Why, yes, the abbÃ© runs a chance of being wet, said the other; and then there was a burst of brutal laughter.
DantÃs did not comprehend the jest, but his hair stood erect on his head.
Well, here we are at last, said one of them.
A little farther”a little farther, said the other. You know very well that the last was stopped on his way, dashed on the rocks, and the governor told us next day that we were careless fellows.
They ascended five or six more steps, and then DantÃs felt that they took him, one by the head and the other by the heels, and swung him to and fro.
One! said the grave-diggers, two! three!
And at the same instant DantÃs felt himself flung into the air like a wounded bird, falling, falling, with a rapidity that made his blood curdle. Although drawn downwards by the heavy weight which hastened his rapid descent, it seemed to him as if the fall lasted for a century. At last, with a horrible splash, he darted like an arrow into the ice-cold water, and as he did so he uttered a shrill cry, stifled in a moment by his immersion beneath the waves.
DantÃs had been flung into the sea, and was dragged into its depths by a thirty-six-pound shot tied to his feet.
The sea is the cemetery of the ChÃ¢teau dIf.
0267m
Chapter 21. The Island of Tiboulen
DantÃs, although stunned and almost suffocated, had sufficient presence of mind to hold his breath, and as his right hand (prepared as he was for every chance) held his knife open, he rapidly ripped up the sack, extricated his arm, and then his body; but in spite of all his efforts to free himself from the shot, he felt it dragging him down still lower. He then bent his body, and by a desperate effort severed the cord that bound his legs, at the moment when it seemed as if he were actually strangled. With a mighty leap he rose to the surface of the sea, while the shot dragged down to the depths the sack that had so nearly become his shroud.
DantÃs waited only to get breath, and then dived, in order to avoid being seen. When he arose a second time, he was fifty paces from where he had first sunk. He saw overhead a black and tempestuous sky, across which the wind was driving clouds that occasionally suffered a twinkling star to appear; before him was the vast expanse of waters, sombre and terrible, whose waves foamed and roared as if before the approach of a storm. Behind him, blacker than the sea, blacker than the sky, rose phantom-like the vast stone structure, whose projecting crags seemed like arms extended to seize their prey, and on the highest rock was a torch lighting two figures.
He fancied that these two forms were looking at the sea; doubtless these strange grave-diggers had heard his cry. DantÃs dived again, and remained a long time beneath the water. This was an easy feat to him, for he usually attracted a crowd of spectators in the bay before the lighthouse at Marseilles when he swam there, and was unanimously declared to be the best swimmer in the port. When he came up again the light had disappeared.
He must now get his bearings. Ratonneau and PomÃgue are the nearest islands of all those that surround the ChÃ¢teau dIf, but Ratonneau and PomÃgue are inhabited, as is also the islet of Daume. Tiboulen and Lemaire were therefore the safest for DantÃs venture. The islands of Tiboulen and Lemaire are a league from the ChÃ¢teau dIf; DantÃs, nevertheless, determined to make for them. But how could he find his way in the darkness of the night?
At this moment he saw the light of Planier, gleaming in front of him like a star. By leaving this light on the right, he kept the Island of Tiboulen a little on the left; by turning to the left, therefore, he would find it. But, as we have said, it was at least a league from the ChÃ¢teau dIf to this island. Often in prison Faria had said to him,

when he saw him idle and inactive:
DantÃs, you must not give way to this listlessness; you will be drowned if you seek to escape, and your strength has not been properly exercised and prepared for exertion.
These words rang in DantÃs ears, even beneath the waves; he hastened to cleave his way through them to see if he had not lost his strength. He found with pleasure that his captivity had taken away nothing of his power, and that he was still master of that element on whose bosom he had so often sported as a boy.
Fear, that relentless pursuer, clogged DantÃs efforts. He listened for any sound that might be audible, and every time that he rose to the top of a wave he scanned the horizon, and strove to penetrate the darkness. He fancied that every wave behind him was a pursuing boat, and he redoubled his exertions, increasing rapidly his distance from the chÃ¢teau, but exhausting his strength. He swam on still, and already the terrible chÃ¢teau had disappeared in the darkness. He could not see it, but he _felt_ its presence.
An hour passed, during which DantÃs, excited by the feeling of freedom, continued to cleave the waves.
Let us see, said he, I have swum above an hour, but as the wind is against me, that has retarded my speed; however, if I am not mistaken, I must be close to Tiboulen. But what if I were mistaken?
A shudder passed over him. He sought to tread water, in order to rest himself; but the sea was too violent, and he felt that he could not make use of this means of recuperation.
Well, said he, I will swim on until I am worn out, or the cramp seizes me, and then I shall sink; and he struck out with the energy of despair.
Suddenly the sky seemed to him to become still darker and more dense, and heavy clouds seemed to sweep down towards him; at the same time he felt a sharp pain in his knee. He fancied for a moment that he had been shot, and listened for the report; but he heard nothing. Then he put out his hand, and encountered an obstacle and with another stroke knew that he had gained the shore.
Before him rose a grotesque mass of rocks, that resembled nothing so much as a vast fire petrified at the moment of its most fervent combustion. It was the Island of Tiboulen. DantÃs rose, advanced a few steps, and, with a fervent prayer of gratitude, stretched himself on the granite, which seemed to him softer than down. Then, in spite of the wind and rain, he fell into the deep, sweet sleep of utter exhaustion. At the expiration of an hour Edmond was awakened by the roar of thunder. The tempest was let loose and beating the atmosphere with its mighty wings; from time to time a flash of lightning stretched across the heavens like a fiery serpent, lighting up the clouds that rolled on in vast chaotic waves.
DantÃs had not been deceived”he had reached the first of the two islands, which was, in fact, Tiboulen. He knew that it was barren and without shelter; but when the sea became more calm, he resolved to plunge into its waves again, and swim to Lemaire, equally arid, but larger, and consequently better adapted for concealment.
An overhanging rock offered him a temporary shelter, and scarcely had he availed himself of it when the tempest burst forth in all its fury. Edmond felt the trembling of the rock beneath which he lay; the waves, dashing themselves against it, wetted him with their spray. He was safely sheltered, and yet he felt dizzy in the midst of the warring of the elements and the dazzling brightness of the lightning. It seemed to him that the island trembled to its base, and that it would, like a vessel at anchor, break moorings, and bear him off into the centre of the storm.
He then recollected that he had not eaten or drunk for four-and-twenty hours. He extended his hands, and drank greedily of the rainwater that had lodged in a hollow of the rock.
As he rose, a flash of lightning, that seemed to rive the remotest

heights of heaven, illumined the darkness. By its light, between the Island of Lemaire and Cape Croiselle, a quarter of a league distant, DantÃs saw a fishing-boat driven rapidly like a spectre before the power of winds and waves. A second after, he saw it again, approaching with frightful rapidity. DantÃs cried at the top of his voice to warn them of their danger, but they saw it themselves. Another flash showed him four men clinging to the shattered mast and the rigging, while a fifth clung to the broken rudder. The men he beheld saw him undoubtedly, for their cries were carried to his ears by the wind. Above the splintered mast a sail rent to tatters was waving; suddenly the ropes that still held it gave way, and it disappeared in the darkness of the night like a vast sea-bird.

At the same moment a violent crash was heard, and cries of distress. DantÃs from his rocky perch saw the shattered vessel, and among the fragments the floating forms of the hapless sailors. Then all was dark again.

DantÃs ran down the rocks at the risk of being himself dashed to pieces; he listened, he groped about, but he heard and saw nothing”the cries had ceased, and the tempest continued to rage. By degrees the wind abated, vast gray clouds rolled towards the west, and the blue firmament appeared studded with bright stars. Soon a red streak became visible in the horizon, the waves whitened, a light played over them, and gilded their foaming crests with gold. It was day.

DantÃs stood mute and motionless before this majestic spectacle, as if he now beheld it for the first time; and indeed since his captivity in the ChÃ¢teau dIf he had forgotten that such scenes were ever to be witnessed. He turned towards the fortress, and looked at both sea and land. The gloomy building rose from the bosom of the ocean with imposing majesty and seemed to dominate the scene. It was about five oclock. The sea continued to get calmer.

In two or three hours, thought DantÃs, the turnkey will enter my chamber, find the body of my poor friend, recognize it, seek for me in vain, and give the alarm. Then the tunnel will be discovered; the men who cast me into the sea and who must have heard the cry I uttered, will be questioned. Then boats filled with armed soldiers will pursue the wretched fugitive. The cannon will warn everyone to refuse shelter to a man wandering about naked and famished. The police of Marseilles will be on the alert by land, whilst the governor pursues me by sea. I am cold, I am hungry. I have lost even the knife that saved me. Oh, my God, I have suffered enough surely! Have pity on me, and do for me what I am unable to do for myself.

As DantÃs (his eyes turned in the direction of the ChÃ¢teau dIf) uttered this prayer, he saw off the farther point of the Island of PomÃgue a small vessel with lateen sail skimming the sea like a gull in search of prey; and with his sailors eye he knew it to be a Genoese tartan. She was coming out of Marseilles harbor, and was standing out to sea rapidly, her sharp prow cleaving through the waves.

Oh, cried Edmond, to think that in half an hour I could join her, did I not fear being questioned, detected, and conveyed back to Marseilles! What can I do? What story can I invent? under pretext of trading along the coast, these men, who are in reality smugglers, will prefer selling me to doing a good action. I must wait. But I cannot”I am starving. In a few hours my strength will be utterly exhausted; besides, perhaps I have not been missed at the fortress. I can pass as one of the sailors wrecked last night. My story will be accepted, for there is no one left to contradict me.

As he spoke, DantÃs looked toward the spot where the fishing-vessel had been wrecked, and started. The red cap of one of the sailors hung to a point of the rock and some timbers that had formed part of the vessels keel, floated at the foot of the crag. In an instant DantÃs plan was formed. He swam to the cap, placed it on his head, seized one of the timbers, and struck out so as to cut across the course the vessel was taking.

I am saved! murmured he. And this conviction restored his strength.
He soon saw that the vessel, with the wind dead ahead, was tacking between the ChÃ¢teau dIf and the tower of Planier. For an instant he feared lest, instead of keeping in shore, she should stand out to sea; but he soon saw that she would pass, like most vessels bound for Italy, between the islands of Jaros and Calaseraigne.
However, the vessel and the swimmer insensibly neared one another, and in one of its tacks the tartan bore down within a quarter of a mile of him. He rose on the waves, making signs of distress; but no one on board saw him, and the vessel stood on another tack. DantÃs would have shouted, but he knew that the wind would drown his voice.
It was then he rejoiced at his precaution in taking the timber, for without it he would have been unable, perhaps, to reach the vessel”certainly to return to shore, should he be unsuccessful in attracting attention.
DantÃs, though almost sure as to what course the vessel would take, had yet watched it anxiously until it tacked and stood towards him. Then he advanced; but before they could meet, the vessel again changed her course. By a violent effort he rose half out of the water, waving his cap, and uttering a loud shout peculiar to sailors. This time he was both seen and heard, and the tartan instantly steered towards him. At the same time, he saw they were about to lower the boat.
An instant after, the boat, rowed by two men, advanced rapidly towards him. DantÃs let go of the timber, which he now thought to be useless, and swam vigorously to meet them. But he had reckoned too much upon his strength, and then he realized how serviceable the timber had been to him. His arms became stiff, his legs lost their flexibility, and he was almost breathless.
He shouted again. The two sailors redoubled their efforts, and one of them cried in Italian, Courage!
The word reached his ear as a wave which he no longer had the strength to surmount passed over his head. He rose again to the surface, struggled with the last desperate effort of a drowning man, uttered a third cry, and felt himself sinking, as if the fatal cannon shot were again tied to his feet. The water passed over his head, and the sky turned gray. A convulsive movement again brought him to the surface. He felt himself seized by the hair, then he saw and heard nothing. He had fainted.
When he opened his eyes DantÃs found himself on the deck of the tartan. His first care was to see what course they were taking. They were rapidly leaving the ChÃ¢teau dIf behind. DantÃs was so exhausted that the exclamation of joy he uttered was mistaken for a sigh.
As we have said, he was lying on the deck. A sailor was rubbing his limbs with a woollen cloth; another, whom he recognized as the one who had cried out Courage! held a gourd full of rum to his mouth; while the third, an old sailor, at once the pilot and captain, looked on with that egotistical pity men feel for a misfortune that they have escaped yesterday, and which may overtake them tomorrow.
A few drops of the rum restored suspended animation, while the friction of his limbs restored their elasticity.
Who are you? said the pilot in bad French.
I am, replied DantÃs, in bad Italian, a Maltese sailor. We were coming from Syracuse laden with grain. The storm of last night overtook us at Cape Morgiou, and we were wrecked on these rocks.
Where do you come from?
From these rocks that I had the good luck to cling to while our captain and the rest of the crew were all lost. I saw your vessel, and fearful of being left to perish on the desolate island, I swam off on a piece of wreckage to try and intercept your course. You have saved my life, and I thank you, continued DantÃs. I was lost when one of your sailors caught hold of my hair.
It was I, said a sailor of a frank and manly appearance; and it was time, for you were sinking.

Yes, returned DantÃs, holding out his hand, I thank you again.
I almost hesitated, though, replied the sailor; you looked more like a brigand than an honest man, with your beard six inches, and your hair a foot long.
DantÃs recollected that his hair and beard had not been cut all the time he was at the ChÃ¢teau dIf.
Yes, said he, I made a vow, to our Lady of the Grotto not to cut my hair or beard for ten years if I were saved in a moment of danger; but today the vow expires.
Now what are we to do with you? said the captain.
Alas, anything you please. My captain is dead; I have barely escaped; but I am a good sailor. Leave me at the first port you make; I shall be sure to find employment.
Do you know the Mediterranean?
I have sailed over it since my childhood.
You know the best harbors?
There are few ports that I could not enter or leave with a bandage over my eyes.
I say, captain, said the sailor who had cried Courage! to DantÃs, if what he says is true, what hinders his staying with us?
If he says true, said the captain doubtingly. But in his present condition he will promise anything, and take his chance of keeping it afterwards.
I will do more than I promise, said DantÃs.
We shall see, returned the other, smiling.
Where are you going? asked DantÃs.
To Leghorn.
Then why, instead of tacking so frequently, do you not sail nearer the wind?
Because we should run straight on to the Island of Rion.
You shall pass it by twenty fathoms.
Take the helm, and let us see what you know.
The young man took the helm, felt to see if the vessel answered the rudder promptly and seeing that, without being a first-rate sailor, she yet was tolerably obedient.
To the sheets, said he. The four seamen, who composed the crew, obeyed, while the pilot looked on. Haul taut.
They obeyed.
Belay. This order was also executed; and the vessel passed, as DantÃs had predicted, twenty fathoms to windward.
Bravo! said the captain.
Bravo! repeated the sailors. And they all looked with astonishment at this man whose eye now disclosed an intelligence and his body a vigor they had not thought him capable of showing.
You see, said DantÃs, quitting the helm, I shall be of some use to you, at least during the voyage. If you do not want me at Leghorn, you can leave me there, and I will pay you out of the first wages I get, for my food and the clothes you lend me.
Ah, said the captain, we can agree very well, if you are reasonable.
Give me what you give the others, and it will be all right, returned DantÃs.
Thats not fair, said the seaman who had saved DantÃs; for you know more than we do.
What is that to you, Jacopo? returned the Captain. Everyone is free to ask what he pleases.
Thats true, replied Jacopo; I only make a remark.
Well, you would do much better to find him a jacket and a pair of trousers, if you have them.
No, said Jacopo; but I have a shirt and a pair of trousers.
That is all I want, interrupted DantÃs. Jacopo dived into the hold and soon returned with what Edmond wanted.
Now, then, do you wish for anything else? said the patron.

A piece of bread and another glass of the capital rum I tasted, for I have not eaten or drunk for a long time. He had not tasted food for forty hours. A piece of bread was brought, and Jacopo offered him the gourd.
Larboard your helm, cried the captain to the steersman. DantÃs glanced that way as he lifted the gourd to his mouth; then paused with hand in mid-air.
Hollo! whats the matter at the ChÃ¢teau dIf? said the captain.
A small white cloud, which had attracted DantÃs attention, crowned the summit of the bastion of the ChÃ¢teau dIf. At the same moment the faint report of a gun was heard. The sailors looked at one another.
What is this? asked the captain.
A prisoner has escaped from the ChÃ¢teau dIf, and they are firing the alarm gun, replied DantÃs. The captain glanced at him, but he had lifted the rum to his lips and was drinking it with so much composure, that suspicions, if the captain had any, died away.
0277m
Pretty strong rum! said DantÃs, wiping his brow with his sleeve.
At any rate, murmured he, if it be, so much the better, for I have made a rare acquisition.
0279m
Under pretence of being fatigued, DantÃs asked to take the helm; the steersman, glad to be relieved, looked at the captain, and the latter by a sign indicated that he might abandon it to his new comrade. DantÃs could thus keep his eyes on Marseilles.
What is the day of the month? asked he of Jacopo, who sat down beside him.
The 28th of February.
In what year?
In what year”you ask me in what year?
Yes, replied the young man, I ask you in what year!
You have forgotten then?
I got such a fright last night, replied DantÃs, smiling, that I have almost lost my memory. I ask you what year is it?
The year 1829, returned Jacopo.
It was fourteen years, day for day, since DantÃs arrest. He was nineteen when he entered the ChÃ¢teau dIf; he was thirty-three when he escaped. A sorrowful smile passed over his face; he asked himself what had become of MercÃ©dÃs, who must believe him dead. Then his eyes lighted up with hatred as he thought of the three men who had caused him so long and wretched a captivity. He renewed against Danglars, Fernand, and Villefort the oath of implacable vengeance he had made in his dungeon.
This oath was no longer a vain menace; for the fastest sailor in the Mediterranean would have been unable to overtake the little tartan, that with every stitch of canvas set was flying before the wind to Leghorn.
Chapter 22. The Smugglers
DantÃs had not been a day on board before he had a very clear idea of the men with whom his lot had been cast. Without having been in the school of the AbbÃ© Faria, the worthy master of _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_ (the name of the Genoese tartan) knew a smattering of all the tongues spoken on the shores of that large lake called the Mediterranean, from the Arabic to the ProvenÃ§al, and this, while it spared him interpreters, persons always troublesome and frequently indiscreet, gave him great facilities of communication, either with the vessels he met at sea, with the small boats sailing along the coast, or with the people without name, country, or occupation, who are always seen on the quays of seaports, and who live by hidden and mysterious means which we must suppose to be a direct gift of Providence, as they have no visible means of support. It is fair to assume that DantÃs was on board a smuggler.
At first the captain had received DantÃs on board with a certain degree

of distrust. He was very well known to the customs officers of the coast; and as there was between these worthies and himself a perpetual battle of wits, he had at first thought that DantÃs might be an emissary of these industrious guardians of rights and duties, who perhaps employed this ingenious means of learning some of the secrets of his trade. But the skilful manner in which DantÃs had handled the lugger had entirely reassured him; and then, when he saw the light plume of smoke floating above the bastion of the ChÃ¢teau dIf, and heard the distant report, he was instantly struck with the idea that he had on board his vessel one whose coming and going, like that of kings, was accompanied with salutes of artillery. This made him less uneasy, it must be owned, than if the new-comer had proved to be a customs officer; but this supposition also disappeared like the first, when he beheld the perfect tranquillity of his recruit.

Edmond thus had the advantage of knowing what the owner was, without the owner knowing who he was; and however the old sailor and his crew tried to pump him, they extracted nothing more from him; he gave accurate descriptions of Naples and Malta, which he knew as well as Marseilles, and held stoutly to his first story. Thus the Genoese, subtle as he was, was duped by Edmond, in whose favor his mild demeanor, his nautical skill, and his admirable dissimulation, pleaded. Moreover, it is possible that the Genoese was one of those shrewd persons who know nothing but what they should know, and believe nothing but what they should believe.

In this state of mutual understanding, they reached Leghorn. Here Edmond was to undergo another trial; he was to find out whether he could recognize himself, as he had not seen his own face for fourteen years. He had preserved a tolerably good remembrance of what the youth had been, and was now to find out what the man had become. His comrades believed that his vow was fulfilled. As he had twenty times touched at Leghorn, he remembered a barber in St. Ferdinand Street; he went there to have his beard and hair cut. The barber gazed in amazement at this man with the long, thick and black hair and beard, which gave his head the appearance of one of Titians portraits. At this period it was not the fashion to wear so large a beard and hair so long; now a barber would only be surprised if a man gifted with such advantages should consent voluntarily to deprive himself of them. The Leghorn barber said nothing and went to work.

When the operation was concluded, and Edmond felt that his chin was completely smooth, and his hair reduced to its usual length, he asked for a looking-glass. He was now, as we have said, three-and-thirty years of age, and his fourteen years imprisonment had produced a great transformation in his appearance.

DantÃs had entered the ChÃ¢teau dIf with the round, open, smiling face of a young and happy man, with whom the early paths of life have been smooth, and who anticipates a future corresponding with his past. This was now all changed. The oval face was lengthened, his smiling mouth had assumed the firm and marked lines which betoken resolution; his eyebrows were arched beneath a brow furrowed with thought; his eyes were full of melancholy, and from their depths occasionally sparkled gloomy fires of misanthropy and hatred; his complexion, so long kept from the sun, had now that pale color which produces, when the features are encircled with black hair, the aristocratic beauty of the man of the north; the profound learning he had acquired had besides diffused over his features a refined intellectual expression; and he had also acquired, being naturally of a goodly stature, that vigor which a frame possesses which has so long concentrated all its force within itself.

0283m

To the elegance of a nervous and slight form had succeeded the solidity of a rounded and muscular figure. As to his voice, prayers, sobs, and imprecations had changed it so that at times it was of a singularly penetrating sweetness, and at others rough and almost hoarse.

Moreover, from being so long in twilight or darkness, his eyes had

acquired the faculty of distinguishing objects in the night, common to the hyena and the wolf. Edmond smiled when he beheld himself; it was impossible that his best friend”if, indeed, he had any friend left”could recognize him; he could not recognize himself.
The master of _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_, who was very desirous of retaining amongst his crew a man of Edmonds value, had offered to advance him funds out of his future profits, which Edmond had accepted. His next care on leaving the barbers who had achieved his first metamorphosis was to enter a shop and buy a complete sailors suit”a garb, as we all know, very simple, and consisting of white trousers, a striped shirt, and a cap.
It was in this costume, and bringing back to Jacopo the shirt and trousers he had lent him, that Edmond reappeared before the captain of the lugger, who had made him tell his story over and over again before he could believe him, or recognize in the neat and trim sailor the man with thick and matted beard, hair tangled with seaweed, and body soaking in seabrine, whom he had picked up naked and nearly drowned. Attracted by his prepossessing appearance, he renewed his offers of an engagement to DantÃs; but DantÃs, who had his own projects, would not agree for a longer time than three months.
La Jeune AmÃ©lie had a very active crew, very obedient to their captain, who lost as little time as possible. He had scarcely been a week at Leghorn before the hold of his vessel was filled with printed muslins, contraband cottons, English powder, and tobacco on which the excise had forgotten to put its mark. The master was to get all this out of Leghorn free of duties, and land it on the shores of Corsica, where certain speculators undertook to forward the cargo to France.
They sailed; Edmond was again cleaving the azure sea which had been the first horizon of his youth, and which he had so often dreamed of in prison. He left Gorgone on his right and La Pianosa on his left, and went towards the country of Paoli and Napoleon.
The next morning going on deck, as he always did at an early hour, the patron found DantÃs leaning against the bulwarks gazing with intense earnestness at a pile of granite rocks, which the rising sun tinged with rosy light. It was the Island of Monte Cristo.
La Jeune AmÃ©lie left it three-quarters of a league to the larboard and kept on for Corsica. DantÃs thought, as they passed so closely to the island whose name was so interesting to him, that he had only to leap into the sea and in half an hour be at the promised land. But then what could he do without instruments to discover his treasure, without arms to defend himself? Besides, what would the sailors say? What would the patron think? He must wait.
Fortunately, DantÃs had learned how to wait; he had waited fourteen years for his liberty, and now he was free he could wait at least six months or a year for wealth. Would he not have accepted liberty without riches if it had been offered to him? Besides, were not those riches chimerical?”offspring of the brain of the poor AbbÃ© Faria, had they not died with him? It is true, the letter of the Cardinal Spada was singularly circumstantial, and DantÃs repeated it to himself, from one end to the other, for he had not forgotten a word.
0285m
Evening came, and Edmond saw the island tinged with the shades of twilight, and then disappear in the darkness from all eyes but his own, for he, with vision accustomed to the gloom of a prison, continued to behold it last of all, for he remained alone upon deck. The next morn broke off the coast of Aleria; all day they coasted, and in the evening saw fires lighted on land; the position of these was no doubt a signal for landing, for a ships lantern was hung up at the mast-head instead of the streamer, and they came to within a gunshot of the shore. DantÃs noticed that the captain of _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_ had, as he neared the land, mounted two small culverins, which, without making much noise, can throw a four ounce ball a thousand paces or so.
But on this occasion the precaution was superfluous, and everything

proceeded with the utmost smoothness and politeness. Four shallops came off with very little noise alongside the lugger, which, no doubt, in acknowledgement of the compliment, lowered her own shallop into the sea, and the five boats worked so well that by two oclock in the morning all the cargo was out of _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_ and on _terra firma_. The same night, such a man of regularity was the patron of _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_, the profits were divided, and each man had a hundred Tuscan livres, or about eighty francs.

But the voyage was not ended. They turned the bowsprit towards Sardinia, where they intended to take in a cargo, which was to replace what had been discharged. The second operation was as successful as the first, _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_ was in luck. This new cargo was destined for the coast of the Duchy of Lucca, and consisted almost entirely of Havana cigars, sherry, and Malaga wines.

There they had a bit of a skirmish in getting rid of the duties; the excise was, in truth, the everlasting enemy of the patron of _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_. A customs officer was laid low, and two sailors wounded; DantÃs was one of the latter, a ball having touched him in the left shoulder. DantÃs was almost glad of this affray, and almost pleased at being wounded, for they were rude lessons which taught him with what eye he could view danger, and with what endurance he could bear suffering. He had contemplated danger with a smile, and when wounded had exclaimed with the great philosopher, Pain, thou art not an evil. He had, moreover, looked upon the customs officer wounded to death, and, whether from heat of blood produced by the encounter, or the chill of human sentiment, this sight had made but slight impression upon him. DantÃs was on the way he desired to follow, and was moving towards the end he wished to achieve; his heart was in a fair way of petrifying in his bosom. Jacopo, seeing him fall, had believed him killed, and rushing towards him raised him up, and then attended to him with all the kindness of a devoted comrade.

This world was not then so good as Doctor Pangloss believed it, neither was it so wicked as DantÃs thought it, since this man, who had nothing to expect from his comrade but the inheritance of his share of the prize-money, manifested so much sorrow when he saw him fall.

Fortunately, as we have said, Edmond was only wounded, and with certain herbs gathered at certain seasons, and sold to the smugglers by the old Sardinian women, the wound soon closed. Edmond then resolved to try Jacopo, and offered him in return for his attention a share of his prize-money, but Jacopo refused it indignantly.

As a result of the sympathetic devotion which Jacopo had from the first bestowed on Edmond, the latter was moved to a certain degree of affection. But this sufficed for Jacopo, who instinctively felt that Edmond had a right to superiority of position”a superiority which Edmond had concealed from all others. And from this time the kindness which Edmond showed him was enough for the brave seaman.

Then in the long days on board ship, when the vessel, gliding on with security over the azure sea, required no care but the hand of the helmsman, thanks to the favorable winds that swelled her sails, Edmond, with a chart in his hand, became the instructor of Jacopo, as the poor AbbÃ© Faria had been his tutor. He pointed out to him the bearings of the coast, explained to him the variations of the compass, and taught him to read in that vast book opened over our heads which they call heaven, and where God writes in azure with letters of diamonds.

And when Jacopo inquired of him, What is the use of teaching all these things to a poor sailor like me? Edmond replied, Who knows? You may one day be the captain of a vessel. Your fellow-countryman, Bonaparte, became emperor. We had forgotten to say that Jacopo was a Corsican.

Two months and a half elapsed in these trips, and Edmond had become as skilful a coaster as he had been a hardy seaman; he had formed an acquaintance with all the smugglers on the coast, and learned all the Masonic signs by which these half pirates recognize each other. He had passed and re-passed his Island of Monte Cristo twenty times, but not

once had he found an opportunity of landing there.
He then formed a resolution. As soon as his engagement with the patron of _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_ ended, he would hire a small vessel on his own account”for in his several voyages he had amassed a hundred piastres”and under some pretext land at the Island of Monte Cristo. Then he would be free to make his researches, not perhaps entirely at liberty, for he would be doubtless watched by those who accompanied him. But in this world we must risk something. Prison had made Edmond prudent, and he was desirous of running no risk whatever. But in vain did he rack his imagination; fertile as it was, he could not devise any plan for reaching the island without companionship.
DantÃs was tossed about on these doubts and wishes, when the patron, who had great confidence in him, and was very desirous of retaining him in his service, took him by the arm one evening and led him to a tavern on the Via del Oglio, where the leading smugglers of Leghorn used to congregate and discuss affairs connected with their trade. Already DantÃs had visited this maritime Bourse two or three times, and seeing all these hardy free-traders, who supplied the whole coast for nearly two hundred leagues in extent, he had asked himself what power might not that man attain who should give the impulse of his will to all these contrary and diverging minds. This time it was a great matter that was under discussion, connected with a vessel laden with Turkey carpets, stuffs of the Levant, and cashmeres. It was necessary to find some neutral ground on which an exchange could be made, and then to try and land these goods on the coast of France. If the venture was successful the profit would be enormous, there would be a gain of fifty or sixty piastres each for the crew.
The patron of _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_ proposed as a place of landing the Island of Monte Cristo, which being completely deserted, and having neither soldiers nor revenue officers, seemed to have been placed in the midst of the ocean since the time of the heathen Olympus by Mercury, the god of merchants and robbers, classes of mankind which we in modern times have separated if not made distinct, but which antiquity appears to have included in the same category.
At the mention of Monte Cristo DantÃs started with joy; he rose to conceal his emotion, and took a turn around the smoky tavern, where all the languages of the known world were jumbled in a _lingua franca_. When he again joined the two persons who had been discussing the matter, it had been decided that they should touch at Monte Cristo and set out on the following night. Edmond, being consulted, was of opinion that the island afforded every possible security, and that great enterprises to be well done should be done quickly.
Nothing then was altered in the plan, and orders were given to get under weigh next night, and, wind and weather permitting, to make the neutral island by the following day.
0289m
Chapter 23. The Island of Monte Cristo
Thus, at length, by one of the unexpected strokes of fortune which sometimes befall those who have for a long time been the victims of an evil destiny, DantÃs was about to secure the opportunity he wished for, by simple and natural means, and land on the island without incurring any suspicion. One night more and he would be on his way.
The night was one of feverish distraction, and in its progress visions, good and evil, passed through DantÃs mind. If he closed his eyes, he saw Cardinal Spadas letter written on the wall in characters of flame”if he slept for a moment the wildest dreams haunted his brain. He ascended into grottos paved with emeralds, with panels of rubies, and the roof glowing with diamond stalactites. Pearls fell drop by drop, as subterranean waters filter in their caves. Edmond, amazed, wonderstruck, filled his pockets with the radiant gems and then returned to daylight, when he discovered that his prizes had all changed into common pebbles. He then endeavored to re-enter the marvellous grottos, but they had suddenly receded, and now the path

became a labyrinth, and then the entrance vanished, and in vain did he tax his memory for the magic and mysterious word which opened the splendid caverns of Ali Baba to the Arabian fisherman. All was useless, the treasure disappeared, and had again reverted to the genii from whom for a moment he had hoped to carry it off.

The day came at length, and was almost as feverish as the night had been, but it brought reason to the aid of imagination, and DantÃs was then enabled to arrange a plan which had hitherto been vague and unsettled in his brain. Night came, and with it the preparation for departure, and these preparations served to conceal DantÃs agitation. He had by degrees assumed such authority over his companions that he was almost like a commander on board; and as his orders were always clear, distinct, and easy of execution, his comrades obeyed him with celerity and pleasure.

The old patron did not interfere, for he too had recognized the superiority of DantÃs over the crew and himself. He saw in the young man his natural successor, and regretted that he had not a daughter, that he might have bound Edmond to him by a more secure alliance. At seven oclock in the evening all was ready, and at ten minutes past seven they doubled the lighthouse just as the beacon was kindled. The sea was calm, and, with a fresh breeze from the south-east, they sailed beneath a bright blue sky, in which God also lighted up in turn his beacon lights, each of which is a world. DantÃs told them that all hands might turn in, and he would take the helm. When the Maltese (for so they called DantÃs) had said this, it was sufficient, and all went to their bunks contentedly.

This frequently happened. DantÃs, cast from solitude into the world, frequently experienced an imperious desire for solitude; and what solitude is more complete, or more poetical, than that of a ship floating in isolation on the sea during the obscurity of the night, in the silence of immensity, and under the eye of Heaven?

Now this solitude was peopled with his thoughts, the night lighted up by his illusions, and the silence animated by his anticipations. When the patron awoke, the vessel was hurrying on with every sail set, and every sail full with the breeze. They were making nearly ten knots an hour. The Island of Monte Cristo loomed large in the horizon. Edmond resigned the lugger to the masters care, and went and lay down in his hammock; but, in spite of a sleepless night, he could not close his eyes for a moment.

Two hours afterwards he came on deck, as the boat was about to double the Island of Elba. They were just abreast of Mareciana, and beyond the flat but verdant Island of La Pianosa. The peak of Monte Cristo reddened by the burning sun, was seen against the azure sky. DantÃs ordered the helmsman to put down his helm, in order to leave La Pianosa to starboard, as he knew that he should shorten his course by two or three knots. About five oclock in the evening the island was distinct, and everything on it was plainly perceptible, owing to that clearness of the atmosphere peculiar to the light which the rays of the sun cast at its setting.

Edmond gazed very earnestly at the mass of rocks which gave out all the variety of twilight colors, from the brightest pink to the deepest blue; and from time to time his cheeks flushed, his brow darkened, and a mist passed over his eyes. Never did a gamester, whose whole fortune is staked on one cast of the die, experience the anguish which Edmond felt in his paroxysms of hope.

Night came, and at ten oclock they anchored. _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_ was first at the rendezvous. In spite of his usual command over himself, DantÃs could not restrain his impetuosity. He was the first to jump on shore; and had he dared, he would, like Lucius Brutus, have kissed his mother earth. It was dark, but at eleven oclock the moon rose in the midst of the ocean, whose every wave she silvered, and then, ascending high, played in floods of pale light on the rocky hills of this second Pelion.

The island was familiar to the crew of _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_,”it was one of her regular haunts. As to DantÃs, he had passed it on his voyage to and from the Levant, but never touched at it. He questioned Jacopo.
Where shall we pass the night? he inquired.
Why, on board the tartan, replied the sailor.
Should we not do better in the grottos?
What grottos?
Why, the grottos”caves of the island.
I do not know of any grottos, replied Jacopo.
The cold sweat sprang forth on DantÃs brow.
What, are there no grottos at Monte Cristo? he asked.
None.
For a moment DantÃs was speechless; then he remembered that these caves might have been filled up by some accident, or even stopped up, for the sake of greater security, by Cardinal Spada. The point was, then, to discover the hidden entrance. It was useless to search at night, and DantÃs therefore delayed all investigation until the morning. Besides, a signal made half a league out at sea, and to which _La Jeune AmÃ©lie_ replied by a similar signal, indicated that the moment for business had come.
The boat that now arrived, assured by the answering signal that all was well, soon came in sight, white and silent as a phantom, and cast anchor within a cables length of shore.
Then the landing began. DantÃs reflected, as he worked, on the shout of joy which, with a single word, he could evoke from all these men, if he gave utterance to the one unchanging thought that pervaded his heart; but, far from disclosing this precious secret, he almost feared that he had already said too much, and by his restlessness and continual questions, his minute observations and evident preoccupation, aroused suspicions. Fortunately, as regarded this circumstance at least, his painful past gave to his countenance an indelible sadness, and the glimmerings of gayety seen beneath this cloud were indeed but transitory.
No one had the slightest suspicion; and when next day, taking a fowling-piece, powder, and shot, DantÃs declared his intention to go and kill some of the wild goats that were seen springing from rock to rock, his wish was construed into a love of sport, or a desire for solitude. However, Jacopo insisted on following him, and DantÃs did not oppose this, fearing if he did so that he might incur distrust.
Scarcely, however, had they gone a quarter of a league when, having killed a kid, he begged Jacopo to take it to his comrades, and request them to cook it, and when ready to let him know by firing a gun. This and some dried fruits and a flask of Monte Pulciano, was the bill of fare.
DantÃs went on, looking from time to time behind and around about him. Having reached the summit of a rock, he saw, a thousand feet beneath him, his companions, whom Jacopo had rejoined, and who were all busy preparing the repast which Edmonds skill as a marksman had augmented with a capital dish.
Edmond looked at them for a moment with the sad and gentle smile of a man superior to his fellows.
In two hours time, said he, these persons will depart richer by fifty piastres each, to go and risk their lives again by endeavoring to gain fifty more; then they will return with a fortune of six hundred francs, and waste this treasure in some city with the pride of sultans and the insolence of nabobs. At this moment hope makes me despise their riches, which seem to me contemptible. Yet perchance tomorrow deception will so act on me, that I shall, on compulsion, consider such a contemptible possession as the utmost happiness. Oh, no! exclaimed Edmond, that will not be. The wise, unerring Faria could not be mistaken in this one thing. Besides, it were better to die than to continue to lead this low and wretched life.
Thus DantÃs, who but three months before had no desire but liberty had

now not liberty enough, and panted for wealth. The cause was not in DantÃs, but in Providence, who, while limiting the power of man, has filled him with boundless desires.
Meanwhile, by a cleft between two walls of rock, following a path worn by a torrent, and which, in all human probability, human foot had never before trod, DantÃs approached the spot where he supposed the grottos must have existed. Keeping along the shore, and examining the smallest object with serious attention, he thought he could trace, on certain rocks, marks made by the hand of man.
Time, which encrusts all physical substances with its mossy mantle, as it invests all things of the mind with forgetfulness, seemed to have respected these signs, which apparently had been made with some degree of regularity, and probably with a definite purpose. Occasionally the marks were hidden under tufts of myrtle, which spread into large bushes laden with blossoms, or beneath parasitical lichen. So Edmond had to separate the branches or brush away the moss to know where the guide-marks were. The sight of marks renewed Edmond fondest hopes. Might it not have been the cardinal himself who had first traced them, in order that they might serve as a guide for his nephew in the event of a catastrophe, which he could not foresee would have been so complete. This solitary place was precisely suited to the requirements of a man desirous of burying treasure. Only, might not these betraying marks have attracted other eyes than those for whom they were made? and had the dark and wondrous island indeed faithfully guarded its precious secret?
0295m
It seemed, however, to Edmond, who was hidden from his comrades by the inequalities of the ground, that at sixty paces from the harbor the marks ceased; nor did they terminate at any grotto. A large round rock, placed solidly on its base, was the only spot to which they seemed to lead. Edmond concluded that perhaps instead of having reached the end of the route he had only explored its beginning, and he therefore turned round and retraced his steps.
Meanwhile his comrades had prepared the repast, had got some water from a spring, spread out the fruit and bread, and cooked the kid. Just at the moment when they were taking the dainty animal from the spit, they saw Edmond springing with the boldness of a chamois from rock to rock, and they fired the signal agreed upon. The sportsman instantly changed his direction, and ran quickly towards them. But even while they watched his daring progress, Edmonds foot slipped, and they saw him stagger on the edge of a rock and disappear. They all rushed towards him, for all loved Edmond in spite of his superiority; yet Jacopo reached him first.
He found Edmond lying prone, bleeding, and almost senseless. He had rolled down a declivity of twelve or fifteen feet. They poured a little rum down his throat, and this remedy which had before been so beneficial to him, produced the same effect as formerly. Edmond opened his eyes, complained of great pain in his knee, a feeling of heaviness