

ing that is marvellous, M. Albert. Tell me, why does a steward rob his master?

Because, I suppose, it is his nature to do so, for the love of robbing.

You are mistaken; it is because he has a wife and family, and ambitious desires for himself and them. Also because he is not sure of always retaining his situation, and wishes to provide for the future. Now, M. Bertuccio is alone in the world; he uses my property without accounting for the use he makes of it; he is sure never to leave my service.

Why?

Because I should never get a better.

Probabilities are deceptive.

But I deal in certainties; he is the best servant over whom one has the power of life and death.

Do you possess that right over Bertuccio?

Yes.

There are words which close a conversation with an iron door; such was the counts yes.

The whole journey was performed with equal rapidity; the thirty-two horses, dispersed over seven stages, brought them to their destination in eight hours. At midnight they arrived at the gate of a beautiful park. The porter was in attendance; he had been apprised by the groom of the last stage of the counts approach. At half past two in the morning Morcerf was conducted to his apartments, where a bath and supper were prepared. The servant who had travelled at the back of the carriage waited on him; Baptistin, who rode in front, attended the count.

Albert bathed, took his supper, and went to bed. All night he was lulled by the melancholy noise of the surf. On rising, he went to his window, which opened on a terrace, having the sea in front, and at the back a pretty park bounded by a small forest.

In a creek lay a little sloop, with a narrow keel and high masts, bearing on its flag the Monte Cristo arms which were a mountain \_or\_, on a sea \_azure\_, with a cross \_gules\_ in chief which might be an allusion to his name that recalled Calvary, the mount rendered by our Lords passion more precious than gold, and to the degrading cross which his blood had rendered holy; or it might be some personal remembrance of suffering and regeneration buried in the night of this mysterious personages pas life.

Around the schooner lay a number of small fishing-boats belonging to the fishermen of the neighboring village, like humble subjects awaiting orders from their queen. There, as in every spot where Monte Cristo stopped, if but for two days, luxury abounded and life went on with the utmost ease.

Albert found in his anteroom two guns, with all the accoutrements for hunting; a lofty room on the ground floor containing all the ingenious instruments the English "eminent in piscatory pursuits, since they are patient and sluggish" have invented for fishing. The day passed in pursuing those exercises in which Monte Cristo excelled. They killed a dozen pheasants in the park, as many trout in the stream, dined in a summer-house overlooking the ocean, and took tea in the library. Towards the evening of the third day. Albert, completely exhausted with the exercise which invigorated Monte Cristo, was sleeping in an armchair near the window, while the count was designing with his architect the plan of a conservatory in his house, when the sound of a horse at full speed on the high road made Albert look up. He was disagreeably surprised to see his own valet de chambre, whom he had not brought, that he might not inconvenience Monte Cristo.

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Florentin here! cried he, starting up; is my mother ill? And he hastened to the door. Monte Cristo watched and saw him approach the valet, who drew a small sealed parcel from his pocket, containing a

newspaper and a letter.

From whom is this? said he eagerly.

From M. Beauchamp, replied Florentin.

Did he send you?

Yes, sir; he sent for me to his house, gave me money for my journey, procured a horse, and made me promise not to stop till I had reached you, I have come in fifteen hours.

Albert opened the letter with fear, uttered a shriek on reading the first line, and seized the paper. His sight was dimmed, his legs sank under him, and he would have fallen had not Florentin supported him. Poor young man, said Monte Cristo in a low voice; it is then true that the sin of the father shall fall on the children to the third and fourth generation.

Meanwhile Albert had revived, and, continuing to read, he threw back his head, saying:

Florentin, is your horse fit to return immediately?

It is a poor, lame post-horse.

In what state was the house when you left?

All was quiet, but on returning from M. Beauchamps, I found madame in tears; she had sent for me to know when you would return. I told her my orders from M. Beauchamp; she first extended her arms to prevent me, but after a moments reflection, ~Yes, go, Florentin, said she, ~and may he come quickly.

Yes, my mother, said Albert, I will return, and woe to the infamous wretch! But first of all I must get there.

He went back to the room where he had left Monte Cristo. Five minutes had sufficed to make a complete transformation in his appearance. His voice had become rough and hoarse; his face was furrowed with wrinkles; his eyes burned under the blue-veined lids, and he tottered like a drunken man.

Count, said he, I thank you for your hospitality, which I would gladly have enjoyed longer; but I must return to Paris.

What has happened?

A great misfortune, more important to me than life. Dont question me, I beg of you, but lend me a horse.

My stables are at your command, viscount; but you will kill yourself by riding on horseback. Take a post-chaise or a carriage.

No, it would delay me, and I need the fatigue you warn me of; it will do me good.

Albert reeled as if he had been shot, and fell on a chair near the door. Monte Cristo did not see this second manifestation of physical exhaustion; he was at the window, calling:

Ali, a horse for M. de Morcerf"quick! he is in a hurry!

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These words restored Albert; he darted from the room, followed by the count.

Thank you! cried he, throwing himself on his horse.

Return as soon as you can, Florentin. Must I use any password to procure a horse?

Only dismount; another will be immediately saddled.

Albert hesitated a moment. You may think my departure strange and foolish, said the young man; you do not know how a paragraph in a newspaper may exasperate one. Read that, said he, when I am gone, that you may not be witness of my anger.

While the count picked up the paper he put spurs to his horse, which leaped in astonishment at such an unusual stimulus, and shot away with the rapidity of an arrow. The count watched him with a feeling of compassion, and when he had completely disappeared, read as follows:

The French officer in the service of Ali Pasha of Yanina alluded to three weeks since in \_lImpartial\_, who not only surrendered the castle of Yanina, but sold his benefactor to the Turks, styled himself truly at that time Fernand, as our esteemed contemporary states; but he has since added to his Christian name a title of nobility and a family

name. He now calls himself the Count of Morcerf, and ranks among the peers.

Thus the terrible secret, which Beauchamp had so generously destroyed, appeared again like an armed phantom; and another paper, deriving its information from some malicious source, had published two days after Alberts departure for Normandy the few lines which had rendered the unfortunate young man almost crazy.

#### Chapter 86. The Trial

At eight oclock in the morning Albert had arrived at Beauchamps door.

The valet de chambre had received orders to usher him in at once.

Beauchamp was in his bath.

Here I am, Albert said.

Well, my poor friend, replied Beauchamp, I expected you.

I need not say I think you are too faithful and too kind to have spoken of that painful circumstance. Your having sent for me is another proof of your affection. So, without losing time, tell me, have you the slightest idea whence this terrible blow proceeds?

I think I have some clew.

But first tell me all the particulars of this shameful plot.

Beauchamp proceeded to relate to the young man, who was overwhelmed with shame and grief, the following facts. Two days previously, the article had appeared in another paper besides \_ lImpartial\_, and, what was more serious, one that was well known as a government paper.

Beauchamp was breakfasting when he read the paragraph. He sent immediately for a cabriolet, and hastened to the publishers office.

Although professing diametrically opposite principles from those of the editor of the other paper, Beauchamp"as it sometimes, we may say often, happens"was his intimate friend. The editor was reading, with apparent delight, a leading article in the same paper on beet-sugar, probably a composition of his own.

Ah, \_pardieu!\_ said Beauchamp, with the paper in your hand, my friend, I need not tell you the cause of my visit.

Are you interested in the sugar question? asked the editor of the ministerial paper.

No, replied Beauchamp, I have not considered the question; a totally different subject interests me.

What is it?

The article relative to Morcerf.

Indeed? Is it not a curious affair?

So curious, that I think you are running a great risk of a prosecution for defamation of character.

Not at all; we have received with the information all the requisite proofs, and we are quite sure M. de Morcerf will not raise his voice against us; besides, it is rendering a service to ones country to denounce these wretched criminals who are unworthy of the honor bestowed on them.

Beauchamp was thunderstruck.

Who, then, has so correctly informed you? asked he; for my paper, which gave the first information on the subject, has been obliged to stop for want of proof; and yet we are more interested than you in exposing M. de Morcerf, as he is a peer of France, and we are of the opposition.

Oh, that is very simple; we have not sought to scandalize. This news was brought to us. A man arrived yesterday from Yanina, bringing a formidable array of documents; and when we hesitated to publish the accusatory article, he told us it should be inserted in some other paper.

Beauchamp understood that nothing remained but to submit, and left the office to despatch a courier to Morcerf. But he had been unable to send to Albert the following particulars, as the events had transpired after the messengers departure; namely, that the same day a great agitation was manifest in the House of Peers among the usually calm members of that dignified assembly. Everyone had arrived almost before the usual

hour, and was conversing on the melancholy event which was to attract the attention of the public towards one of their most illustrious colleagues. Some were perusing the article, others making comments and recalling circumstances which substantiated the charges still more. The Count of Morcerf was no favorite with his colleagues. Like all upstarts, he had had recourse to a great deal of haughtiness to maintain his position. The true nobility laughed at him, the talented repelled him, and the honorable instinctively despised him. He was, in fact, in the unhappy position of the victim marked for sacrifice; the finger of God once pointed at him, everyone was prepared to raise the hue and cry.

The Count of Morcerf alone was ignorant of the news. He did not take in the paper containing the defamatory article, and had passed the morning in writing letters and in trying a horse. He arrived at his usual hour, with a proud look and insolent demeanor; he alighted, passed through the corridors, and entered the house without observing the hesitation of the door-keepers or the coolness of his colleagues.

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Business had already been going on for half an hour when he entered. Everyone held the accusing paper, but, as usual, no one liked to take upon himself the responsibility of the attack. At length an honorable peer, Morcerfs acknowledged enemy, ascended the tribune with that solemnity which announced that the expected moment had arrived. There was an impressive silence; Morcerf alone knew not why such profound attention was given to an orator who was not always listened to with so much complacency.

The count did not notice the introduction, in which the speaker announced that his communication would be of that vital importance that it demanded the undivided attention of the House; but at the mention of Yanina and Colonel Fernand, he turned so frightfully pale that every member shuddered and fixed his eyes upon him. Moral wounds have this peculiarity,"they may be hidden, but they never close; always painful, always ready to bleed when touched, they remain fresh and open in the heart.

The article having been read during the painful hush that followed, a universal shudder pervaded the assembly, and immediately the closest attention was given to the orator as he resumed his remarks. He stated his scruples and the difficulties of the case; it was the honor of M. de Morcerf, and that of the whole House, he proposed to defend, by provoking a debate on personal questions, which are always such painful themes of discussion. He concluded by calling for an investigation, which might dispose of the calumnious report before it had time to spread, and restore M. de Morcerf to the position he had long held in public opinion.

Morcerf was so completely overwhelmed by this great and unexpected calamity that he could scarcely stammer a few words as he looked around on the assembly. This timidity, which might proceed from the astonishment of innocence as well as the shame of guilt, conciliated some in his favor; for men who are truly generous are always ready to compassionate when the misfortune of their enemy surpasses the limits of their hatred.

The president put it to the vote, and it was decided that the investigation should take place. The count was asked what time he required to prepare his defence. Morcerfs courage had revived when he found himself alive after this horrible blow.

My lords, answered he, it is not by time I could repel the attack made on me by enemies unknown to me, and, doubtless, hidden in obscurity; it is immediately, and by a thunderbolt, that I must repel the flash of lightning which, for a moment, startled me. Oh, that I could, instead of taking up this defence, shed my last drop of blood to prove to my noble colleagues that I am their equal in worth.

These words made a favorable impression on behalf of the accused.

I demand, then, that the examination shall take place as soon as

possible, and I will furnish the house with all necessary information. What day do you fix? asked the president.

Today I am at your service, replied the count.

The president rang the bell. Does the House approve that the examination should take place today?

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Yes, was the unanimous answer.

A committee of twelve members was chosen to examine the proofs brought forward by Morcerf. The investigation would begin at eight oclock that evening in the committee-room, and if postponement were necessary, the proceedings would be resumed each evening at the same hour. Morcerf asked leave to retire; he had to collect the documents he had long been preparing against this storm, which his sagacity had foreseen.

Beauchamp related to the young man all the facts we have just narrated; his story, however, had over ours all the advantage of the animation of living things over the coldness of dead things.

Albert listened, trembling now with hope, then with anger, and then again with shame, for from Beauchamps confidence he knew his father was guilty, and he asked himself how, since he was guilty, he could prove his innocence. Beauchamp hesitated to continue his narrative. What next? asked Albert.

What next? My friend, you impose a painful task on me. Must you know all?

Absolutely; and rather from your lips than anothers.

Muster up all your courage, then, for never have you required it more.

Albert passed his hand over his forehead, as if to try his strength, as a man who is preparing to defend his life proves his shield and bends his sword. He thought himself strong enough, for he mistook fever for energy. Go on, said he.

The evening arrived; all Paris was in expectation. Many said your father had only to show himself to crush the charge against him; many others said he would not appear; while some asserted that they had seen him start for Brussels; and others went to the police-office to inquire if he had taken out a passport. I used all my influence with one of the committee, a young peer of my acquaintance, to get admission to one of the galleries. He called for me at seven oclock, and, before anyone had arrived, asked one of the door-keepers to place me in a box. I was concealed by a column, and might witness the whole of the terrible scene which was about to take place. At eight oclock all were in their places, and M. de Morcerf entered at the last stroke. He held some papers in his hand; his countenance was calm, and his step firm, and he was dressed with great care in his military uniform, which was buttoned completely up to the chin. His presence produced a good effect. The committee was made up of Liberals, several of whom came forward to shake hands with him.

Albert felt his heart bursting at these particulars, but gratitude mingled with his sorrow: he would gladly have embraced those who had given his father this proof of esteem at a moment when his honor was so powerfully attacked.

At this moment one of the door-keepers brought in a letter for the president. ~You are at liberty to speak, M. de Morcerf, said the president, as he unsealed the letter; and the count began his defence, I assure you, Albert, in a most eloquent and skilful manner. He produced documents proving that the Vizier of Yanina had up to the last moment honored him with his entire confidence, since he had interested him with a negotiation of life and death with the emperor. He produced the ring, his mark of authority, with which Ali Pasha generally sealed his letters, and which the latter had given him, that he might, on his return at any hour of the day or night, gain access to the presence, even in the harem. Unfortunately, the negotiation failed, and when he returned to defend his benefactor, he was dead. ~But, said the count, ~so great was Ali Pashas confidence, that on his death-bed he resigned

his favorite mistress and her daughter to my care.

Albert started on hearing these words; the history of HaydÃ©e recurred to him, and he remembered what she had said of that message and the ring, and the manner in which she had been sold and made a slave.

And what effect did this discourse produce? anxiously inquired

Albert.

I acknowledge it affected me, and, indeed, all the committee also, said Beauchamp.

Meanwhile, the president carelessly opened the letter which had been brought to him; but the first lines aroused his attention; he read them again and again, and fixing his eyes on M. de Morcerf, "Count," said he, "you have said that the Vizier of Yanina confided his wife and daughter to your care?" "Yes, sir," replied Morcerf; "but in that, like all the rest, misfortune pursued me. On my return, Vasiliki and her daughter HaydÃ©e had disappeared." "Did you know them?" "My intimacy with the pasha and his unlimited confidence had gained me an introduction to them, and I had seen them above twenty times.

"Have you any idea what became of them?" "Yes, sir; I heard they had fallen victims to their sorrow, and, perhaps, to their poverty. I was not rich; my life was in constant danger; I could not seek them, to my great regret. The president frowned imperceptibly. "Gentlemen," said he, "you have heard the Comte de Morcerf's defence. Can you, sir, produce any witnesses to the truth of what you have asserted?" "Alas, no, monsieur," replied the count; "all those who surrounded the vizier, or who knew me at his court, are either dead or gone away, I know not where. I believe that I alone, of all my countrymen, survived that dreadful war. I have only the letters of Ali Tepelini, which I have placed before you; the ring, a token of his good-will, which is here; and, lastly, the most convincing proof I can offer, after an anonymous attack, and that is the absence of any witness against my veracity and the purity of my military life.

A murmur of approbation ran through the assembly; and at this moment, Albert, had nothing more transpired, your father's cause had been gained. It only remained to put it to the vote, when the president resumed: "Gentlemen and you, monsieur," "you will not be displeased, I presume, to listen to one who calls himself a very important witness, and who has just presented himself. He is, doubtless, come to prove the perfect innocence of our colleague. Here is a letter I have just received on the subject; shall it be read, or shall it be passed over? and shall we take no notice of this incident? M. de Morcerf turned pale, and clenched his hands on the papers he held. The committee decided to hear the letter; the count was thoughtful and silent. The president read:

"Mr. President," "I can furnish the committee of inquiry into the conduct of the Lieutenant-General the Count of Morcerf in Epirus and in Macedonia with important particulars.

The president paused, and the count turned pale. The president looked at his auditors. "Proceed," was heard on all sides. The president resumed:

"I was on the spot at the death of Ali Pasha. I was present during his last moments. I know what is become of Vasiliki and HaydÃ©e. I am at the command of the committee, and even claim the honor of being heard. I shall be in the lobby when this note is delivered to you.

"And who is this witness, or rather this enemy?" asked the count, in a tone in which there was a visible alteration. "We shall know, sir," replied the president. "Is the committee willing to hear this witness?" "Yes, yes, they all said at once. The door-keeper was called. "Is there anyone in the lobby?" said the president.

"Yes, sir." "Who is it?" "A woman, accompanied by a servant. Everyone looked at his neighbor. "Bring her in," said the president. Five minutes after the door-keeper again appeared; all eyes were fixed on the door, and I, said Beauchamp, shared the general expectation and anxiety. Behind the door-keeper walked a woman enveloped in a large

veil, which completely concealed her. It was evident, from her figure and the perfumes she had about her, that she was young and fastidious in her tastes, but that was all. The president requested her to throw aside her veil, and it was then seen that she was dressed in the Grecian costume, and was remarkably beautiful.

Ah, said Albert, it was she.

Who?

Hayd  e.

Who told you that?

Alas, I guess it. But go on, Beauchamp. You see I am calm and strong. And yet we must be drawing near the disclosure.

M. de Morcerf, continued Beauchamp, looked at this woman with surprise and terror. Her lips were about to pass his sentence of life or death. To the committee the adventure was so extraordinary and curious, that the interest they had felt for the counts safety became now quite a secondary matter. The president himself advanced to place a seat for the young lady; but she declined availing herself of it. As for the count, he had fallen on his chair; it was evident that his legs refused to support him.

  Madame, said the president,   you have engaged to furnish the committee with some important particulars respecting the affair at Yanina, and you have stated that you were an eyewitness of the event."  I was, indeed, said the stranger, with a tone of sweet melancholy, and with the sonorous voice peculiar to the East.

  But allow me to say that you must have been very young then."  I was four years old; but as those events deeply concerned me, not a single detail has escaped my memory."  In what manner could these events concern you? and who are you, that they should have made so deep an impression on you?"  On them depended my fathers life, replied she.

  I am Hayd  e, the daughter of Ali Tepelini, pasha of Yanina, and of Vasiliki, his beloved wife.

40202m

The blush of mingled pride and modesty which suddenly suffused the cheeks of the young woman, the brilliancy of her eye, and her highly important communication, produced an indescribable effect on the assembly. As for the count, he could not have been more overwhelmed if a thunderbolt had fallen at his feet and opened an immense gulf before him.

  Madame, replied the president, bowing with profound respect,   allow me to ask one question; it shall be the last: Can you prove the authenticity of what you have now stated?

  I can, sir, said Hayd  e, drawing from under her veil a satin satchel highly perfumed;   for here is the register of my birth, signed by my father and his principal officers, and that of my baptism, my father having consented to my being brought up in my mothers faith,"this latter has been sealed by the grand primate of Macedonia and Epirus; and lastly (and perhaps the most important), the record of the sale of my person and that of my mother to the Armenian merchant El-Kobbir, by the French officer, who, in his infamous bargain with the Porte, had reserved as his part of the booty the wife and daughter of his benefactor, whom he sold for the sum of four hundred thousand francs. A greenish pallor spread over the counts cheeks, and his eyes became bloodshot at these terrible imputations, which were listened to by the assembly with ominous silence.

Hayd  e, still calm, but with a calmness more dreadful than the anger of another would have been, handed to the president the record of her sale, written in Arabic. It had been supposed some of the papers might be in the Arabian, Romaic, or Turkish language, and the interpreter of the House was in attendance. One of the noble peers, who was familiar with the Arabic language, having studied it during the famous Egyptian campaign, followed with his eye as the translator read aloud:

  I, El-Kobbir, a slave-merchant, and purveyor of the harem of his highness, acknowledge having received for transmission to the sublime

emperor, from the French lord, the Count of Monte Cristo, an emerald valued at eight hundred thousand francs; as the ransom of a young Christian slave of eleven years of age, named HaydÃ©e, the acknowledged daughter of the late lord Ali Tepelini, pasha of Yanina, and of Vasiliki, his favorite; she having been sold to me seven years previously, with her mother, who had died on arriving at Constantinople, by a French colonel in the service of the Vizier Ali Tepelini, named Fernand Mondego. The above-mentioned purchase was made on his highness's account, whose mandate I had, for the sum of four hundred thousand francs.

~Given at Constantinople, by authority of his highness, in the year 1247 of the Hegira.

~Signed, El-Kobbir.

~That this record should have all due authority, it shall bear the imperial seal, which the vendor is bound to have affixed to it.

Near the merchant's signature there was, indeed, the seal of the sublime emperor. A dreadful silence followed the reading of this document; the count could only stare, and his gaze, fixed as if unconsciously on HaydÃ©e, seemed one of fire and blood. ~Madame, said the president, ~may reference be made to the Count of Monte Cristo, who is now, I believe, in Paris?

~Sir, replied HaydÃ©e, ~the Count of Monte Cristo, my foster-father, has been in Normandy the last three days.

~Who, then, has counselled you to take this step, one for which the court is deeply indebted to you, and which is perfectly natural, considering your birth and your misfortunes?" ~Sir, replied HaydÃ©e, ~I have been led to take this step from a feeling of respect and grief. Although a Christian, may God forgive me, I have always sought to revenge my illustrious father. Since I set my foot in France, and knew the traitor lived in Paris, I have watched carefully. I live retired in the house of my noble protector, but I do it from choice. I love retirement and silence, because I can live with my thoughts and recollections of past days. But the Count of Monte Cristo surrounds me with every paternal care, and I am ignorant of nothing which passes in the world. I learn all in the silence of my apartments,"for instance, I see all the newspapers, every periodical, as well as every new piece of music; and by thus watching the course of the life of others, I learned what had transpired this morning in the House of Peers, and what was to take place this evening; then I wrote.

40204m

~Then, remarked the president, ~the Count of Monte Cristo knows nothing of your present proceedings?" ~He is quite unaware of them, and I have but one fear, which is that he should disapprove of what I have done. But it is a glorious day for me, continued the young girl, raising her ardent gaze to heaven, ~that on which I find at last an opportunity of avenging my father!

The count had not uttered one word the whole of this time. His colleagues looked at him, and doubtless pitied his prospects, blighted under the perfumed breath of a woman. His misery was depicted in sinister lines on his countenance. ~M. de Morcerf, said the president, ~do you recognize this lady as the daughter of Ali Tepelini, pasha of Yanina?" ~No, said Morcerf, attempting to rise, ~it is a base plot, contrived by my enemies. HaydÃ©e, whose eyes had been fixed on the door, as if expecting someone, turned hastily, and, seeing the count standing, shrieked, ~You do not know me? said she. ~Well, I fortunately recognize you! You are Fernand Mondego, the French officer who led the troops of my noble father! It is you who surrendered the castle of Yanina! It is you who, sent by him to Constantinople, to treat with the emperor for the life or death of your benefactor, brought back a false mandate granting full pardon! It is you who, with that mandate, obtained the pasha's ring, which gave you authority over Selim, the fire-keeper! It is you who stabbed Selim. It is you who sold us, my mother and me, to the merchant, El-Kobbir! Assassin, assassin,



assassin, you have still on your brow your masters blood! Look, gentlemen, all!

These words had been pronounced with such enthusiasm and evident truth, that every eye was fixed on the counts forehead, and he himself passed his hand across it, as if he felt Alis blood still lingering there. "You positively recognize M. de Morcerf as the officer, Fernand Mondego?" "Indeed I do!" cried HaydÃ©. "Oh, my mother, it was you who said, You were free, you had a beloved father, you were destined to be almost a queen. Look well at that man; it is he who raised your fathers head on the point of a spear; it is he who sold us; it is he who forsook us! Look well at his right hand, on which he has a large wound; if you forgot his features, you would know him by that hand, into which fell, one by one, the gold pieces of the merchant El-Kobbir! I know him! Ah, let him say now if he does not recognize me! Each word fell like a dagger on Morcerf, and deprived him of a portion of his energy; as she uttered the last, he hid his mutilated hand hastily in his bosom, and fell back on his seat, overwhelmed by wretchedness and despair. This scene completely changed the opinion of the assembly respecting the accused count.

"Count of Morcerf, said the president, "do not allow yourself to be cast down; answer. The justice of the court is supreme and impartial as that of God; it will not suffer you to be trampled on by your enemies without giving you an opportunity of defending yourself. Shall further inquiries be made? Shall two members of the House be sent to Yanina? Speak! Morcerf did not reply. Then all the members looked at each other with terror. They knew the counts energetic and violent temper; it must be, indeed, a dreadful blow which would deprive him of courage to defend himself. They expected that his stupefied silence would be followed by a fiery outburst. "Well, asked the president, "what is your decision?

40206m

"I have no reply to make, said the count in a low tone.

"Has the daughter of Ali Tepelini spoken the truth? said the president. "Is she, then, the terrible witness to whose charge you dare not plead Not guilty? Have you really committed the crimes of which you are accused? The count looked around him with an expression which might have softened tigers, but which could not disarm his judges. Then he raised his eyes towards the ceiling, but withdrew then, immediately, as if he feared the roof would open and reveal to his distressed view that second tribunal called heaven, and that other judge named God. Then, with a hasty movement, he tore open his coat, which seemed to stifle him, and flew from the room like a madman; his footstep was heard one moment in the corridor, then the rattling of his carriage-wheels as he was driven rapidly away. "Gentlemen, said the president, when silence was restored, "is the Count of Morcerf convicted of felony, treason, and conduct unbecoming a member of this House?" "Yes, replied all the members of the committee of inquiry with a unanimous voice.

HaydÃ© had remained until the close of the meeting. She heard the counts sentence pronounced without betraying an expression of joy or pity; then drawing her veil over her face she bowed majestically to the councillors, and left with that dignified step which Virgil attributes to his goddesses.

#### Chapter 87. The Challenge

Then, continued Beauchamp, I took advantage of the silence and the darkness to leave the house without being seen. The usher who had introduced me was waiting for me at the door, and he conducted me through the corridors to a private entrance opening into the Rue de Vaugirard. I left with mingled feelings of sorrow and delight. Excuse me, Albert, "sorrow on your account, and delight with that noble girl, thus pursuing paternal vengeance. Yes, Albert, from whatever source the blow may have proceeded"it may be from an enemy, but that enemy is only the agent of Providence.

Albert held his head between his hands; he raised his face, red with shame and bathed in tears, and seizing Beauchamps arm:

My friend, said he, my life is ended. I cannot calmly say with you, ~Providence has struck the blow; but I must discover who pursues me with this hatred, and when I have found him I shall kill him, or he will kill me. I rely on your friendship to assist me, Beauchamp, if contempt has not banished it from your heart.

Contempt, my friend? How does this misfortune affect you? No, happily that unjust prejudice is forgotten which made the son responsible for the fathers actions. Review your life, Albert; although it is only just beginning, did a lovely summers day ever dawn with greater purity than has marked the commencement of your career? No, Albert, take my advice. You are young and rich"leave Paris"all is soon forgotten in this great Babylon of excitement and changing tastes. You will return after three or four years with a Russian princess for a bride, and no one will think more of what occurred yesterday than if it had happened sixteen years ago.

Thank you, my dear Beauchamp, thank you for the excellent feeling which prompts your advice; but it cannot be. I have told you my wish, or rather my determination. You understand that, interested as I am in this affair, I cannot see it in the same light as you do. What appears to you to emanate from a celestial source, seems to me to proceed from one far less pure. Providence appears to me to have no share in this affair; and happily so, for instead of the invisible, impalpable agent of celestial rewards and punishments, I shall find one both palpable and visible, on whom I shall revenge myself, I assure you, for all I have suffered during the last month. Now, I repeat, Beauchamp, I wish to return to human and material existence, and if you are still the friend you profess to be, help me to discover the hand that struck the blow.

Be it so, said Beauchamp; if you must have me descend to earth, I submit; and if you will seek your enemy, I will assist you, and I will engage to find him, my honor being almost as deeply interested as yours.

Well, then, you understand, Beauchamp, that we begin our search immediately. Each moments delay is an eternity for me. The calumniator is not yet punished, and he may hope that he will not be; but, on my honor, if he thinks so, he deceives himself.

Well, listen, Morcerf.

Ah, Beauchamp, I see you know something already; you will restore me to life.

I do not say there is any truth in what I am going to tell you, but it is, at least, a ray of light in a dark night; by following it we may, perhaps, discover something more certain.

Tell me; satisfy my impatience.

Well, I will tell you what I did not like to mention on my return from Yanina.

Say on.

I went, of course, to the chief banker of the town to make inquiries.

At the first word, before I had even mentioned your fathers name"

~Ah, said he. ~I guess what brings you here.

~How, and why?

~Because a fortnight since I was questioned on the same subject.

~By whom?

~By a banker of Paris, my correspondent.

~Whose name is""

~Danglars.

He! cried Albert; yes, it is indeed he who has so long pursued my father with jealous hatred. He, the man who would be popular, cannot forgive the Count of Morcerf for being created a peer; and this marriage broken off without a reason being assigned"yes, it is all from the same cause.

Make inquiries, Albert, but do not be angry without reason; make

inquiries, and if it be true""

Oh, yes, if it be true, cried the young man, he shall pay me all I have suffered.

Beware, Morcerf, he is already an old man.

I will respect his age as he has respected the honor of my family; if my father had offended him, why did he not attack him personally? Oh, no, he was afraid to encounter him face to face.

I do not condemn you, Albert; I only restrain you. Act prudently.

Oh, do not fear; besides, you will accompany me. Beauchamp, solemn transactions should be sanctioned by a witness. Before this day closes, if M. Danglars is guilty, he shall cease to live, or I shall die.

\_Pardieu\_, Beauchamp, mine shall be a splendid funeral!

When such resolutions are made, Albert, they should be promptly executed. Do you wish to go to M. Danglars? Let us go immediately.

They sent for a cabriolet. On entering the bankers mansion, they perceived the phaeton and servant of M. Andrea Cavalcanti.

Ah! \_parbleu!\_ thats good, said Albert, with a gloomy tone. If M. Danglars will not fight with me, I will kill his son-in-law; Cavalcanti will certainly fight.

The servant announced the young man; but the banker, recollecting what had transpired the day before, did not wish him admitted. It was, however, too late; Albert had followed the footman, and, hearing the order given, forced the door open, and followed by Beauchamp found himself in the bankers study.

Sir, cried the latter, am I no longer at liberty to receive whom I choose in my house? You appear to forget yourself sadly.

No, sir, said Albert, coldly; there are circumstances in which one cannot, except through cowardice,"I offer you that refuge,"refuse to admit certain persons at least.

What is your errand, then, with me, sir?

I mean, said Albert, drawing near, and without apparently noticing Cavalcanti, who stood with his back towards the fireplace"I mean to propose a meeting in some retired corner where no one will interrupt us for ten minutes; that will be sufficient"where two men having met, one of them will remain on the ground.

Danglars turned pale; Cavalcanti moved a step forward, and Albert turned towards him.

And you, too, said he, come, if you like, monsieur; you have a claim, being almost one of the family, and I will give as many rendezvous of that kind as I can find persons willing to accept them.

Cavalcanti looked at Danglars with a stupefied air, and the latter, making an effort, arose and stepped between the two young men. Alberts attack on Andrea had placed him on a different footing, and he hoped this visit had another cause than that he had at first supposed.

Indeed, sir, said he to Albert, if you are come to quarrel with this gentleman because I have preferred him to you, I shall resign the case to the kings attorney.

You mistake, sir, said Morcerf with a gloomy smile; I am not referring in the least to matrimony, and I only addressed myself to M. Cavalcanti because he appeared disposed to interfere between us. In one respect you are right, for I am ready to quarrel with everyone today; but you have the first claim, M. Danglars.

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Sir, replied Danglars, pale with anger and fear, I warn you, when I have the misfortune to meet with a mad dog, I kill it; and far from thinking myself guilty of a crime, I believe I do society a kindness.

Now, if you are mad and try to bite me, I will kill you without pity.

Is it my fault that your father has dishonored himself?

Yes, miserable wretch! cried Morcerf, it is your fault.

Danglars retreated a few steps. My fault? said he; you must be mad!

What do I know of the Grecian affair? Have I travelled in that country?

Did I advise your father to sell the castle of Yanina"to betray""

Silence! said Albert, with a thundering voice. No; it is not you who

have directly made this exposure and brought this sorrow on us, but you hypocritically provoked it.

I?

Yes; you! How came it known?

I suppose you read it in the paper in the account from Yanina?

Who wrote to Yanina?

To Yanina?

Yes. Who wrote for particulars concerning my father?

I imagine anyone may write to Yanina.

But one person only wrote!

One only?

Yes; and that was you!

I, doubtless, wrote. It appears to me that when about to marry your daughter to a young man, it is right to make some inquiries respecting his family; it is not only a right, but a duty.

You wrote, sir, knowing what answer you would receive.

I, indeed? I assure you, cried Danglars, with a confidence and security proceeding less from fear than from the interest he really felt for the young man, I solemnly declare to you, that I should never have thought of writing to Yanina, did I know anything of Ali Pashas misfortunes.

Who, then, urged you to write? Tell me.

\_Pardieu!\_ it was the most simple thing in the world. I was speaking of your fathers past history. I said the origin of his fortune remained obscure. The person to whom I addressed my scruples asked me where your father had acquired his property? I answered, ~In Greece."~Then, said he, ~write to Yanina.

And who thus advised you?

No other than your friend, Monte Cristo.

The Count of Monte Cristo told you to write to Yanina?

Yes; and I wrote, and will show you my correspondence, if you like.

Albert and Beauchamp looked at each other.

Sir, said Beauchamp, who had not yet spoken, you appear to accuse the count, who is absent from Paris at this moment, and cannot justify himself.

I accuse no one, sir, said Danglars; I relate, and I will repeat before the count what I have said to you.

Does the count know what answer you received?

Yes; I showed it to him.

Did he know my fathers Christian name was Fernand, and his family name Mondego?

Yes, I had told him that long since, and I did only what any other would have done in my circumstances, and perhaps less. When, the day after the arrival of this answer, your father came by the advice of Monte Cristo to ask my daughters hand for you, I decidedly refused him, but without any explanation or exposure. In short, why should I have any more to do with the affair? How did the honor or disgrace of M. de Morcerf affect me? It neither increased nor decreased my income. Albert felt the blood mounting to his brow; there was no doubt upon the subject. Danglars defended himself with the baseness, but at the same time with the assurance, of a man who speaks the truth, at least in part, if not wholly"not for conscience sake, but through fear.

Besides, what was Morcerf seeking? It was not whether Danglars or Monte Cristo was more or less guilty; it was a man who would answer for the offence, whether trifling or serious; it was a man who would fight, and it was evident Danglars would not fight.

In addition to this, everything forgotten or unperceived before presented itself now to his recollection. Monte Cristo knew everything, as he had bought the daughter of Ali Pasha; and, knowing everything, he had advised Danglars to write to Yanina. The answer known, he had yielded to Alberts wish to be introduced to HaydÃ©e, and allowed the conversation to turn on the death of Ali, and had not opposed HaydÃ©es recital (but having, doubtless, warned the young girl, in the few

Romaic words he spoke to her, not to implicate Morcerf's father). Besides, had he not begged of Morcerf not to mention his father's name before Haydée? Lastly, he had taken Albert to Normandy when he knew the final blow was near. There could be no doubt that all had been calculated and previously arranged; Monte Cristo then was in league with his father's enemies. Albert took Beauchamp aside, and communicated these ideas to him.

You are right, said the latter; M. Danglars has only been a secondary agent in this sad affair, and it is of M. de Monte Cristo that you must demand an explanation.

Albert turned.

Sir, said he to Danglars, understand that I do not take a final leave of you; I must ascertain if your insinuations are just, and am going now to inquire of the Count of Monte Cristo.

He bowed to the banker, and went out with Beauchamp, without appearing to notice Cavalcanti. Danglars accompanied him to the door, where he again assured Albert that no motive of personal hatred had influenced him against the Count of Morcerf.

Chapter 88. The Insult

At the banker's door Beauchamp stopped Morcerf.

Listen, said he; just now I told you it was of M. de Monte Cristo you must demand an explanation.

Yes; and we are going to his house.

Reflect, Morcerf, one moment before you go.

On what shall I reflect?

On the importance of the step you are taking.

Is it more serious than going to M. Danglars?

Yes; M. Danglars is a money-lover, and those who love money, you know, think too much of what they risk to be easily induced to fight a duel. The other is, on the contrary, to all appearance a true nobleman; but do you not fear to find him a bully?

I only fear one thing; namely, to find a man who will not fight.

Do not be alarmed, said Beauchamp; he will meet you. My only fear is that he will be too strong for you.

My friend, said Morcerf, with a sweet smile, that is what I wish.

The happiest thing that could occur to me, would be to die in my father's stead; that would save us all.

Your mother would die of grief.

My poor mother! said Albert, passing his hand across his eyes, I know she would; but better so than die of shame.

Are you quite decided, Albert?

Yes; let us go.

But do you think we shall find the count at home?

He intended returning some hours after me, and doubtless he is now at home.

They ordered the driver to take them to No. 30 Champs-Élysées.

Beauchamp wished to go in alone, but Albert observed that as this was an unusual circumstance he might be allowed to deviate from the usual etiquette of duels. The cause which the young man espoused was one so sacred that Beauchamp had only to comply with all his wishes; he yielded and contented himself with following Morcerf. Albert sprang from the porters' lodge to the steps. He was received by Baptistin. The count had, indeed, just arrived, but he was in his bath, and had forbidden that anyone should be admitted.

But after his bath? asked Morcerf.

My master will go to dinner.

And after dinner?

He will sleep an hour.

Then?

He is going to the Opera.

Are you sure of it? asked Albert.

Quite, sir; my master has ordered his horses at eight o'clock precisely.

Very good, replied Albert; that is all I wished to know. Then, turning towards Beauchamp, If you have anything to attend to, Beauchamp, do it directly; if you have any appointment for this evening, defer it till tomorrow. I depend on you to accompany me to the Opera; and if you can, bring Châteaurenault with you. Beauchamp availed himself of Albert's permission, and left him, promising to call for him at a quarter before eight. On his return home, Albert expressed his wish to Franz Debray, and Morrel, to see them at the Opera that evening. Then he went to see his mother, who since the events of the day before had refused to see anyone, and had kept her room. He found her in bed, overwhelmed with grief at this public humiliation.

The sight of Albert produced the effect which might naturally be expected on Mercutio; she pressed her son's hand and sobbed aloud, but her tears relieved her. Albert stood one moment speechless by the side of his mother's bed. It was evident from his pale face and knit brows that his resolution to revenge himself was growing weaker.

My dear mother, said he, do you know if M. de Morcerf has any enemy?

Mercutio started; she noticed that the young man did not say my father.

My son, she said, persons in the Count's situation have many secret enemies. Those who are known are not the most dangerous.

I know it, and appeal to your penetration. You are of so superior a mind, nothing escapes you.

Why do you say so?

Because, for instance, you noticed on the evening of the ball we gave, that M. de Monte Cristo would eat nothing in our house.

Mercutio raised herself on her feverish arm.

M. de Monte Cristo! she exclaimed; and how is he connected with the question you asked me?

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You know, mother, M. de Monte Cristo is almost an Oriental, and it is customary with the Orientals to secure full liberty for revenge by not