

, then

withdrawing the curtain he saw Morrel, who had been writing at his desk, bound from his seat at the noise of the broken window.

I beg a thousand pardons, said the count, there is nothing the matter, but I slipped down and broke one of your panes of glass with my elbow. Since it is opened, I will take advantage of it to enter your room; do not disturb yourself"do not disturb yourself!

And passing his hand through the broken glass, the count opened the door. Morrel, evidently discomposed, came to meet Monte Cristo less with the intention of receiving him than to exclude his entry.

Ma foi, said Monte Cristo, rubbing his elbow, its all your servants fault; your stairs are so polished, it is like walking on glass.

Are you hurt, sir? coldly asked Morrel.

I believe not. But what are you about there? You were writing.

I?

Your fingers are stained with ink.

Ah, true, I was writing. I do sometimes, soldier though I am.

Monte Cristo advanced into the room; Maximilian was obliged to let him pass, but he followed him.

You were writing? said Monte Cristo with a searching look.

I have already had the honor of telling you I was, said Morrel.

The count looked around him.

Your pistols are beside your desk, said Monte Cristo, pointing with his finger to the pistols on the table.

I am on the point of starting on a journey, replied Morrel disdainfully.

My friend, exclaimed Monte Cristo in a tone of exquisite sweetness.

Sir?

My friend, my dear Maximilian, do not make a hasty resolution, I entreat you.

I make a hasty resolution? said Morrel, shrugging his shoulders; is there anything extraordinary in a journey?

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Maximilian, said the count, let us both lay aside the mask we have assumed. You no more deceive me with that false calmness than I impose upon you with my frivolous solicitude. You can understand, can you not, that to have acted as I have done, to have broken that glass, to have intruded on the solitude of a friend"you can understand that, to have done all this, I must have been actuated by real uneasiness, or rather by a terrible conviction. Morrel, you are going to destroy yourself! Indeed, count, said Morrel, shuddering; what has put this into your head?

I tell you that you are about to destroy yourself, continued the count, and here is proof of what I say; and, approaching the desk, he removed the sheet of paper which Morrel had placed over the letter he had begun, and took the latter in his hands.

Morrel rushed forward to tear it from him, but Monte Cristo perceiving his intention, seized his wrist with his iron grasp.

You wish to destroy yourself, said the count; you have written it.

Well, said Morrel, changing his expression of calmness for one of violence"well, and if I do intend to turn this pistol against myself, who shall prevent me"who will dare prevent me? All my hopes are blighted, my heart is broken, my life a burden, everything around me is sad and mournful; earth has become distasteful to me, and human voices distract me. It is a mercy to let me die, for if I live I shall lose my reason and become mad. When, sir, I tell you all this with tears of heartfelt anguish, can you reply that I am wrong, can you prevent my putting an end to my miserable existence? Tell me, sir, could you have the courage to do so?

Yes, Morrel, said Monte Cristo, with a calmness which contrasted strangely with the young mans excitement; yes, I would do so.

You? exclaimed Morrel, with increasing anger and reproach"you, who

have deceived me with false hopes, who have cheered and soothed me with vain promises, when I might, if not have saved her, at least have seen her die in my arms! You, who pretend to understand everything, even the hidden sources of knowledge,"and who enact the part of a guardian angel upon earth, and could not even find an antidote to a poison administered to a young girl! Ah, sir, indeed you would inspire me with pity, were you not hateful in my eyes.

Morrel""

Yes; you tell me to lay aside the mask, and I will do so, be satisfied! When you spoke to me at the cemetery, I answered you"my heart was softened; when you arrived here, I allowed you to enter. But since you abuse my confidence, since you have devised a new torture after I thought I had exhausted them all, then, Count of Monte Cristo my pretended benefactor"then, Count of Monte Cristo, the universal guardian, be satisfied, you shall witness the death of your friend; and Morrel, with a maniacal laugh, again rushed towards the pistols. And I again repeat, you shall not commit suicide. Prevent me, then! replied Morrel, with another struggle, which, like the first, failed in releasing him from the counts iron grasp.

I will prevent you.

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And who are you, then, that arrogate to yourself this tyrannical right over free and rational beings?

Who am I? repeated Monte Cristo. Listen; I am the only man in the world having the right to say to you, ~Morrel, your fathers son shall not die today; and Monte Cristo, with an expression of majesty and sublimity, advanced with arms folded toward the young man, who, involuntarily overcome by the commanding manner of this man, recoiled a step.

Why do you mention my father? stammered he; why do you mingle a recollection of him with the affairs of today?

Because I am he who saved your fathers life when he wished to destroy himself, as you do today"because I am the man who sent the purse to your young sister, and the _Pharaon_ to old Morrel"because I am the Edmond DantÃs who nursed you, a child, on my knees.

Morrel made another step back, staggering, breathless, crushed; then all his strength give way, and he fell prostrate at the feet of Monte Cristo. Then his admirable nature underwent a complete and sudden revulsion; he arose, rushed out of the room and to the stairs, exclaiming energetically, Julie, Julie"Emmanuel, Emmanuel!

Monte Cristo endeavored also to leave, but Maximilian would have died rather than relax his hold of the handle of the door, which he closed upon the count. Julie, Emmanuel, and some of the servants, ran up in alarm on hearing the cries of Maximilian. Morrel seized their hands, and opening the door exclaimed in a voice choked with sobs:

On your knees"on your knees"he is our benefactor"the saviour of our father! He is""

He would have added Edmond DantÃs, but the count seized his arm and prevented him.

Julie threw herself into the arms of the count; Emmanuel embraced him as a guardian angel; Morrel again fell on his knees, and struck the ground with his forehead. Then the iron-hearted man felt his heart swell in his breast; a flame seemed to rush from his throat to his eyes, he bent his head and wept. For a while nothing was heard in the room but a succession of sobs, while the incense from their grateful hearts mounted to heaven. Julie had scarcely recovered from her deep emotion when she rushed out of the room, descended to the next floor, ran into the drawing-room with childlike joy and raised the crystal globe which covered the purse given by the unknown of the AllÃes de Meilhan. Meanwhile, Emmanuel in a broken voice said to the count:

Oh, count, how could you, hearing us so often speak of our unknown benefactor, seeing us pay such homage of gratitude and adoration to his memory,"how could you continue so long without discovering yourself to

us? Oh, it was cruel to us, and "dare I say it?" to you also.

Listen, my friends, said the count "I may call you so since we have really been friends for the last eleven years" the discovery of this secret has been occasioned by a great event which you must never know. I wished to bury it during my whole life in my own bosom, but your brother Maximilian wrested it from me by a violence he repents of now, I am sure.

Then turning around, and seeing that Morrel, still on his knees, had thrown himself into an armchair, he added in a low voice, pressing Emmanuel's hand significantly, Watch over him.

Why so? asked the young man, surprised.

I cannot explain myself; but watch over him. Emmanuel looked around the room and caught sight of the pistols; his eyes rested on the weapons, and he pointed to them. Monte Cristo bent his head. Emmanuel went towards the pistols.

Leave them, said Monte Cristo. Then walking towards Morrel, he took his hand; the tumultuous agitation of the young man was succeeded by a profound stupor. Julie returned, holding the silken purse in her hands, while tears of joy rolled down her cheeks, like dewdrops on the rose. Here is the relic, she said; do not think it will be less dear to us now we are acquainted with our benefactor!

My child, said Monte Cristo, coloring, allow me to take back that purse? Since you now know my face, I wish to be remembered alone through the affection I hope you will grant me.

Oh, no, said Julie, pressing the purse to her heart, no, no, I beseech you do not take it, for some unhappy day you will leave us, will you not?

You have guessed rightly, madame, replied Monte Cristo, smiling; in a week I shall have left this country, where so many persons who merit the vengeance of Heaven lived happily, while my father perished of hunger and grief.

While announcing his departure, the count fixed his eyes on Morrel, and remarked that the words, I shall have left this country, had failed to rouse him from his lethargy. He then saw that he must make another struggle against the grief of his friend, and taking the hands of Emmanuel and Julie, which he pressed within his own, he said with the mild authority of a father:

My kind friends, leave me alone with Maximilian.

Julie saw the means offered of carrying off her precious relic, which Monte Cristo had forgotten. She drew her husband to the door. Let us leave them, she said.

The count was alone with Morrel, who remained motionless as a statue. Come, said Monte-Cristo, touching his shoulder with his finger, are you a man again, Maximilian?

Yes; for I begin to suffer again.

The count frowned, apparently in gloomy hesitation.

Maximilian, Maximilian, he said, the ideas you yield to are unworthy of a Christian.

Oh, do not fear, my friend, said Morrel, raising his head, and smiling with a sweet expression on the count; I shall no longer attempt my life.

Then we are to have no more pistols "no more despair?"

No; I have found a better remedy for my grief than either a bullet or a knife.

Poor fellow, what is it?

My grief will kill me of itself.

My friend, said Monte Cristo, with an expression of melancholy equal to his own, listen to me. One day, in a moment of despair like yours, since it led to a similar resolution, I also wished to kill myself; one day your father, equally desperate, wished to kill himself too. If anyone had said to your father, at the moment he raised the pistol to his head "if anyone had told me, when in my prison I pushed back the food I had not tasted for three days" if anyone had said to either of us

then, "Live! the day will come when you will be happy, and will bless life!" no matter whose voice had spoken, we should have heard him with the smile of doubt, or the anguish of incredulity, "and yet how many times has your father blessed life while embracing you" how often have I myself?"

Ah, exclaimed Morrel, interrupting the count, you had only lost your liberty, my father had only lost his fortune, but I have lost Valentine.

Look at me, said Monte Cristo, with that expression which sometimes made him so eloquent and persuasive "look at me. There are no tears in my eyes, nor is there fever in my veins, yet I see you suffer" you, Maximilian, whom I love as my own son. Well, does not this tell you that in grief, as in life, there is always something to look forward to beyond? Now, if I entreat, if I order you to live, Morrel, it is in the conviction that one day you will thank me for having preserved your life.

Oh, heavens, said the young man, oh, heavens "what are you saying, count? Take care. But perhaps you have never loved!

Child! replied the count.

I mean, as I love. You see, I have been a soldier ever since I attained manhood. I reached the age of twenty-nine without loving, for none of the feelings I before then experienced merit the appellation of love. Well, at twenty-nine I saw Valentine; for two years I have loved her, for two years I have seen written in her heart, as in a book, all the virtues of a daughter and wife. Count, to possess Valentine would have been a happiness too infinite, too ecstatic, too complete, too divine for this world, since it has been denied me; but without Valentine the earth is desolate.

I have told you to hope, said the count.

Then have a care, I repeat, for you seek to persuade me, and if you succeed I should lose my reason, for I should hope that I could again behold Valentine.

The count smiled.

My friend, my father, said Morrel with excitement, have a care, I again repeat, for the power you wield over me alarms me. Weigh your words before you speak, for my eyes have already become brighter, and my heart beats strongly; be cautious, or you will make me believe in supernatural agencies. I must obey you, though you bade me call forth the dead or walk upon the water.

Hope, my friend, repeated the count.

Ah, said Morrel, falling from the height of excitement to the abyss of despair "ah, you are playing with me, like those good, or rather selfish mothers who soothe their children with honeyed words, because their screams annoy them. No, my friend, I was wrong to caution you; do not fear, I will bury my grief so deep in my heart, I will disguise it so, that you shall not even care to sympathize with me. Adieu, my friend, adieu!

On the contrary, said the count, after this time you must live with me "you must not leave me, and in a week we shall have left France behind us.

And you still bid me hope?

I tell you to hope, because I have a method of curing you.

Count, you render me sadder than before, if it be possible. You think the result of this blow has been to produce an ordinary grief, and you would cure it by an ordinary remedy "change of scene. And Morrel dropped his head with disdainful incredulity.

What can I say more? asked Monte Cristo. I have confidence in the remedy I propose, and only ask you to permit me to assure you of its efficacy.

Count, you prolong my agony.

Then, said the count, your feeble spirit will not even grant me the trial I request? Come "do you know of what the Count of Monte Cristo is capable? do you know that he holds terrestrial beings under his

control? nay, that he can almost work a miracle? Well, wait for the miracle I hope to accomplish, or""

Or? repeated Morrel.

Or, take care, Morrel, lest I call you ungrateful.

Have pity on me, count!

I feel so much pity towards you, Maximilian, that"listen to me attentively"if I do not cure you in a month, to the day, to the very hour, mark my words, Morrel, I will place loaded pistols before you, and a cup of the deadliest Italian poison"a poison more sure and prompt than that which has killed Valentine.

Will you promise me?

Yes; for I am a man, and have suffered like yourself, and also contemplated suicide; indeed, often since misfortune has left me I have longed for the delights of an eternal sleep.

But you are sure you will promise me this? said Morrel, intoxicated.

I not only promise, but swear it! said Monte Cristo extending his hand.

In a month, then, on your honor, if I am not consoled, you will let me take my life into my own hands, and whatever may happen you will not call me ungrateful?

In a month, to the day, the very hour and the date is a sacred one, Maximilian. I do not know whether you remember that this is the 5th of September; it is ten years today since I saved your fathers life, who wished to die.

Morrel seized the counts hand and kissed it; the count allowed him to pay the homage he felt due to him.

In a month you will find on the table, at which we shall be then sitting, good pistols and a delicious draught; but, on the other hand, you must promise me not to attempt your life before that time.

Oh, I also swear it!

Monte Cristo drew the young man towards him, and pressed him for some time to his heart. And now, he said, after today, you will come and live with me; you can occupy HaydÃ©es apartment, and my daughter will at least be replaced by my son.

HaydÃ©e? said Morrel, what has become of her?

She departed last night.

To leave you?

To wait for me. Hold yourself ready then to join me at the Champs-Ã©lysÃ©es, and lead me out of this house without anyone seeing my departure.

Maximilian hung his head, and obeyed with childlike reverence.

Chapter 106. Dividing the Proceeds

The apartment on the first floor of the house in the Rue Saint-Germain-des-PrÃ©s, where Albert de Morcerf had selected a home for his mother, was let to a very mysterious person. This was a man whose face the concierge himself had never seen, for in the winter his chin was buried in one of the large red handkerchiefs worn by gentlemens coachmen on a cold night, and in the summer he made a point of always blowing his nose just as he approached the door. Contrary to custom, this gentleman had not been watched, for as the report ran that he was a person of high rank, and one who would allow no impertinent interference, his _incognito_ was strictly respected.

His visits were tolerably regular, though occasionally he appeared a little before or after his time, but generally, both in summer and winter, he took possession of his apartment about four oclock, though he never spent the night there. At half-past three in the winter the fire was lighted by the discreet servant, who had the superintendence of the little apartment, and in the summer ices were placed on the table at the same hour. At four oclock, as we have already stated, the mysterious personage arrived.

Twenty minutes afterwards a carriage stopped at the house, a lady alighted in a black or dark blue dress, and always thickly veiled; she passed like a shadow through the lodge, and ran upstairs without a

sound escaping under the touch of her light foot. No one ever asked her where she was going. Her face, therefore, like that of the gentleman, was perfectly unknown to the two concierges, who were perhaps unequalled throughout the capital for discretion. We need not say she stopped at the first floor. Then she tapped in a peculiar manner at a door, which after being opened to admit her was again fastened, and curiosity penetrated no farther. They used the same precautions in leaving as in entering the house. The lady always left first, and as soon as she had stepped into her carriage, it drove away, sometimes towards the right hand, sometimes to the left; then about twenty minutes afterwards the gentleman would also leave, buried in his cravat or concealed by his handkerchief.

The day after Monte Cristo had called upon Danglars, the mysterious lodger entered at ten oclock in the morning instead of four in the afternoon. Almost directly afterwards, without the usual interval of time, a cab arrived, and the veiled lady ran hastily upstairs. The door opened, but before it could be closed, the lady exclaimed:

Oh, Lucien"oh, my friend!

The concierge therefore heard for the first time that the lodgers name was Lucien; still, as he was the very perfection of a door-keeper, he made up his mind not to tell his wife.

Well, what is the matter, my dear? asked the gentleman whose name the ladys agitation revealed; tell me what is the matter.

Oh, Lucien, can I confide in you?

Of course, you know you can do so. But what can be the matter? Your note of this morning has completely bewildered me. This precipitation"this unusual appointment. Come, ease me of my anxiety, or else frighten me at once.

Lucien, a great event has happened! said the lady, glancing inquiringly at Lucien,"M. Danglars left last night!

Left?"M. Danglars left? Where has he gone?

I do not know.

What do you mean? Has he gone intending not to return?

Undoubtedly;"at ten oclock at night his horses took him to the barrier of Charenton; there a post-chaise was waiting for him"he entered it with his valet de chambre, saying that he was going to Fontainebleau.

Then what did you mean""

Stay"he left a letter for me.

A letter?

Yes; read it.

And the baroness took from her pocket a letter which she gave to Debray. Debray paused a moment before reading, as if trying to guess its contents, or perhaps while making up his mind how to act, whatever it might contain. No doubt his ideas were arranged in a few minutes, for he began reading the letter which caused so much uneasiness in the heart of the baroness, and which ran as follows:

~Madame and most faithful wife.

Debray mechanically stopped and looked at the baroness, whose face became covered with blushes.

Read, she said.

Debray continued:

~When you receive this, you will no longer have a husband. Oh, you need not be alarmed, you will only have lost him as you have lost your daughter; I mean that I shall be travelling on one of the thirty or forty roads leading out of France. I owe you some explanations for my conduct, and as you are a woman that can perfectly understand me, I will give them. Listen, then. I received this morning five millions which I paid away; almost directly afterwards another demand for the same sum was presented to me; I put this creditor off till tomorrow and I intend leaving today, to escape that tomorrow, which would be rather too unpleasant for me to endure. You understand this, do you not, my most precious wife? I say you understand this, because you are as

conversant with my affairs as I am; indeed, I think you understand them better, since I am ignorant of what has become of a considerable portion of my fortune, once very tolerable, while I am sure, madame, that you know perfectly well. For women have infallible instincts; they can even explain the marvellous by an algebraic calculation they have invented; but I, who only understand my own figures, know nothing more than that one day these figures deceived me. Have you admired the rapidity of my fall? Have you been slightly dazzled at the sudden fusion of my ingots? I confess I have seen nothing but the fire; let us hope you have found some gold among the ashes. With this consoling idea, I leave you, madame, and most prudent wife, without any conscientious reproach for abandoning you; you have friends left, and the ashes I have already mentioned, and above all the liberty I hasten to restore to you. And here, madame, I must add another word of explanation. So long as I hoped you were working for the good of our house and for the fortune of our daughter, I philosophically closed my eyes; but as you have transformed that house into a vast ruin I will not be the foundation of another mans fortune. You were rich when I married you, but little respected. Excuse me for speaking so very candidly, but as this is intended only for ourselves, I do not see why I should weigh my words. I have augmented our fortune, and it has continued to increase during the last fifteen years, till extraordinary and unexpected catastrophes have suddenly overturned it,"without any fault of mine, I can honestly declare. You, madame, have only sought to increase your own, and I am convinced that you have succeeded. I leave you, therefore, as I took you,"rich, but little respected. Adieu! I also intend from this time to work on my own account. Accept my acknowledgments for the example you have set me, and which I intend following.

~Your very devoted husband,

~Baron Danglars.

The baroness had watched Debray while he read this long and painful letter, and saw him, notwithstanding his self-control, change color once or twice. When he had ended the perusal, he folded the letter and resumed his pensive attitude.

Well? asked Madame Danglars, with an anxiety easy to be understood.

Well, madame? unhesitatingly repeated Debray.

With what ideas does that letter inspire you?

Oh, it is simple enough, madame; it inspires me with the idea that M. Danglars has left suspiciously.

Certainly; but is this all you have to say to me?

I do not understand you, said Debray with freezing coldness.

He is gone! Gone, never to return!

Oh, madame, do not think that!

I tell you he will never return. I know his character; he is inflexible in any resolutions formed for his own interests. If he could have made any use of me, he would have taken me with him; he leaves me in Paris, as our separation will conduce to his benefit;"therefore he has gone, and I am free forever, added Madame Danglars, in the same supplicating tone.

Debray, instead of answering, allowed her to remain in an attitude of nervous inquiry.

Well? she said at length, do you not answer me?

I have but one question to ask you,"what do you intend to do?

I was going to ask you, replied the baroness with a beating heart.

Ah, then, you wish to ask advice of me?

Yes; I do wish to ask your advice, said Madame Danglars with anxious expectation.

Then if you wish to take my advice, said the young man coldly, I would recommend you to travel.

To travel! she murmured.

Certainly; as M. Danglars says, you are rich, and perfectly free. In my opinion, a withdrawal from Paris is absolutely necessary after the

double catastrophe of Mademoiselle Danglars broken contract and M. Danglars disappearance. The world will think you abandoned and poor, for the wife of a bankrupt would never be forgiven, were she to keep up an appearance of opulence. You have only to remain in Paris for about a fortnight, telling the world you are abandoned, and relating the details of this desertion to your best friends, who will soon spread the report. Then you can quit your house, leaving your jewels and giving up your jointure, and everyones mouth will be filled with praises of your disinterestedness. They will know you are deserted, and think you also poor, for I alone know your real financial position, and am quite ready to give up my accounts as an honest partner. The dread with which the pale and motionless baroness listened to this, was equalled by the calm indifference with which Debray had spoken. Deserted? she repeated; ah, yes, I am, indeed, deserted! You are right, sir, and no one can doubt my position. These were the only words that this proud and violently enamoured woman could utter in response to Debray.

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But then you are rich,"very rich, indeed, continued Debray, taking out some papers from his pocket-book, which he spread upon the table. Madame Danglars did not see them; she was engaged in stilling the beatings of her heart, and restraining the tears which were ready to gush forth. At length a sense of dignity prevailed, and if she did not entirely master her agitation, she at least succeeded in preventing the fall of a single tear.

Madame, said Debray, it is nearly six months since we have been associated. You furnished a principal of 100,000 francs. Our partnership began in the month of April. In May we commenced operations, and in the course of the month gained 450,000 francs. In June the profit amounted to 900,000. In July we added 1,700,000 francs,"it was, you know, the month of the Spanish bonds. In August we lost 300,000 francs at the beginning of the month, but on the 13th we made up for it, and we now find that our accounts, reckoning from the first day of partnership up to yesterday, when I closed them, showed a capital of 2,400,000 francs, that is, 1,200,000 for each of us. Now, madame, said Debray, delivering up his accounts in the methodical manner of a stockbroker, there are still 80,000 francs, the interest of this money, in my hands.

But, said the baroness, I thought you never put the money out to interest.

Excuse me, madame, said Debray coldly, I had your permission to do so, and I have made use of it. There are, then, 40,000 francs for your share, besides the 100,000 you furnished me to begin with, making in all 1,340,000 francs for your portion. Now, madame, I took the precaution of drawing out your money the day before yesterday; it is not long ago, you see, and I was in continual expectation of being called on to deliver up my accounts. There is your money,"half in bank-notes, the other half in checks payable to bearer. I say _there_, for as I did not consider my house safe enough, or lawyers sufficiently discreet, and as landed property carries evidence with it, and moreover since you have no right to possess anything independent of your husband, I have kept this sum, now your whole fortune, in a chest concealed under that closet, and for greater security I myself concealed it there.

Now, madame, continued Debray, first opening the closet, then the chest;"now, madame, here are 800 notes of 1,000 francs each, resembling, as you see, a large book bound in iron; to this I add a certificate in the funds of 25,000 francs; then, for the odd cash, making I think about 110,000 francs, here is a check upon my banker, who, not being M. Danglars, will pay you the amount, you may rest assured.

Madame Danglars mechanically took the check, the bond, and the heap of bank-notes. This enormous fortune made no great appearance on the

table. Madame Danglars, with tearless eyes, but with her breast heaving with concealed emotion, placed the bank-notes in her bag, put the certificate and check into her pocket-book, and then, standing pale and mute, awaited one kind word of consolation.

But she waited in vain.

Now, madame, said Debray, you have a splendid fortune, an income of about 60,000 livres a year, which is enormous for a woman who cannot keep an establishment here for a year, at least. You will be able to indulge all your fancies; besides, should you find your income insufficient, you can, for the sake of the past, madame, make use of mine; and I am ready to offer you all I possess, on loan.

Thank you, sir"thank you, replied the baroness; you forget that what you have just paid me is much more than a poor woman requires, who intends for some time, at least, to retire from the world.

Debray was, for a moment, surprised, but immediately recovering himself, he bowed with an air which seemed to say, As you please, madame.

Madame Danglars had until then, perhaps, hoped for something; but when she saw the careless bow of Debray, and the glance by which it was accompanied, together with his significant silence, she raised her head, and without passion or violence or even hesitation, ran downstairs, disdaining to address a last farewell to one who could thus part from her.

Bah, said Debray, when she had left, these are fine projects! She will remain at home, read novels, and speculate at cards, since she can no longer do so on the Bourse.

Then taking up his account book, he cancelled with the greatest care all the entries of the amounts he had just paid away.

I have 1,060,000 francs remaining, he said. What a pity Mademoiselle de Villefort is dead! She suited me in every respect, and I would have married her.

And he calmly waited until the twenty minutes had elapsed after Madame Danglars departure before he left the house. During this time he occupied himself in making figures, with his watch by his side.

Asmodeus"that diabolical personage, who would have been created by every fertile imagination if Le Sage had not acquired the priority in his great masterpiece"would have enjoyed a singular spectacle, if he had lifted up the roof of the little house in the Rue

Saint-Germain-des-PrÃ©s, while Debray was casting up his figures.

Above the room in which Debray had been dividing two millions and a half with Madame Danglars was another, inhabited by persons who have played too prominent a part in the incidents we have related for their appearance not to create some interest.

MercÃ©dÃ©s and Albert were in that room.

MercÃ©dÃ©s was much changed within the last few days; not that even in her days of fortune she had ever dressed with the magnificent display which makes us no longer able to recognize a woman when she appears in a plain and simple attire; nor indeed, had she fallen into that state of depression where it is impossible to conceal the garb of misery; no, the change in MercÃ©dÃ©s was that her eye no longer sparkled, her lips no longer smiled, and there was now a hesitation in uttering the words which formerly sprang so fluently from her ready wit.

It was not poverty which had broken her spirit; it was not a want of courage which rendered her poverty burdensome. MercÃ©dÃ©s, although deposed from the exalted position she had occupied, lost in the sphere she had now chosen, like a person passing from a room splendidly lighted into utter darkness, appeared like a queen, fallen from her palace to a hovel, and who, reduced to strict necessity, could neither become reconciled to the earthen vessels she was herself forced to place upon the table, nor to the humble pallet which had become her bed.

The beautiful Catalane and noble countess had lost both her proud glance and charming smile, because she saw nothing but misery around

her; the walls were hung with one of the gray papers which economical landlords choose as not likely to show the dirt; the floor was uncarpeted; the furniture attracted the attention to the poor attempt at luxury; indeed, everything offended eyes accustomed to refinement and elegance.

Madame de Morcerf had lived there since leaving her house; the continual silence of the spot oppressed her; still, seeing that Albert continually watched her countenance to judge the state of her feelings, she constrained herself to assume a monotonous smile of the lips alone, which, contrasted with the sweet and beaming expression that usually shone from her eyes, seemed like moonlight on a statue,"yielding light without warmth.

Albert, too, was ill at ease; the remains of luxury prevented him from sinking into his actual position. If he wished to go out without gloves, his hands appeared too white; if he wished to walk through the town, his boots seemed too highly polished. Yet these two noble and intelligent creatures, united by the indissoluble ties of maternal and filial love, had succeeded in tacitly understanding one another, and economizing their stores, and Albert had been able to tell his mother without extorting a change of countenance:

Mother, we have no more money.

50141m

MercÃ©dÃ©s had never known misery; she had often, in her youth, spoken of poverty, but between want and necessity, those synonymous words, there is a wide difference.

Amongst the Catalans, MercÃ©dÃ©s wished for a thousand things, but still she never really wanted any. So long as the nets were good, they caught fish; and so long as they sold their fish, they were able to buy twine for new nets. And then, shut out from friendship, having but one affection, which could not be mixed up with her ordinary pursuits, she thought of herself"of no one but herself. Upon the little she earned she lived as well as she could; now there were two to be supported, and nothing to live upon.

Winter approached. MercÃ©dÃ©s had no fire in that cold and naked room"she, who was accustomed to stoves which heated the house from the hall to the boudoir; she had not even one little flower"she whose apartment had been a conservatory of costly exotics. But she had her son. Hitherto the excitement of fulfilling a duty had sustained them. Excitement, like enthusiasm, sometimes renders us unconscious to the things of earth. But the excitement had calmed down, and they felt themselves obliged to descend from dreams to reality; after having exhausted the ideal, they found they must talk of the actual.

Mother, exclaimed Albert, just as Madame Danglars was descending the stairs, let us reckon our riches, if you please; I want capital to build my plans upon.

Capital"nothing! replied MercÃ©dÃ©s with a mournful smile.

No, mother,"capital 3,000 francs. And I have an idea of our leading a delightful life upon this 3,000 francs.

Child! sighed MercÃ©dÃ©s.

Alas, dear mother, said the young man, I have unhappily spent too much of your money not to know the value of it. These 3,000 francs are enormous, and I intend building upon this foundation a miraculous certainty for the future.

You say this, my dear boy; but do you think we ought to accept these 3,000 francs? said MercÃ©dÃ©s, coloring.

I think so, answered Albert in a firm tone. We will accept them the more readily, since we have them not here; you know they are buried in the garden of the little house in the AllÃ©es de Meilhan, at Marseilles. With 200 francs we can reach Marseilles.

With 200 francs?"are you sure, Albert?

Oh, as for that, I have made inquiries respecting the diligences and steamboats, and my calculations are made. You will take your place in the _coupÃ©_ to ChÃ¢lons. You see, mother, I treat you handsomely for

thirty-five francs.

Albert then took a pen, and wrote:

Frs. _CoupÃ©_,
thirty-five
francs.....

.....
..... 35.

From ChÃ¢lons
to Lyons you
will go on by
the
steamboat..

6. From Lyons
to Avignon
(still by
steamboat)....

..... 16.
From Avignon
to Marseilles,
seven
francs.....

..... 7.
Expenses on
the road,
about fifty
francs.....

..... 50.
Total.....

.....
.....
.....
114 frs.

Let us put down 120, added Albert, smiling. You see I am generous,
am I not, mother?

But you, my poor child?

I? do you not see that I reserve eighty francs for myself? A young man
does not require luxuries; besides, I know what travelling is.

With a post-chaise and valet de chambre?

Any way, mother.

Well, be it so. But these 200 francs?

Here they are, and 200 more besides. See, I have sold my watch for 100
francs, and the guard and seals for 300. How fortunate that the
ornaments were worth more than the watch. Still the same story of
superfluities! Now I think we are rich, since instead of the 114 francs
we require for the journey we find ourselves in possession of 250.

But we owe something in this house?

Thirty francs; but I pay that out of my 150 francs,"that is
understood,"and as I require only eighty francs for my journey, you see
I am overwhelmed with luxury. But that is not all. What do you say to
this, mother?

And Albert took out of a little pocket-book with golden clasps, a
remnant of his old fancies, or perhaps a tender souvenir from one of
the mysterious and veiled ladies who used to knock at his little
door,"Albert took out of this pocket-book a note of 1,000 francs.

What is this? asked MercÃ©dÃ©s.

A thousand francs.

But whence have you obtained them?

Listen to me, mother, and do not yield too much to agitation. And
Albert, rising, kissed his mother on both cheeks, then stood looking at
her. You cannot imagine, mother, how beautiful I think you! said the
young man, impressed with a profound feeling of filial love. You are,
indeed, the most beautiful and most noble woman I ever saw!

Dear child! said MercÃ©dÃ©s, endeavoring in vain to restrain a tear

which glistened in the corner of her eye. Indeed, you only wanted misfortune to change my love for you to admiration. I am not unhappy while I possess my son!

Ah, just so, said Albert; here begins the trial. Do you know the decision we have come to, mother?

Have we come to any?

Yes; it is decided that you are to live at Marseilles, and that I am to leave for Africa, where I will earn for myself the right to use the name I now bear, instead of the one I have thrown aside. MercÃ©dÃ©s sighed. Well, mother, I yesterday engaged myself as substitute in the Spahis, 25 added the young man, lowering his eyes with a certain feeling of shame, for even he was unconscious of the sublimity of his self-abasement. I thought my body was my own, and that I might sell it. I yesterday took the place of another. I sold myself for more than I thought I was worth, he added, attempting to smile; I fetched 2,000 francs.

Then these 1,000 francs"" said MercÃ©dÃ©s, shuddering.

Are the half of the sum, mother; the other will be paid in a year.

MercÃ©dÃ©s raised her eyes to heaven with an expression it would be impossible to describe, and tears, which had hitherto been restrained, now yielded to her emotion, and ran down her cheeks.

The price of his blood! she murmured.

Yes, if I am killed, said Albert, laughing. But I assure you, mother, I have a strong intention of defending my person, and I never felt half so strong an inclination to live as I do now.

Merciful Heavens!

Besides, mother, why should you make up your mind that I am to be killed? Has LamoriciÃ©re, that Ney of the South, been killed? Has Changarnier been killed? Has Bedeau been killed? Has Morrel, whom we know, been killed? Think of your joy, mother, when you see me return with an embroidered uniform! I declare, I expect to look magnificent in it, and chose that regiment only from vanity.

MercÃ©dÃ©s sighed while endeavoring to smile; the devoted mother felt that she ought not to allow the whole weight of the sacrifice to fall upon her son.

Well, now you understand, mother! continued Albert; here are more than 4,000 francs settled on you; upon these you can live at least two years.

Do you think so? said MercÃ©dÃ©s.

These words were uttered in so mournful a tone that their real meaning did not escape Albert; he felt his heart beat, and taking his mother's hand within his own he said, tenderly:

Yes, you will live!

I shall live!"then you will not leave me, Albert?

Mother, I must go, said Albert in a firm, calm voice; you love me too well to wish me to remain useless and idle with you; besides, I have signed.

50145m

You will obey your own wish and the will of Heaven!

Not my own wish, mother, but reason"necessity. Are we not two despairing creatures? What is life to you?"Nothing. What is life to me?"Very little without you, mother; for believe me, but for you I should have ceased to live on the day I doubted my father and renounced his name. Well, I will live, if you promise me still to hope; and if you grant me the care of your future prospects, you will redouble my strength. Then I will go to the governor of Algeria; he has a royal heart, and is essentially a soldier; I will tell him my gloomy story. I will beg him to turn his eyes now and then towards me, and if he keep his word and interest himself for me, in six months I shall be an officer, or dead. If I am an officer, your fortune is certain, for I shall have money enough for both, and, moreover, a name we shall both be proud of, since it will be our own. If I am killed"well then mother, you can also die, and there will be an end of our misfortunes.

It is well, replied Mercutio, with her eloquent glance; you are right, my love; let us prove to those who are watching our actions that we are worthy of compassion.

But let us not yield to gloomy apprehensions, said the young man; I assure you we are, or rather we shall be, very happy. You are a woman at once full of spirit and resignation; I have become simple in my tastes, and am without passion, I hope. Once in service, I shall be rich"once in M. Dant's house, you will be at rest. Let us strive, I beseech you,"let us strive to be cheerful.

Yes, let us strive, for you ought to live, and to be happy, Albert. And so our division is made, mother, said the young man, affecting ease of mind. We can now part; come, I shall engage your passage.

And you, my dear boy?

I shall stay here for a few days longer; we must accustom ourselves to parting. I want recommendations and some information relative to Africa. I will join you again at Marseilles.

Well, be it so"let us part, said Mercutio, folding around her shoulders the only shawl she had taken away, and which accidentally happened to be a valuable black cashmere. Albert gathered up his papers hastily, rang the bell to pay the thirty francs he owed to the landlord, and offering his arm to his mother, they descended the stairs.

Someone was walking down before them, and this person, hearing the rustling of a silk dress, turned around. Debray! muttered Albert. You, Morcerf? replied the secretary, resting on the stairs. Curiosity had vanquished the desire of preserving his _incognito_, and he was recognized. It was, indeed, strange in this unknown spot to find the young man whose misfortunes had made so much noise in Paris.

Morcerf! repeated Debray. Then noticing in the dim light the still youthful and veiled figure of Madame de Morcerf:

Pardon me, he added with a smile, I leave you, Albert. Albert understood his thoughts.

Mother, he said, turning towards Mercutio, this is M. Debray, secretary of the Minister for the Interior, once a friend of mine.

How once? stammered Debray; what do you mean?

I say so, M. Debray, because I have no friends now, and I ought not to have any. I thank you for having recognized me, sir. Debray stepped forward, and cordially pressed the hand of his interlocutor.

Believe me, dear Albert, he said, with all the emotion he was capable of feeling,"believe me, I feel deeply for your misfortunes, and if in any way I can serve you, I am yours.

Thank you, sir, said Albert, smiling. In the midst of our misfortunes, we are still rich enough not to require assistance from anyone. We are leaving Paris, and when our journey is paid, we shall have 5,000 francs left.

The blood mounted to the temples of Debray, who held a million in his pocket-book, and unimaginative as he was he could not help reflecting that the same house had contained two women, one of whom, justly dishonored, had left it poor with 1,500,000 francs under her cloak, while the other, unjustly stricken, but sublime in her misfortune, was yet rich with a few deniers. This parallel disturbed his usual politeness, the philosophy he witnessed appalled him, he muttered a few words of general civility and ran downstairs.

That day the ministers clerks and the subordinates had a great deal to put up with from his ill-humor. But that same night, he found himself the possessor of a fine house, situated on the Boulevard de la Madeleine, and an income of 50,000 livres.

The next day, just as Debray was signing the deed, that is about five o'clock in the afternoon, Madame de Morcerf, after having affectionately embraced her son, entered the _coupé_ of the diligence, which closed upon her.

A man was hidden in Lafittes banking-house, behind one of the little arched windows which are placed above each desk; he saw Mercutio enter

the diligence, and he also saw Albert withdraw. Then he passed his hand across his forehead, which was clouded with doubt.

Alas, he exclaimed, how can I restore the happiness I have taken away from these poor innocent creatures? God help me!

Chapter 107. The Lions Den

One division of La Force, in which the most dangerous and desperate prisoners are confined, is called the court of Saint-Bernard. The prisoners, in their expressive language, have named it the Lions Den, probably because the captives possess teeth which frequently gnaw the bars, and sometimes the keepers also. It is a prison within a prison; the walls are double the thickness of the rest. The gratings are every day carefully examined by jailers, whose herculean proportions and cold pitiless expression prove them to have been chosen to reign over their subjects for their superior activity and intelligence.

The courtyard of this quarter is enclosed by enormous walls, over which the sun glances obliquely, when it deigns to penetrate into this gulf of moral and physical deformity. On this paved yard are to be seen, "pacing to and fro from morning till night, pale, careworn, and haggard, like so many shadows," the men whom justice holds beneath the steel she is sharpening. There, crouched against the side of the wall which attracts and retains the most heat, they may be seen sometimes talking to one another, but more frequently alone, watching the door, which sometimes opens to call forth one from the gloomy assemblage, or to throw in another outcast from society.