why, you know the proverb—"He who proves too much, proves nothing." Produce an example in proof!

MONT. An example?

REN. Aye, any single one.

MONT. Hang it! there's no difficulty in that—and without going far—

REN. Who?—let us hear!

MONT. Madame de Lesparre!

REN. Emilie de Lesparre?

MONT. (*ironically*) Yes, it is asserted—it is affirmed even—my irresistible friend, that during two months you have laid close siege to her, and that you have obtained from her much less than you seek to make the world believe.

REN. People say so, do they?—and who, pray?

MONT. Why, pretty nearly everybody.

REN. And you?

MONT. Oh! as for me, I am always in the habit of agreeing with the majority.

REN. Then you believe I am a coxcomb?

MONT. Why, as to that—

REN. That I am a boaster?

MONT. Why, faith—

MAR. Gentlemen, gentlemen!

REN. Don't be afraid, Sir, it will only come to a simple wager.

(*to MONTGIRON*) Now, are you willing to lay?

MONT. What?

REN. That I do not produce a proof.

MONT. A proof!—what kind of one?

REN. Any you may prefer. If, for instance, that lady be seen hanging on my arm this evening, at the ball?

MONT. Ah, ah!—is she at the Opera, then?

REN. (*carelessly*) Yes, I believe so, in a box; but whether she be here or not, does my proposition suit you?

MONT. No! that would be no proof; any woman may come to the ball at the Opera, and lean on the arm of a cavalier she is acquainted with, without such a circumstance having the least signification.

REN. Well, if I bring her to supper at your house, to-night?

MONT. Ah, that's quite another thing; but I defy you to do it!

REN. You challenge me to do it?

MONT. Yes.

REN. What will you lay?

MONT. Name your bet.

REN. A supper, within three days, for all your guests.

MONT. Be it so.

REN. And until what hour will you give me to win the wager?

MONT. Until four o'clock; at four o'clock precisely, if you are not there with Madame de Lesparre, you will have lost.

REN. That will do. Au revoir!

Exit CHATEAU-RENAUD, L.

MONT. Au revoir!

Excunt MONTGIRON and MARTELLI, up stage.

A Curtain descends—MUSIC—it rises, and discovers

SCENE II.—*An Avenue at the back of the Boxes—1st grooves.*

Enter CHATEAU-RENAUD, L.

REN. (L.) Ah! beautiful Emilie, during two months you encourage my love—you give me reason to entertain the most delightful

hopes—you begin with me the most delicious romance—then, one day, from caprice, or I know not what absurd scruple, it pleases you to close the book, and you believe that all is said. Now, this would be rather too good, for me, Château-Renaud, to be bantered, and sported with by a woman, like a green-horn or a scholar! No, no, my fair friend, I am piqued to the game; if you have your reputation to defend, I have mine to preserve, and I think I can manage so completely to compromise you, that you must finish by becoming mine. But hush, her box opens—there she is!

Enter EMILIE, R.H. she approaches him in a very agitated manner.

EMIL. (*aside*) He is alone—I may proceed!

REN. At last, you are here, Madame!

EMIL. You have insisted upon my coming, and I am come—at the risk of compromising myself—of ruining myself!

REN. What have you to fear? Under that domino—beneath that mask—who can possibly recognise you?

EMIL. Good heavens! how do I know? Calumnies are already cast upon me; and, if any of my friends or your friends should see me with you!—In short, I have performed the condition you imposed upon me—in your turn, you will keep your promise; those letters—you have brought them with you—have you not?

REN. Yes, they are here.

EMIL. And you will return them to me?

REN. Doubtless, since you require me to do so. But a moment, I entreat you—do me the favour to accept my arm.

EMIL. What? and remain in this place? Oh! be generous, restore me my letters—and let me go!

REN. Go? what! already—when this interview may, perhaps, be the last? No, no, that is impossible; you do not quit me thus—before you have heard me—before you have told me—

EMIL. What further do you desire me to say to you?

REN. Inform me, at least, of the cause of this sudden change—the reason of this coldness that desolates me. Why did you receive me kindly at first? why did you flatter me with such hopes? why, bless me with those charming letters that I considered as pledges of reciprocal love, and that you now so coldly require me to return?

EMIL. Yes, I feel I must appear to you capricious—a coquette—and yet, I am but unfortunate. United by my father to a man I scarcely knew; then separated from him before I had time to love him—left alone, without defence against the dangers of the world—my heart lent itself to the voice of seduction—I slid to the very verge of the precipice, and I was, perhaps, about to sink in it, when, happily, I received the warning of a friend.

REN. Of a friend?

EMIL. Yes—a letter opened my eyes, and recalled me to a sense of my duties. I had been imprudent—I was resolved I would not be guilty! That which appears coquetry, is rectitude,—that which you term caprice, I feel to be remorse.

REN. (*veiled*) And this officious, devoted friend—the author of this super-excellent measure—was, doubtless, Monsieur Louis dei Franchi?

EMIL. He, or another, of what importance can that be?

REN. Monsieur Louis, who, if I am rightly informed, knew you before your marriage! Monsieur Louis, who, since his arrival in Paris, has seen you often—who, very possibly, entertains secret hopes himself!

EMIL. He?

REN. Is he not an advocate? It is not the custom with that astute confraternity to give their consultations gratis.

EMIL. (*offended*) Monsieur!

REN. (*aside*) Is it likely I should hesitate, when not only my self-love and reputation are concerned, but when, by retiring, I give up the place to a rival?

EMIL. (*who looks towards the back*) Good heavens! the crowd is coming this way. Those letters!—I implore you!—those letters!

REN. Those letters? Well—yes—I will restore them to you—I will keep my word; but presently—this morning—and upon one condition.

EMIL. Ah!—you are selfish and cruel, Monsieur!

REN. Selfish? yes—if it is being selfish to wish to delay the moment of our separation. Cruel? certainly not—for that which I ask—

EMIL. Well—what?

REN. (*looking off*) I perceive some friends. Withdraw a little—in a moment I will rejoin you, and you shall know.

EMILIE *withdraws quickly*, R.H.—MONTGIRON, *who enters with MARTELLI*, L.H., *looks at her smilingly as she departs*.

MONT. (*laughing*) Ha, ha, ha! it seems my appearance frightens away the doves! (*coming up to RENAUD*) Well, my all-conquering hero, have you seen Madame de Lesparre?

REN. Perhaps I have.

LOUIS DEI FRANCHI *appears at the back, and listens*.

MONT. And does the wager still hold good?

REN. Faster than ever!

LOUIS. (*aside*) A wager?—what is it about?

REN. I will double it if you like.

MONT. Well, you don't want for assurance! To-night, then—

REN. This night, my good Amphitryon, Madame de Lesparre and I will have the honour of supping with you.

Exit CHATEAU-RENAUD, quickly, R.H.

LOUIS. (R.C.) (*aside*) Merciful heavens!

MAR. (*perceiving LOUIS*) Ah, Louis! well, this domino—has she told you all?

LOUIS. (C.) Oh, yes! I now know all I wish to know. (*to MONTGIRON*) My dear Montgiron, you just now kindly invited me to sup with you?

MONT. Yes, and you, as unkindly, refused to come.

LOUIS. That's true; but I have changed my mind.

MONT. Bah!—And now?

LOUIS. Now, I accept your invitation.

MONT. Bravo!

MAR. (*looking at LOUIS*) That's strange!

MONT. At three o'clock, then, gentlemen!

LOUIS. } At three o'clock!

MAR. }

*They depart in different directions—MARTELLI follows
LOUIS DEI FRANCHI.*

A Curtain descends—MUSIC—it is raised for

Second Tableau.

SCENE III.—*The House of MONTGIRON—A Bachelor's Salon, very elegantly furnished; entrance door at the back—Through a door-way placed on the left, another apartment is seen, in which there is a table richly covered—On the right a chimney-place, with a clock over it.*

Enter LOUIS, MARTELLI, and SERVANT, C. from L.

SERV. (*entering from the back, and introducing the TWO GENTLEMEN*) Have the kindness to walk in, gentlemen.

LOUIS. M. de Montgiron is not returned yet, then?

SERV. My master? no gentlemen, not yet.

MAR. We will wait, then.

SERV. You are invited to supper then, gentlemen?

MAR. Yes.

SERV. You are very near the time, gentlemen. The supper is ordered at three o'clock, and it only wants a few minutes.

MAR. Very well.

SERV. Perhaps, gentlemen, you do not require my attendance?

MAR. No, we will stay here—you may leave us.

SERV. (*bowing and retiring*) That is quite sufficient, gentlemen.

Exit c.

LOUIS has, in the meantime, seated himself, and appears absorbed in his own reflections—MARTELLI regards him, for some minutes, in silence—at length he approaches him, and takes his hand.

MAR. (C.) Louis, you are unhappy!—you have something on your mind!

LOUIS. (L.C.) I?

MAR. Yes, you. Whilst we were in the crowd, where other ears might hear you, I have put no questions to you; I have respected your silence. But here, we are alone, and you may confide your secret to me. You know that the sorrow we impart to a friend is half dissipated. Come, you do not doubt my discretion, or my good feeling?

LOUIS. (*holding out his hand*) No, Martelli, no!

MAR. Well, then, tell me what it is that pains you—that afflicts you. Love—is it not?

LOUIS. Yes, love—born beneath our beautiful Corsican sky!—the sweet and first hymn of a young heart, wafted to me by the soft southern breeze, and torn from me by the tempest!

MAR. Speak out, then; tell me all about it. (*he sits down near Louis*).

LOUIS. Listen, then, my friend. This woman, as I have told you, I first loved in our own country. At her departure from Ajaccio, knowing that she was going to Paris, I resolved to follow her thither. I quitted all—my country—my mother—my brother, so good, so generous, for he loved her likewise.

MAR. He loved her!

LOUIS. Who would not have loved her? In short, two months after, I arrived in Paris, full of hope, and enraptured with the thought that I should be near her again. Judge, then, of my despair, when I discovered that she was married!

MAR. Married?

LOUIS. Yes, married, and without love; and this I learned when I came to ask her hand.

MAR. Oh! I can fully enter into your bitter regrets, your grief! But this woman—have you seen her again?

LOUIS. To my misfortune, perhaps, yes—some time after, I met her by chance. I had been received at the house of her father, during her abode in Corsica, and was not, therefore, a stranger to her. She invited me to visit her. I ought to have avoided her—to have fled from her—but I had not the courage. I went to her house—there she introduced me to her husband—an old friend of her father's—captain of a frigate, frank and honest, believing all men incapable of a baseness, because he had never committed one. His reception of me affected me deeply. I resolved to be worthy of his confidence; I continued to frequent his house, determined to combat and subdue my passion—I fondly believed that a pure and holy friendship might take the place of love. But I soon perceived my mistake, and, too loyal to abuse the hospitality that had been so kindly offered, I discontinued my visits all at once. (*he rises*)

MAR. Right, very right, my dear friend.

LOUIS. Shortly after, I received a visit from the husband; he came to complain of my absence, of my indifference. I then frankly told him the truth, that is to say—that his wife was too seductive to allow me to expose myself to the danger of seeing her frequently. He smiled, and holding out his hand—"My dear Louis," said he, "in a few days I set out for Mexico; perhaps I shall be absent six months, perhaps a year, perhaps more; we sailors sometimes know the hour of our departure, never that of our return. My wife is young and beautiful: she is about to be deprived of her support, of her natural defender—I commit her to your charge during my absence, be her friend, her guardian angel, her brother."

MAR. Is it possible?

LOUIS. I remained stupefied, and in my confusion and agitation, I

promised. A week after that, the captain sailed. From that time the perilous task that had been confided to me began; but the thought that I might be serviceable to her I loved; the protection which, in the place of love, I might afford her; the idea that though it was not permitted me to worship the idol, I might preserve its purity—all this gave me strength and courage. I have no occasion to tell you, I am sure, that whilst loving her more than a brother ought, I never considered her as anything but a sister.

MAR. What follows—what follows?

LOUIS. (*reseating himself*) She lived very retired; except myself and a few intimate friends, nobody frequented her house—when one day somebody introduced Monsieur de Château-Renaud to her.

MAR. (*much surprised*) Monsieur de Château-Renaud!

LOUIS. What do you mean?

MAR. Nothing, nothing—go on.

LOUIS. You have faith in presentiments, have you not? At the sight of him I started. He did not address a word to me. He was all that a man of the world ought to be in a drawing-room; and yet, when he went away, I felt that I hated him.

MAR. (*rising*) Yes, I do not doubt it. I perceived that there was, between you and that man, one of those mysterious relations of which a woman is the conductor. She whom you love is named Madame de Lesparre?

LOUIS. What! you know? Yes, yes—it is she—it is Emilie!

MAR. Then I can guess the rest. Monsieur de Château-Renaud pleased her: deeply skilled in the arts of seduction, he spared no pains to make himself beloved.

LOUIS. (*rising, and going up to MARTELLI*) Yes, and it soon appeared to me that I was not the only one to perceive the preference she accorded him. My part was at once taken; and I resolved to speak of it to Emilie, convinced as I was, that there was, as yet, nothing on her side but thoughtlessness. But, to my perfect astonishment, Emilie took my observations as a jest, pretending that I was silly, and that all who shared my opinion were as silly as I was. From that time, you may easily conceive my part became ridiculous—almost hateful. I absented myself from her house. I sought, in study, forgetfulness of the thoughts that devoured me. Vain hope!—the thoughts that had assailed me in the world, came to seek me in my solitude. I was desirous of making one last and great effort. I wrote to Emilie, to endeavour to recall her to her duties—to warn her of the gulf into which she was about to fall—conjuring her, if it were still time, to stop on that fatal declivity. I received no answer; I thence concluded that the evil was beyond remedy, and that Emilie was the mistress of Monsieur de Château-Renaud. What shall I say to you? A profound sorrow took possession of me—a sorrow that was further augmented by the reflection, that by suffering here, I caused my poor brother to suffer at home. Yesterday, in consequence of the fatality that seems to pursue me, I went to the Opera, and there, after learning from the unknown person whom I went to meet, that Emilie was at the ball, I was witness to that disgraceful wager that so irretrievably dishonours her! (*he lifts his hand to his eyes*)

MAR. (*after a moment's silence*) My dear friend, will you permit me to offer you some earnest advice?

LOUIS. Speak!

MAR. Believe me, you had better not be present at this supper.

LOUIS. Go away!—what, I?

MAR. Yes, it would indeed be better.

LOUIS. Possibly it would, and I feel that you are right; but do we always do that which we ought to do? I admit that I ought to despise this woman—I confess that I do wrong in remaining—and yet I must remain. (*he sits down, L.*)

MAR. You will remain?

LOUIS. Yes—that's fixed. I will, if she should come, be here to confound her—to force her to blush—that will be her punishment—that will be my revenge.

MAR. (*going up to him*) Well—be it so! but I must request calmness—courage. It is evident that if she comes to sup at the house of a man she does not know, and with people she knows no better than him, she must be a coquette!—and a coquette is not worthy of the love of a man of honour.

LOUIS. That's all true—all true—and yet—(*boisterous LAUGHING without.*)

MAR. Silence!—they are coming.

Enter MONTGIRON, three other young MEN, ESTELLE, CELESTINE, CORALIE, and another GIRL, in character dresses and masks, c. from L.

MONT. This way, ladies and gentlemen, this way.

EST. (R.C.) Ah! here we are at last! And this is your house, is it, Montgiron? (*looking about her*) Not amiss for a bachelor!

CEL. (R., *flopping into a spring chair*) Criminy! how scrumptious! Flowers on the stands—satin on the fauteuils—plush on the servants!

EST. Ah! all right; there's nobody here to be particular with—we may take off our masks.

MONT. Certainly.

EST. Now, ladies, you hear—off with the masks!

THE OTHER FEMALES. Off with the masks!

They take off their masks, place their bouquets, and arrange their toilets—in the meantime MONTGIRON approaches LOUIS and MARTELLI.

MONT. Ah! gentlemen, are you here? Your pardon for keeping you waiting; but you know a quarter of an hour's grace is always allowed.

MAR. To be sure, my good fellow, that is but fair.

MONT. (*presenting the young men*) Monsieur Beauchamp, Monsieur Favrolles. (*they bow*) As to these ladies —

EST. Bah! there's no occasion to introduce us, they know us.

MONT. (*laughing*) Very advantageously, my charmer!

CEL. We flatter ourselves they do.

LOUIS. (L., *aside*) Is it among such women as these he will dare to bring?—

EST. Well, now all the introductions are made, the best thing we can do is to adjourn to the table ; I am so hungry !

The other WOMEN. And so am I !

MONT. Your pardon, my dear Estelle, but I must entreat you and my other guests to be so good as to have a little patience.

CEL. I would rather have some cold chicken.

EST. Stay !—what for ? Was not three fixed upon as the hour for supper ?—Is not the champagne iced ?

MONT. Yes, that's ready ; but there is a little change—

EST. Not a supper missing, I hope ?

MONT. No, no ! be satisfied of that ; only I request your indulgence till four o'clock.

EST. and
WOMEN. } Oh, good Lord !

MONT. And to take the sharp edge off appetites that are too keen, as I came in, I ordered François to bring up some madeira.

EST. Let us see the madeira—I will moisten a biscuit.

FRANÇOIS enters with a plateau, which he places on a guéridon.

MONT. Now, ladies—now, gentlemen !

All gather round the guéridon, with the exception of LOUIS, who remains in front.

CEL. *(after having drank)* You expect some one else, I suppose ?

MONT. Yes !

EST. And pray who is this some one that is so behind time ?

MONT. Château-Renaud.

ALL THE WOMEN. Château-Renaud !

MONT. I promised to give him till four o'clock, and as a wager is at stake—

SOME OF THE PARTY. A wager ?

MONT. Yes, I have laid him a wager of a supper for a dozen persons, that he would not be able to bring with him a certain lady, whom he said he could bring.

LOUIS. *(aside)* Heavens, what torment !

EST. And pray who is this beauty whose virtue is so immaculate, that such wagers are laid about her ?

LOUIS. *(becomes very attentive)*

CEL. Some prude or other—some Joan of Arc.

MONT. Faith ! I don't see any great indiscretion in naming the mask—it is Madame—

LOUIS *(rises, and places his hand upon the arm of MONTGIRON)* Montgiron, in the name of our friendship, grant me a favour !

MONT. A favour, my friend ?—of what kind ?

LOUIS. Do not name the person who is to come with Monsieur Château-Renaud.

MONT. And why not ?

LOUIS. You know she is a married woman.

COR. (*laughing*) A married woman?—well, that's more droll still!

MONT. Yes, but whose husband is at Smyrna, in the Indies, at Mexico, or the lord knows where.

CEL. (*laughing*) Poor thing! I pity her!

ALL. (*laugh*) Ha, ha, ha!

MONT. When a woman's husband is so far off, you know, it is just the same as if she had not one at all.

ALL. (*laugh loudly*) Ha, ha, ha!

LOUIS. (*seriously*) Her husband will return in a few days. I know him,—he is a man of honour—worthy of the respect of every one; and I should wish, if possible, to spare him the grief of learning, on his return, that his wife had committed such a folly.

MONT. Pardon me, my dear friend; I was not aware you knew this lady—I even doubted whether she were married or not: but, since you know her—know her husband—

LOUIS. I know them both.

MONT. We will exercise the greatest discretion. Gentlemen and ladies, whether Château-Renaud comes or does not come—whether he comes alone or accompanied—whether he wins or loses his wager—I require, from all of you, implicit secrecy regarding this adventure.

ALL. Certainly, certainly—we all promise.

EST. For my part, I swear it.

LOUIS. (*holding out his hand to MONTGIRON*) Thanks, Montgiron—thanks! I assure you, you have just performed the act of a man of honour.

CEL. Did not you say Monsieur Château-Renaud was allowed till four o'clock? I advise him to make haste, for it does not want more than ten minutes.

LOUIS. (*looking at the clock*) Are you right?

MONT. (*laughing*) Faith! that does not concern me,—that's Château-Renaud's business; I sent to regulate my clock by his watch, in order that there might be no mistake for him to complain of.

EST. Well, my opinion is, that as we cannot speak openly about Château-Renaud and his unknown beauty, we had better say nothing about them at all—for we shall only fall into enigmas, rebuses, charades—and that would not be at all amusing.

MONT. Estelle is right; there are so many women who are neither enigmas nor charades, of whom we may speak, and who wish for nothing better than that we should speak of them.

EST. (*raising her glass*) To the health of all such!

OMNES. (*except LOUIS*) Yes, yes, to their health!

MAR. (*aside to LOUIS*) Come, drink, you see plainly he will not come.

LOUIS. (*constantly looking at the clock*) It wants five minutes to four, yet.

MAR. Never mind, the chances are in your favour.

LOUIS. (*aside, and smiling*) At four o'clock, my friend; however behind I may be, I promise you I will soon overtake the rest.

MAR. (*withdrawing a little, and aside*) Poor Louis!

LOUIS. (*with his eyes fixed on the clock, whilst the other persons drink round the guéridon—aside*) How slowly that hand advances! who could guess, whilst watching its impassible course, that my life and my hopes depended upon it. Oh, Heaven—oh, Heaven! will the hour I expect, that I anxiously hope for, never strike? (*a moment of silence—the first chime of the clock, striking four, is heard*) Ah!

ALL. Ah!

MAR. (*with animation, to LOUIS*) To your health!

LOUIS takes a glass, and is about to lift it to his mouth, the clock continues to strike—at the fourth chime, a loud ringing is heard from the bell in the Ante-chamber.

LOUIS. (*putting down his glass, and starting*) It is he!

MAR. Yes! but perhaps it is not she.

MONT. (*springing towards the door at the back*) We will soon see. (*he disappears for a moment, and all eyes are turned with great curiosity towards the back*)

LOUIS. (L., *seizing the arm of MARTELLI*) My friend, I think I heard her voice.

MAR. (L.C.) (*aside*) Remember, you promised me coolness and courage.

MONT. (*without*) I beg, Madame, you will come in, I assure you, we are but a friendly party.

REN. (*without*) Yes; come, come, my dear Emilie, you need not unmask, unless you please.

LOUIS. (*aside*) Scoundrel!

Enter MONTGIRON, EMILIE, and CHATEAU-RENAUD C. from L.

EMIL. (*who reluctantly enters, led by MONTGIRON*) Monsieur, Monsieur, I entreat you—

REN. (*appearing at the back*) Four o'clock was striking, gentlemen, as I came in.

MONT. Well, my dear fellow, you have won—that's all.

EMIL. (C., *drawing herself up to her full length*) Not yet, Monsieur; for I now understand why you so earnestly insisted on my coming. You have laid a wager that you would bring me here to supper—have you not?

REN. (R.C.) But—

EMIL. Since this man will not answer me—you, Sir, answer me. Did not Monsieur de Château-Renaud lay a wager with you that he would bring me to sup at your house?

MONT. (L.C.) I cannot deny, Madame, that M. de Château-Renaud flattered me with that hope.

EMIL. Well, then, M. de Château-Renaud has lost.

ALL. What does she say?

EMIL. Yes, lost; because I was ignorant whither I was going—because, in order to induce me to come, he employed trick and falsehood. He made me believe he was conducting me to the house of a lady who is my friend.

ALL. Is it possible?

EMIL. (*taking off her mask*) Oh, I may unmask now! I do not fear to speak with an uncovered face; for if any one has reason to blush here, I am sure it is not I.

REN. Madame!

EMIL. Now, as I said, since I did not come here willingly, in my opinion M. de Château-Renaud ought to lose his wager.

REN. But, at least, now you are here, my dear lady, you will stay, will you not? See, we have a pleasant company of men, and a joyous company of women.

EMIL. Now that I am here, I will thank the gentleman who appears to be master of the house, for the welcome he was willing to offer me; but as I cannot accept of his polite invitation, I will request M. Louis dei Franchi, my friend, to favour me with his arm, and conduct me to my own home.

LOUIS. (*springing towards her*) Oh, I am perfectly at your command, Madame.

EST. (*to RENAUD.*) You are done, my dear—regularly diddled!

REN. (*with concentrated passion*) Your pardon, but I would wish you to observe, Madame, that as it was I who brought you here, consequently it is I who must conduct you hence.

EMIL. Gentlemen, you are here five men; I place myself under the safe-guard of your honour; you will, I hope, prevent M. Château-Renaud from offering me any violence. (*LOUIS places himself between her and CHATEAU-RENAUD.*)

REN. (*after having repressed a movement of violence, very calm*) It is well, Madame—you are perfectly free—I know to whom I have to look.

LOUIS. (*coolly*) If you mean me, Sir, you will find me at home to-morrow during the whole day.

REN. Enough, Sir; perhaps I shall not have the honour of waiting on you in person; but on my part and in my place, I hope you will be willing to receive two of my friends.

EMIL. A duel?

ALL. Gentlemen! gentlemen!

LOUIS. (*with disdain*) You ought to be ashamed to make such an appointment before a woman! (*offering his arm to EMILIE*) Come, Madame, and believe that my every drop of blood would not be too much for the honour you do me, or the happiness I feel.

EMILIA takes his arm, they go up, bow to the company, and Exit c.

MAR. A duel! that was what I feared!

SERVANT (*entering*) Supper is ready, gentlemen.

REN. To table, then!

ALL. To table!—to table!

MAR. (*aside, going to procure his hat*) As for me, I shall not remain here!

REN. (*with an air of forced gaiety*) Well, gentlemen, I have lost!

that's all! The day after to-morrow, all that are here, at the Frères Provençaux.

The rest move towards the room where the supper is prepared, and MARTELLI goes off at the back.

Curtain descends.

MUSIC—*Curtain rises, and discovers*

Third Tableau.

A clearing in the Forest of Fontainebleau.—LOUIS DEI FRANCHI on the ground R.C., wounded, attended by his seconds, MONTGIRON and MARTELLI; a SURGEON is near him, and examines 'is wound—in the centre of the stage is CHATEAU-RENAUD, wiping his sword; two other SECONDS are near him. It is an exact reproduction of the TABLEAU that terminated the First Act.

MAR. (to the SURGEON) Well, doctor?

SURGEON. The sword has passed through the lungs—the state of the wound leaves me no hope.

MONT. (with great emotion) Oh, Heaven! what an unfortunate affair!

MAR. (looking at his watch, and aside) Ten minutes past nine; my poor friend! he told me correctly.

LOUIS. (coming to himself) Montgiron, Martelli, where are you?

MAR. Here, close to you.

MONT. (leaning over him) My dear friend, have you any desire, any wish to express? Will you not entrust to me the care of informing your family?

LOUIS. That will be useless; they will know all.

MONT. When?

LOUIS. This evening.

MONT. And who will inform them of it?

LOUIS. I will!

He sinks back exhausted—general astonishment—During the utterance of these last words, the bottom of the stage opens slowly—the Chamber of the First Act is discovered, the clock marking the hour, ten minutes after nine; MADAME DEI FRANCHI and FABIEN looking exactly as they did at the end of the First Act.

FAB. (to his mother, who is on her knees) Pray for Louis, my mother—for me!—I go to avenge him!

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

Act III.

The clearing of the Forest of Fontainebleau, where LOUIS was killed.

BOISSEC discovered, *raising faggots, and singing.*

BOIS. (*sings*) Above, below, and round the rock,
A maiden wandered with her flock,
Lon, lon, la!
A maiden wandered with her flock,
Lon, lon, la!

She sang aloud, she murmured low
But all her song was of her woe;
Lon, lon, la!
But all her song was of her woe;
Lon, lon, la!

The King's young son he heard this maid——

The noise of a Post-Chaise on the road, is heard at a distance.

BOISSEC pauses in his work, and looks through the trees, R.U.E.

—Clic! clac! Go along! There's a pretty dust they kick up! Don't they go a pace! Oh! these rich folks, how happy they are, to roll along like that! But what the dickens is the postilion about! He has driven them smack over a heap of stones! The chap must have had a cup this morning! (*crying out*) Hilloa! take care, stupid! Why, you can't see clear; you've made up your mind to upset 'em. (*crash as of the chaise being overturned*) Crash they go—just as I said! Good night to the company! there they lie—all on the ground together! That sarves 'em right, what do they travel in a chaise for? (*still looking, whilst he is filling his pipe*) Hem! hem! two gentlemen, that was in the *what-d'ye-call-it*? Now they're up, and shaking themselves—they look about to the right and left—aye, they want somebody, I dare say, to help them get up their carriage again. I've often put myself out of the way to help people on the road; but I never got anything for it. Good! I think they see me—they certainly see me—oh lord! yes! they make signs to me—yes, yes, you may call—go on! (*he resumes his work, and sings.*)

The King's young son he heard this maid;

“And who is that fair girl?” he said.

Lon, lon, la!

“And who is that sweet girl?” he said.

Lon, lon, la!

Enter CHATEAU-RENAUD and MONTGIRON, from the back,
R.U.E.

REN. (C.) Hilloa, my brave fellow!

BOIS. (L.C.) (*aside, and without noticing them*) Good! here they are! They sometimes stand in need of their neighbours, these rich folks.

(*sings*) "Who is that fair girl?" he said;

Lon, lon, la!

"Who is 'at——"

REN. (*slapping him on the shoulder*) Well, friend! do you hear me? or don't you choose to hear me?

BOIS. (*turning half round*) D'd you speak to me, Sir?

REN. To be sure I did!—to whom else, do you think?

BOIS. Beg pardon—it's 'cause I'm busy. (*chopping, & humming*)

The king's young son said to the fair—

"What, my love, are you doing there?"

Lon, lon, la!

REN. (*impatiently*) Come, listen to me—do you hear?

MONT. (*coming up*) Besides, if we do interrupt you in your work, friend, be satisfied it shall not be for nothing; we will make you amends for lost time.

BOIS. (*taking his pipe out of his mouth, and bowing*) Oh! that makes all the difference! What can I do to serve you, gentlemen?

MONT. The axletree of our carriage is broken.

BOIS. Yes, I know; I saw your carriage,—old Father Anthony had made a yow he'd upset you.

MONT. (*dusting himself with his handkerchief*) Who the deuce is Father Anthony?

BOIS. That's your postilion. But now, let's see—what do you want?

MONT. Is there a wheelwright at Fontainebleau?

BOIS. I believe there is, too, and a famous one!—he is my cousin. Oh! he was born to be a coach-maker at Paris!—but there's no justice in this world.

MONT. Very well; will you undertake to fetch him and his tools?

BOIS. Lord—to be sure I will! But how much will you give me for the job?

MONT. Ten francs—set off!

BOIS. (*eagerly*) Ten francs?—I'll run all the way!

MONT. Make haste, then—we are in a hurry!

BOIS. I'll bring him back in no time. (*he goes a few steps and returns*) Now I think of it, gentlemen, you haven't put any of your joints out, or broken any of your limbs, in your tumble, have you?

MONT. No, I thank you.

BOIS. Ah! because my cousin is a little bit of a surgeon, a veterinary doctor, a bone-setter; and at the same time that he repaired your carriage, he could have set an arm or a leg for you.

MONT. No, fortunately, we have broken nothing.

BOIS. All the better. I'm off. (*pretends to go*)

MONT. Go, then, and make haste. (*seeing him return*) Well, what the devil is it now?

BOIS. I only thought—overturning generally makes people thirsty; you wouldn't like to take anything, would you?—you don't want to refresh, do you?

MONT. (*impatient*) No, you stupid animal, begone, I say!

BOIS. Ah! I only named it, 'cause my cousin keeps a liquor shop.

MONT. Will you go, or will you not? (*pushing him off*)

BOIS. (*going*) Don't be impatient, I'll soon be back.

Exit R.U.E.

MONT. (*going up to CHATEAU-RENAUD, who, during this dialogue, has seated himself upon a fallen tree, L.C., and supports his head with his hand*) Well, what is it now, Château-Renaud?

REN. There is this, my dear Montgiron, that if I were superstitious I would think of it twice, before I resumed my journey.

MONT. In good truth, this journey begins unpropitiously.

REN. Upon my life, my friend, I think we should have done better to have remained in Paris.

MONT. Oh, as to remaining in Paris, that's another affair. I have already made you my profession of faith on that head. Remain, if you please; for my part, I go. The news of your duel with Louis, in spite of all the care we took to stifle the affair, got wind, and we have had the honour to be the subject of a very particular conversation between the King's Procureur General and the Minister of Justice.

REN. (*walking about uneasily*) Yes, I know that, you told me so before; but of what consequence is it?

MONT. Why, you'll please to remember, there is no such thing as joking with these gentlemen of the bench. For some time past they have been looking out for an opportunity of making an example; and as unfortunately this is not your first affair of the kind, they will be delighted to begin with you.

REN. Mon Dieu! and all on account of two or three unfortunate rencontres!

MONT. I don't think that you have any more inclination than I have to figure in a court of justice. People get acquitted, it is true, but they get shut up in prison for three months, which is not at all amusing—without reckoning that you are, moreover, threatened with another annoyance.

REN. What's that?

MONT. You know that Louis dei Franchi has a brother.

REN. Yes! well—and then?

MONT. This brother is a true Corsican, imbued with all the prejudices of his country. Who knows but that when he hears of the death of his brother, he will not make every effort to find you, and avenge him?

REN. Is it any reason, because I have fought with M. Louis dei Franchi, that I should be obliged to fight with all his family?

MONT. In France, no; in Corsica, yes. In short, Château Renaud, I believe it is much more prudent to absent ourselves for a few months; we will make a tour through Switzerland, or the South of France—

we will go wherever you like ; but we must, by our absence, allow time for this deplorable affair to blow over.

REN. Well, be it so, since you wish it, and as it is determined, don't let us alter the programme. I do not know what it is urges me on—whither, or to what I know not ; but perhaps to something fatal.

MONT. (*laughing*) Ha, ha, ha ! What ! you too, Château Renaud ! Château Renaud become a fatalist !

REN. It is absurd, I know ! but how can I help it ?—it is so. I have seen the most firm minds agitated by a broken glass, or a howling dog. And I have laughed at such superstition, without dreaming that in my turn—

MONT. Well, in your turn ?

REN. Observe ! is it not extraordinary that this carriage should be overturned, and in what a place, on the high road ?

MONT. Well, all that only amounts to this—the postilion was drunk !

REN. My friend, the carriage was not overturned because the postilion was drunk. No, the postilion was drunk that the carriage might be overturned.

MONT. Nonsense ! you are getting childish !

REN. (*following up his idea*) And in what place to be overturned ? In the forest of Fontainebleau—in that forest where five days ago— (*looking round him and with terror*) Look ! look !

MONT. At what ?

REN. Look ! I say !—see !

MONT. What the devil is the matter with you ?

REN. How !—don't you recognise it ?—don't you recognise the spot where we are !—this clearing !—that road !—this tree !

MONT. (*looking round*) Stop a bit !—yes, by Jove ! it is the very same spot, where five days ago, and almost at the same hour—

REN. What do you say ?—what !

MONT. (*more serious*) In fact, it is most extraordinary !

REN. You admit it then ?

MONT. I confess that chance—

REN. Chance !—Oh ! there is more than chance in this, Montgiron ! There is fatality !—there is the hand of Heaven, perhaps !

MONT. Calm yourself, I hear somebody coming. (*laughing to the back*) Ah ! it is our man !

Enter BOISSEC, R.U.E.

BOIS. Pugh ! pugh ! here I am ! and a pretty good run I have had of it !

MONT. Well ; where is the wheel-wright ?

BOIS. My cousin ? He is hard at work at your carriage—look ! you may see him yonder.

MONT. That's well ! Here is what I promised you. (*giving money*)

BOIS. Thank you, gentlemen !

MONT. Now, you can resume your work.

BOIS. Work ! no, I thank you—when I have made a good day's work I always feel that I deserve to enjoy myself a little at the cabaret.

(*the sound of a carriage is heard*). Dash it! here comes another post-chaise; now if that too should be overturned! Servant, gentlemen! pleasant journey!

He takes up his hatchet, lifts his faggots on his shoulder, singing.

"What are you doing there, fair maid?"

Lon, lon, la!

"What are you doing there, fair maid?"

Lon, lon, la!

Exit at back.

REN. (*agitated*) Come, my friend. come—let us go!

MONT. Whither?

REN. Whither you please, dear Montgiron—but let us not remain here. I require exercise to rouse me: I wish to be out of this wood. The sight of this clearing recalls remembrances I am anxious to efface; it appears as if everything wore a funereal aspect—a solemn voice! It appears to me that the spectre of Louis dei Franchi is about to issue from amongst those trees!—it appears to me—

MONT. What madness!

REN. (*L.*) I am mad, possibly, but so it is—as I say— Let us go, Montgiron—let us go! (*going up*)

Enter FABIEN R.U.J., in a cloak.

—(*sees FABIEN*) Ah!

FAB. (*at the back, c.*) Stay!

MONT. (*R.*) (*aside, with much emotion*) Great heaven!

REN. (*with terror, to FABIEN*) What is your will?

FAB. Can you not guess, Monsieur de Château-Renaud?

REN. Louis dei Franchi!!

FAB. Not Louis—but Fabien, his brother!

REN. His brother?

MONT. (*aside*) Ah! this is exactly what I feared would happen!

FAB. (*with calm but terrible sternness, advancing towards CHATEAU-RENAUD, who retreats from him*) Is not the resemblance between us great, gentlemen?—so great, that, on seeing me appear, you asked yourselves if it was not the spectre of Louis coming out from the grave? No, gentlemen, I am not a spectre! I am a man—a man who, five days since, was at the other extremity of Corsica, and who, learning he had lost a dearly beloved brother, is come to demand of you—of you, Monsieur de Château-Renaud—What have you done with my brother?

REN. (*with a sort of arrogance*) I?—

FAB. Oh, yes! the answer of the first murderer, is it not? "You have not committed him to *my* care." Well, then, I will tell you what you have done. In the first place, you have destroyed his repose—you have saddened the pleasures of his life—you have endeavoured to ruin a woman, over whose honour he made it his happiness to watch: then, one day, when, by a falsehood, you had contrived to draw this woman into a snare, after having cast your defiance in the face of her defender, taking advantage of your skill as a swordsman,

you have assassinated him! (*the two Young Men appear much excited*) Assassinated!—I repeat the word; for when a man of superior skill forces another, who is not his equal with the weapon, to a duel, he does not kill—he *murders* him! That is what you have done with my brother, Monsieur!

MONT. Your pardon, Sir, but I am at a loss to comprehend: at the period of this fatal event, five days ago, you were in Corsica, you yourself have just said so. How, then, can you possibly have obtained these sad details so quickly?

FAB. You forget the *vallad* of Burger, Monsieur—"The dead travel fast."

MONT. Oh, Monsieur, you do not believe us so credulous, I suppose, as to expect to frighten us, like children, with ghost stories?

FAB. (*coldly*) On the very evening of the death of Louis dei Franchi, I was informed of everything—of the quarrel, the duel, the name of the assassin. Not only was I informed of all, but saw all. I immediately set out: five days have sufficed for a journey of two hundred and eighty leagues. Arrived last night only, I this morning presented myself at your house—you had just got into a post-chaise. I learnt the road you had taken, and followed you. At a distance I saw a carriage overturned on the high road, and I said—Heaven has stopped them!

REN. (*with resolution*) Well, Sir, and what is your will with me?

FAB. What is my will? A Corsican family is the ancient hydra, one of whose heads has no sooner been cut off, than there springs forth another, which bites and tears in the place of the one that has been severed from the trunk. What is my will, Sir?—my will is to kill him who has killed my brother!

REN. You are determined to kill me, Sir!—how?

FAB. Oh, be satisfied!—not from behind a wall, not through a hedge, as is the mode in my country, as is the practice there; but as it is done here, à la mode Française, with a frilled shirt, and with white gloves—and you see, Sir, I am in fighting costume. (*throwing open his cloak, &c.*)

REN. Well, be it so, Sir! my most earnest desire was to avoid this meeting, and as you see, I was flying from it. But since you require it, since you come to cross my path, since you come to seek for evil, evil be upon you!

MONT. An instant, gentlemen, an instant. The custom of France is not to make a duel a family inheritance. The misfortune that has already occurred is quite enough, and I oppose with all my power—

FAB. You did not oppose the cause, and you desire to oppose the effect!—you have no right, Monsieur de Montevirou. Leave me, then, to settle this affair with Monsieur Château-Renaud.

MONT. Say what you will, Sir, but I will not suffer—

FAB. Monsieur de Château-Renaud—notwithstanding my right—notwithstanding my hopes—notwithstanding the quality I have allowed him, for want of any other, of a swordsman—will M. de Château-Renaud refuse me the satisfaction I require, in the name of the blood shed by him?

REN. Sir, I have given no man the right to doubt my courage,

whatever it may be, or from whatever source I derive it—and you shall not have that advantage over others. I place myself entirely at your command—but upon one condition.

FAB. I fancied I had the right to name the conditions—but, no matter, speak!

REN. It is that this combat shall be the last—that after you, there shall not come some other brother, or some other cousin—that after you I shall be left in quiet.

FAB. This combat will be the last—I am the only brother of Louis, and after me—after me—Monsieur de Château-Renaud—it is I who tell you so—you will be at rest.

REN. Enough. Name your hour, arms, and place.

FAB. The hour? I have sworn I should be that in which I should meet you. The arms? it was with the sword you fought my brother, and we will fight with the sword. The place? that where we now are.

REN. This place?

FAB. Did you not choose it, yourself, five days ago? Was it not here that you fought with my brother? Was it not at the foot of that tree that he fell? and if I were to seek closely, if you would dare to seek with me, should we not still find traces of his blood?

REN. (*with resolution*) Well, then, since it must be so—since you will have it so—here, with the sword, and at this very instant. (*throws off his coat*) You are right—better terminate it at once!

MONT. (*passing between them*) Gentlemen, gentlemen, this duel is impossible—at the present, at least; you have but one second, and no arms.

FAB. You are deceived, Sir! We Corsicans—we men of vengeance, as we are called—we never allow ourselves to be found unprovided; and I have brought everything with me that is necessary. (*calling at the back*) Come, Meynard!

Enter ALFRED MEYNARD, in cloak, and carrying two swords, R.U.E.

FAB. Here is my second—there are the weapons.

MONT. (*going up to ALFRED*) Ah! is that you, Meynard?—so much the better! Say, my dear Sir, are there no means?—

FAB. (*who takes his coat and waistcoat off*) Quite useless, Monsieur de Montgiroz. Monsieur de Meynard knows what he has to do.

REN. (*who has removed his waistcoat*) Your pardon, Sir, I am ready!

FAB. Meynard, request Monsieur de Château-Renaud to choose which sword suits him best.

ALF. (*presenting the swords to CHATEAU-RENAUD*) Choose!

REN. (*who has taken a sword*) Guard, Sir!

CLOCK STRIKES NINE, at a distance.

FAB. (*coldly to CHATEAU-RENAUD*) If you have any recommendation to make, Sir—make it!

REN. Why, Sir?

FAB. Because—as there is an all-seeing eye now looking down upon

us, in ten minutes you will be lying there—in the place where my brother laid. (R.C.)

REN. (L.C.) Oh, no boasting, Sir!

FAB. (R., *very calm*) I appeal to these gentlemen—have I the air of a braggart?

First combat of several minutes, in which CHATEAU-RENAUD exerts himself to kill or wound FABIEN, but is foiled by his coolness and skill.

FAB. Rest a little, Sir, you are fatigued.

REN. (to MONTGIRON) This man has a wrist of iron! (after a moment or two) When you are ready, Sir!

FAB. I am always ready.

Second combat, in which the sword of CHATEAU-RENAUD is broken.

MONT. (*springing forward*) Gentlemen, gentlemen, this combat must not be continued; M. Château-Renaud's sword is broken—the weapons are not equal.

FAB. You are mistaken, Sir. (*breaking his sword beneath his heel*) They are so now. (to CHATEAU-RENAUD, *pointing to the broken blade*) Pick up that blade, Sir, and let us go on.

MONT. Implacable!

FAB. As destiny! (*he directs ALFRED how to tie the broken blade to his wrist with his handkerchief*)

REN. (to MONTGIRON, *whilst the latter is fastening the sword point to his wrist, in the same manner as the other*) I shall be killed, Montgiron! You will set out alone! Within a week, you will write to my mother, that I have fallen from my horse—In a fortnight you will write to her that I am dead! If she were to learn the fatal news all at once, it would kill her.

MONT. (L.) You are mad, Château-Renaud!

REN. (L.C.) I speak the truth, as you will see, Montgiron!

ALF. Gentlemen!

A violent bodily contest—CHATEAU-RENAUD throws FABIEN, but, at the moment in which he raises his arm to strike him, FABIEN plunges his weapon into his heart.

REN. (*falling back close to the tree near which LOUIS fell*) Ah! What did I tell you, Montgiron? (*Dies.*)

FAB. (*rising*) My mother! I have kept my word with you!—Louis! Louis!—I can weep for him now! (*passes behind a tree, L., up stage; then advances, with face covered by his hands, and sinks, weeping, upon the fallen tree, L.C.*)—(a pause)

LOUIS. (*rising from R.C., and gliding to L.C., placing his hand on the shoulder of FABIEN*) Why weep for me, my brother!—shall we not meet above?

FABIEN falls on his knees, with his face to the Figure.

Curtain descends.