

e my door.

Ali descended to the street, and marked a straight line on the pavement immediately at the entrance of the house, and then pointed out the line he had traced to the count, who was watching him. The count patted him gently on the shoulder, his usual mode of praising Ali, who, pleased and gratified with the commission assigned him, walked calmly towards a projecting stone forming the angle of the street and house, and, seating himself thereon, began to smoke his chibouque, while Monte Cristo re-entered his dwelling, perfectly assured of the success of his plan.

Still, as five oclock approached, and the carriage was momentarily expected by the count, the indication of more than common impatience and uneasiness might be observed in his manner. He stationed himself in a room commanding a view of the street, pacing the chamber with restless steps, stopping merely to listen from time to time for the sound of approaching wheels, then to cast an anxious glance on Ali; but the regularity with which the Nubian puffed forth the smoke of his chibouque proved that he at least was wholly absorbed in the enjoyment of his favorite occupation.

Suddenly a distant sound of rapidly advancing wheels was heard, and almost immediately a carriage appeared, drawn by a pair of wild, ungovernable horses, while the terrified coachman strove in vain to restrain their furious speed.

In the vehicle was a young woman and a child of about seven or eight clasped in each others arms. Terror seemed to have deprived them even of the power of uttering a cry. The carriage creaked and rattled as it flew over the rough stones, and the slightest obstacle under the wheels would have caused disaster; but it kept on in the middle of the road, and those who saw it pass uttered cries of terror.

Ali suddenly cast aside his chibouque, drew the lasso from his pocket, threw it so skilfully as to catch the forelegs of the near horse in its triple fold, and suffered himself to be dragged on for a few steps by the violence of the shock, then the animal fell over on the pole, which snapped, and therefore prevented the other horse from pursuing its way. Gladly availing himself of this opportunity, the coachman leaped from his box; but Ali had promptly seized the nostrils of the second horse, and held them in his iron grasp, till the beast, snorting with pain, sunk beside his companion.

All this was achieved in much less time than is occupied in the recital. The brief space had, however, been sufficient for a man, followed by a number of servants, to rush from the house before which the accident had occurred, and, as the coachman opened the door of the carriage, to take from it a lady who was convulsively grasping the cushions with one hand, while with the other she pressed to her bosom the young boy, who had lost consciousness. Monte Cristo carried them both to the salon, and deposited them on a sofa.

Compose yourself, madame, said he; all danger is over. The woman looked up at these words, and, with a glance far more expressive than any entreaties could have been, pointed to her child, who still continued insensible. I understand the nature of your alarms, madame, said the count, carefully examining the child, but I assure you there is not the slightest occasion for uneasiness; your little charge has not received the least injury; his insensibility is merely the effects of terror, and will soon pass.

Are you quite sure you do not say so to tranquillize my fears? See how deadly pale he is! My child, my darling Edward; speak to your mother"open your dear eyes and look on me once again! Oh, sir, in pity send for a physician; my whole fortune shall not be thought too much for the recovery of my boy.

With a calm smile and a gentle wave of the hand, Monte Cristo signed to the distracted mother to lay aside her apprehensions; then, opening a casket that stood near, he drew forth a phial of Bohemian glass incrustated with gold, containing a liquid of the color of blood, of

which he let fall a single drop on the child's lips. Scarcely had it reached them, ere the boy, though still pale as marble, opened his eyes, and eagerly gazed around him. At this, the delight of the mother was almost frantic.

Where am I? exclaimed she; and to whom am I indebted for so happy a termination to my late dreadful alarm?

Madame, answered the count, you are under the roof of one who esteems himself most fortunate in having been able to save you from a further continuance of your sufferings.

My wretched curiosity has brought all this about, pursued the lady. All Paris rung with the praises of Madame Danglars' beautiful horses, and I had the folly to desire to know whether they really merited the high praise given to them.

Is it possible, exclaimed the count with well-feigned astonishment, that these horses belong to the baroness?

They do, indeed. May I inquire if you are acquainted with Madame Danglars?

20351m

I have that honor; and my happiness at your escape from the danger that threatened you is redoubled by the consciousness that I have been the unwilling and the unintentional cause of all the peril you have incurred. I yesterday purchased these horses of the baron; but as the baroness evidently regretted parting with them, I ventured to send them back to her, with a request that she would gratify me by accepting them from my hands.

You are, then, doubtless, the Count of Monte Cristo, of whom Hermine has talked to me so much?

You have rightly guessed, madame, replied the count.

And I am Madame HÃ©loÃ©se de Villefort.

The count bowed with the air of a person who hears a name for the first time.

How grateful will M. de Villefort be for all your goodness; how thankfully will he acknowledge that to you alone he owes the existence of his wife and child! Most certainly, but for the prompt assistance of your intrepid servant, this dear child and myself must both have perished.

Indeed, I still shudder at the fearful danger you were placed in.

I trust you will allow me to recompense worthily the devotion of your man.

I beseech you, madame, replied Monte Cristo not to spoil Ali, either by too great praise or rewards. I cannot allow him to acquire the habit of expecting to be recompensed for every trifling service he may render. Ali is my slave, and in saving your life he was but discharging his duty to me.

Nay, interposed Madame de Villefort, on whom the authoritative style adopted by the count made a deep impression, nay, but consider that to preserve my life he has risked his own.

His life, madame, belongs not to him; it is mine, in return for my having myself saved him from death.

Madame de Villefort made no further reply; her mind was utterly absorbed in the contemplation of the person who, from the first instant she saw him, had made so powerful an impression on her.

During the evident preoccupation of Madame de Villefort, Monte Cristo scrutinized the features and appearance of the boy she kept folded in her arms, lavishing on him the most tender endearments. The child was small for his age, and unnaturally pale. A mass of straight black hair, defying all attempts to train or curl it, fell over his projecting forehead, and hung down to his shoulders, giving increased vivacity to eyes already sparkling with a youthful love of mischief and fondness for every forbidden enjoyment. His mouth was large, and the lips, which had not yet regained their color, were particularly thin; in fact, the deep and crafty look, giving a predominant expression to the child's face, belonged rather to a boy of twelve or fourteen than to one so

young. His first movement was to free himself by a violent push from the encircling arms of his mother, and to rush forward to the casket from whence the count had taken the phial of elixir; then, without asking permission of anyone, he proceeded, in all the wilfulness of a spoiled child unaccustomed to restrain either whims or caprices, to pull the corks out of all the bottles.

Touch nothing, my little friend, cried the count eagerly; some of those liquids are not only dangerous to taste, but even to inhale. Madame de Villefort became very pale, and, seizing her sons arm, drew him anxiously toward her; but, once satisfied of his safety, she also cast a brief but expressive glance on the casket, which was not lost upon the count. At this moment Ali entered. At sight of him Madame de Villefort uttered an expression of pleasure, and, holding the child still closer towards her, she said:

Edward, dearest, do you see that good man? He has shown very great courage and resolution, for he exposed his own life to stop the horses that were running away with us, and would certainly have dashed the carriage to pieces. Thank him, then, my child, in your very best manner; for, had he not come to our aid, neither you nor I would have been alive to speak our thanks.

The child stuck out his lips and turned away his head in a disdainful manner, saying, Hes too ugly.

20353m

The count smiled as if the child bade fair to realize his hopes, while Madame de Villefort reprimanded her son with a gentleness and moderation very far from conveying the least idea of a fault having been committed.

This lady, said the Count, speaking to Ali in the Arabic language, is desirous that her son should thank you for saving both their lives; but the boy refuses, saying you are too ugly.

Ali turned his intelligent countenance towards the boy, on whom he gazed without any apparent emotion; but the spasmodic working of the nostrils showed to the practiced eye of Monte Cristo that the Arab had been wounded to the heart.

Will you permit me to inquire, said Madame de Villefort, as she arose to take her leave, whether you usually reside here?

No, I do not, replied Monte Cristo; it is a small place I have purchased quite lately. My place of abode is No. 30, Avenue des Champs-Élysées; but I see you have quite recovered from your fright, and are, no doubt, desirous of returning home. Anticipating your wishes, I have desired the same horses you came with to be put to one of my carriages, and Ali, he whom you think so very ugly, continued he, addressing the boy with a smiling air, will have the honor of driving you home, while your coachman remains here to attend to the necessary repairs of your calash. As soon as that important business is concluded, I will have a pair of my own horses harnessed to convey it direct to Madame Danglars.

I dare not return with those dreadful horses, said Madame de Villefort.

You will see, replied Monte Cristo, that they will be as different as possible in the hands of Ali. With him they will be gentle and docile as lambs.

Ali had, indeed, given proof of this; for, approaching the animals, who had been got upon their legs with considerable difficulty, he rubbed their foreheads and nostrils with a sponge soaked in aromatic vinegar, and wiped off the sweat and foam that covered their mouths. Then, commencing a loud whistling noise, he rubbed them well all over their bodies for several minutes; then, undisturbed by the noisy crowd collected round the broken carriage, Ali quietly harnessed the pacified animals to the counts chariot, took the reins in his hands, and mounted the box, when to the utter astonishment of those who had witnessed the ungovernable spirit and maddened speed of the same horses, he was actually compelled to apply his whip in no very gentle

manner before he could induce them to start; and even then all that could be obtained from the celebrated dappled grays, now changed into a couple of dull, sluggish, stupid brutes, was a slow, pottering pace, kept up with so much difficulty that Madame de Villefort was more than two hours returning to her residence in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré.

20355m

Scarcely had the first congratulations upon her marvellous escape been gone through when she wrote the following letter to Madame Danglars: "Dear Hermine, "I have just had a wonderful escape from the most imminent danger, and I owe my safety to the very Count of Monte Cristo we were talking about yesterday, but whom I little expected to see today. I remember how unmercifully I laughed at what I considered your eulogistic and exaggerated praises of him; but I have now ample cause to admit that your enthusiastic description of this wonderful man fell far short of his merits. Your horses got as far as Ranelagh, when they darted forward like mad things, and galloped away at so fearful a rate, that there seemed no other prospect for myself and my poor Edward but that of being dashed to pieces against the first object that impeded their progress, when a strange-looking man, "an Arab, a negro, or a Nubian, at least a black of some nation or other" at a signal from the count, whose domestic he is, suddenly seized and stopped the infuriated animals, even at the risk of being trampled to death himself; and certainly he must have had a most wonderful escape. The count then hastened to us, and took us into his house, where he speedily recalled my poor Edward to life. He sent us home in his own carriage. Yours will be returned to you tomorrow. You will find your horses in bad condition, from the results of this accident; they seem thoroughly stupefied, as if sulky and vexed at having been conquered by man. The count, however, has commissioned me to assure you that two or three days rest, with plenty of barley for their sole food during that time, will bring them back to as fine, that is as terrifying, a condition as they were in yesterday.

20356m

Adieu! I cannot return you many thanks for the drive of yesterday; but, after all, I ought not to blame you for the misconduct of your horses, more especially as it procured me the pleasure of an introduction to the Count of Monte Cristo, "and certainly that illustrious personage, apart from the millions he is said to be so very anxious to dispose of, seemed to me one of those curiously interesting problems I, for one, delight in solving at any risk, even if it were to necessitate another drive to the Bois behind your horses.

Edward endured the accident with miraculous courage "he did not utter a single cry, but fell lifeless into my arms; nor did a tear fall from his eyes after it was over. I doubt not you will consider these praises the result of blind maternal affection, but there is a soul of iron in that delicate, fragile body. Valentine sends many affectionate remembrances to your dear Eugénie. I embrace you with all my heart. M<sup>lle</sup> de Villefort.

P.S. "Do pray contrive some means for me to meet the Count of Monte Cristo at your house. I must and will see him again. I have just made M. de Villefort promise to call on him, and I hope the visit will be returned.

That night the adventure at Auteuil was talked of everywhere. Albert related it to his mother; Châteaufort-Renaud recounted it at the Jockey Club, and Debray detailed it at length in the salons of the minister; even Beauchamp accorded twenty lines in his journal to the relation of the count's courage and gallantry, thereby celebrating him as the greatest hero of the day in the eyes of all the feminine members of the aristocracy.

Vast was the crowd of visitors and inquiring friends who left their names at the residence of Madame de Villefort, with the design of renewing their visit at the right moment, of hearing from her lips all the interesting circumstances of this most romantic adventure.

As for M. de Villefort, he fulfilled the predictions of "se to the letter,"donned his dress suit, drew on a pair of white gloves, ordered the servants to attend the carriage dressed in their full livery, and drove that same night to No. 30 in the Avenue des Champs-Élysées.

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#### Chapter 48. Ideology

If the Count of Monte Cristo had been for a long time familiar with the ways of Parisian society, he would have appreciated better the significance of the step which M. de Villefort had taken. Standing well at court, whether the king regnant was of the older or younger branch, whether the government was doctrinaire liberal, or conservative; looked upon by all as a man of talent, since those who have never experienced a political check are generally so regarded; hated by many, but warmly supported by others, without being really liked by anybody, M. de Villefort held a high position in the magistracy, and maintained his eminence like a Harlay or a Molé. His drawing-room, under the regenerating influence of a young wife and a daughter by his first marriage, scarcely eighteen, was still one of the well-regulated Paris salons where the worship of traditional customs and the observance of rigid etiquette were carefully maintained. A freezing politeness, a strict fidelity to government principles, a profound contempt for theories and theorists, a deep-seated hatred of ideality,"these were the elements of private and public life displayed by M. de Villefort.

30023m

M. de Villefort was not only a magistrate, he was almost a diplomatist. His relations with the former court, of which he always spoke with dignity and respect, made him respected by the new one, and he knew so many things, that not only was he always carefully considered, but sometimes consulted. Perhaps this would not have been so had it been possible to get rid of M. de Villefort; but, like the feudal barons who rebelled against their sovereign, he dwelt in an impregnable fortress. This fortress was his post as king's attorney, all the advantages of which he exploited with marvellous skill, and which he would not have resigned but to be made deputy, and thus to replace neutrality by opposition.

Ordinarily M. de Villefort made and returned very few visits. His wife visited for him, and this was the received thing in the world, where the weighty and multifarious occupations of the magistrate were accepted as an excuse for what was really only calculated pride, a manifestation of professed superiority" in fact, the application of the axiom, *"Pretend to think well of yourself, and the world will think well of you"*, an axiom a hundred times more useful in society nowadays than that of the Greeks, *Know thyself*, a knowledge for which, in our days, we have substituted the less difficult and more advantageous science of *"knowing others"*.

To his friends M. de Villefort was a powerful protector; to his enemies, he was a silent, but bitter opponent; for those who were neither the one nor the other, he was a statue of the law-made man. He had a haughty bearing, a look either steady and impenetrable or insolently piercing and inquisitorial. Four successive revolutions had built and cemented the pedestal upon which his fortune was based.

M. de Villefort had the reputation of being the least curious and the least wearisome man in France. He gave a ball every year, at which he appeared for a quarter of an hour only,"that is to say, five-and-forty minutes less than the king is visible at his balls. He was never seen at the theatres, at concerts, or in any place of public resort.

Occasionally, but seldom, he played at whist, and then care was taken to select partners worthy of him"sometimes they were ambassadors, sometimes archbishops, or sometimes a prince, or a president, or some dowager duchess.

Such was the man whose carriage had just now stopped before the Count

of Monte Cristos door. The valet de chambre announced M. de Villefort at the moment when the count, leaning over a large table, was tracing on a map the route from St. Petersburg to China.

The procureur entered with the same grave and measured step he would have employed in entering a court of justice. He was the same man, or rather the development of the same man, whom we have heretofore seen as assistant attorney at Marseilles. Nature, according to her way, had made no deviation in the path he had marked out for himself. From being slender he had now become meagre; once pale, he was now yellow; his deep-set eyes were hollow, and the gold spectacles shielding his eyes seemed to be an integral portion of his face. He dressed entirely in black, with the exception of his white tie, and his funeral appearance was only mitigated by the slight line of red ribbon which passed almost imperceptibly through his button-hole, and appeared like a streak of blood traced with a delicate brush.

Although master of himself, Monte Cristo, scrutinized with irrepressible curiosity the magistrate whose salute he returned, and who, distrustful by habit, and especially incredulous as to social prodigies, was much more despised to look upon the noble stranger, as Monte Cristo was already called, as an adventurer in search of new fields, or an escaped criminal, rather than as a prince of the Holy See, or a sultan of the \_Thousand and One Nights\_.

Sir, said Villefort, in the squeaky tone assumed by magistrates in their oratorical periods, and of which they cannot, or will not, divest themselves in society, sir, the signal service which you yesterday rendered to my wife and son has made it a duty for me to offer you my thanks. I have come, therefore, to discharge this duty, and to express to you my overwhelming gratitude.

And as he said this, the eye severe of the magistrate had lost nothing of its habitual arrogance. He spoke in a voice of the procureur-general, with the rigid inflexibility of neck and shoulders which caused his flatterers to say (as we have before observed) that he was the living statue of the law.

Monsieur, replied the count, with a chilling air, I am very happy to have been the means of preserving a son to his mother, for they say that the sentiment of maternity is the most holy of all; and the good fortune which occurred to me, monsieur, might have enabled you to dispense with a duty which, in its discharge, confers an undoubtedly great honor; for I am aware that M. de Villefort is not usually lavish of the favor which he now bestows on me,"a favor which, however estimable, is unequal to the satisfaction which I have in my own consciousness.

Villefort, astonished at this reply, which he by no means expected, started like a soldier who feels the blow levelled at him over the armor he wears, and a curl of his disdainful lip indicated that from that moment he noted in the tablets of his brain that the Count of Monte Cristo was by no means a highly bred gentleman.

He glanced around, in order to seize on something on which the conversation might turn, and seemed to fall easily on a topic. He saw the map which Monte Cristo had been examining when he entered, and said:

You seem geographically engaged, sir? It is a rich study for you, who, as I learn, have seen as many lands as are delineated on this map.

Yes, sir, replied the count; I have sought to make of the human race, taken in the mass, what you practice every day on individuals"a physiological study. I have believed it was much easier to descend from the whole to a part than to ascend from a part to the whole. It is an algebraic axiom, which makes us proceed from a known to an unknown quantity, and not from an unknown to a known; but sit down, sir, I beg of you.

Monte Cristo pointed to a chair, which the procureur was obliged to take the trouble to move forwards himself, while the count merely fell back into his own, on which he had been kneeling when M. Villefort

entered. Thus the count was halfway turned towards his visitor, having his back towards the window, his elbow resting on the geographical chart which furnished the theme of conversation for the moment, "a conversation which assumed, as in the case of the interviews with Danglars and Morcerf, a turn analogous to the persons, if not to the situation.

Ah, you philosophize, replied Villefort, after a moments silence, during which, like a wrestler who encounters a powerful opponent, he took breath; well, sir, really, if, like you, I had nothing else to do, I should seek a more amusing occupation.

Why, in truth, sir, was Monte Cristos reply, man is but an ugly caterpillar for him who studies him through a solar microscope; but you said, I think, that I had nothing else to do. Now, really, let me ask, sir, have you?"do you believe you have anything to do? or to speak in plain terms, do you really think that what you do deserves being called anything?

Villeforts astonishment redoubled at this second thrust so forcibly made by his strange adversary. It was a long time since the magistrate had heard a paradox so strong, or rather, to say the truth more exactly, it was the first time he had ever heard of it. The procureur exerted himself to reply.

Sir, he responded, you are a stranger, and I believe you say yourself that a portion of your life has been spent in Oriental countries, so you are not aware how human justice, so expeditious in barbarous countries, takes with us a prudent and well-studied course. Oh, yes"yes, I do, sir; it is the pede claudo of the ancients. I know all that, for it is with the justice of all countries especially that I have occupied myself"it is with the criminal procedure of all nations that I have compared natural justice, and I must say, sir, that it is the law of primitive nations, that is, the law of retaliation, that I have most frequently found to be according to the law of God. If this law were adopted, sir, said the procureur, it would greatly simplify our legal codes, and in that case the magistrates would not (as you just observed) have much to do.

It may, perhaps, come to this in time, observed Monte Cristo; you know that human inventions march from the complex to the simple, and simplicity is always perfection.

In the meanwhile, continued the magistrate, our codes are in full force, with all their contradictory enactments derived from Gallic customs, Roman laws, and Frank usages; the knowledge of all which, you will agree, is not to be acquired without extended labor; it needs tedious study to acquire this knowledge, and, when acquired, a strong power of brain to retain it.

I agree with you entirely, sir; but all that even you know with respect to the French code, I know, not only in reference to that code, but as regards the codes of all nations. The English, Turkish, Japanese, Hindu laws, are as familiar to me as the French laws, and thus I was right, when I said to you, that relatively (you know that everything is relative, sir)"that relatively to what I have done, you have very little to do; but that relatively to all I have learned, you have yet a great deal to learn.

But with what motive have you learned all this? inquired Villefort, in astonishment.

Monte Cristo smiled.

Really, sir, he observed, I see that in spite of the reputation which you have acquired as a superior man, you look at everything from the material and vulgar view of society, beginning with man, and ending with man"that is to say, in the most restricted, most narrow view which it is possible for human understanding to embrace.

Pray, sir, explain yourself, said Villefort, more and more astonished, I really do"not"understand you"perfectly.

I say, sir, that with the eyes fixed on the social organization of nations, you see only the springs of the machine, and lose sight of the

sublime workman who makes them act; I say that you do not recognize before you and around you any but those office-holders whose commissions have been signed by a minister or king; and that the men whom God has put above those office-holders, ministers, and kings, by giving them a mission to follow out, instead of a post to fill "I say that they escape your narrow, limited field of observation. It is thus that human weakness fails, from its debilitated and imperfect organs. Tobias took the angel who restored him to light for an ordinary young man. The nations took Attila, who was doomed to destroy them, for a conqueror similar to other conquerors, and it was necessary for both to reveal their missions, that they might be known and acknowledged; one was compelled to say, "I am the angel of the Lord; and the other, "I am the hammer of God, in order that the divine essence in both might be revealed.

Then, said Villefort, more and more amazed, and really supposing he was speaking to a mystic or a madman, you consider yourself as one of those extraordinary beings whom you have mentioned?

And why not? said Monte Cristo coldly.

Your pardon, sir, replied Villefort, quite astounded, but you will excuse me if, when I presented myself to you, I was unaware that I should meet with a person whose knowledge and understanding so far surpass the usual knowledge and understanding of men. It is not usual with us corrupted wretches of civilization to find gentlemen like yourself, possessors, as you are, of immense fortune "at least, so it is said" and I beg you to observe that I do not inquire, I merely repeat; "it is not usual, I say, for such privileged and wealthy beings to waste their time in speculations on the state of society, in philosophical reveries, intended at best to console those whom fate has disinherited from the goods of this world.

Really, sir, retorted the count, have you attained the eminent situation in which you are, without having admitted, or even without having met with exceptions? and do you never use your eyes, which must have acquired so much finesse and certainty, to divine, at a glance, the kind of man by whom you are confronted? Should not a magistrate be not merely the best administrator of the law, but the most crafty expounder of the chicanery of his profession, a steel probe to search hearts, a touchstone to try the gold which in each soul is mingled with more or less of alloy?

Sir, said Villefort, upon my word, you overcome me. I really never heard a person speak as you do.

Because you remain eternally encircled in a round of general conditions, and have never dared to raise your wings into those upper spheres which God has peopled with invisible or exceptional beings. And you allow then, sir, that spheres exist, and that these marked and invisible beings mingle amongst us?

Why should they not? Can you see the air you breathe, and yet without which you could not for a moment exist?

Then we do not see those beings to whom you allude?

Yes, we do; you see them whenever God pleases to allow them to assume a material form. You touch them, come in contact with them, speak to them, and they reply to you.

Ah, said Villefort, smiling, I confess I should like to be warned when one of these beings is in contact with me.

You have been served as you desire, monsieur, for you were warned just now, and I now again warn you.

Then you yourself are one of these marked beings?

Yes, monsieur, I believe so; for until now, no man has found himself in a position similar to mine. The dominions of kings are limited either by mountains or rivers, or a change of manners, or an alteration of language. My kingdom is bounded only by the world, for I am not an Italian, or a Frenchman, or a Hindu, or an American, or a Spaniard "I am a cosmopolite. No country can say it saw my birth. God alone knows what country will see me die. I adopt all customs, speak all languages. You



believe me to be a Frenchman, for I speak French with the same facility and purity as yourself. Well, Ali, my Nubian, believes me to be an Arab; Bertuccio, my steward, takes me for a Roman; HaydÃ©e, my slave, thinks me a Greek. You may, therefore, comprehend, that being of no country, asking no protection from any government, acknowledging no man as my brother, not one of the scruples that arrest the powerful, or the obstacles which paralyze the weak, paralyzes or arrests me. I have only two adversaries"I will not say two conquerors, for with perseverance I subdue even them,"they are time and distance. There is a third, and the most terrible"that is my condition as a mortal being. This alone can stop me in my onward career, before I have attained the goal at which I aim, for all the rest I have reduced to mathematical terms. What men call the chances of fate"namely, ruin, change, circumstances"I have fully anticipated, and if any of these should overtake me, yet it will not overwhelm me. Unless I die, I shall always be what I am, and therefore it is that I utter the things you have never heard, even from the mouths of kings"for kings have need, and other persons have fear of you. For who is there who does not say to himself, in a society as incongruously organized as ours, ~Perhaps some day I shall have to do with the kings attorney?

But can you not say that, sir? The moment you become an inhabitant of France, you are naturally subjected to the French law.

I know it sir, replied Monte Cristo; but when I visit a country I begin to study, by all the means which are available, the men from whom I may have anything to hope or to fear, till I know them as well as, perhaps better than, they know themselves. It follows from this, that the kings attorney, be he who he may, with whom I should have to deal, would assuredly be more embarrassed than I should.

That is to say, replied Villefort with hesitation, that human nature being weak, every man, according to your creed, has committed faults. Faults or crimes, responded Monte Cristo with a negligent air.

And that you alone, amongst the men whom you do not recognize as your brothers"for you have said so, observed Villefort in a tone that faltered somewhat"you alone are perfect.

No, not perfect, was the counts reply; only impenetrable, thats all. But let us leave off this strain, sir, if the tone of it is displeasing to you; I am no more disturbed by your justice than are you by my second-sight.

No, no,"by no means, said Villefort, who was afraid of seeming to abandon his ground. No; by your brilliant and almost sublime conversation you have elevated me above the ordinary level; we no longer talk, we rise to dissertation. But you know how the theologians in their collegiate chairs, and philosophers in their controversies, occasionally say cruel truths; let us suppose for the moment that we are theologizing in a social way, or even philosophically, and I will say to you, rude as it may seem, ~My brother, you sacrifice greatly to pride; you may be above others, but above you there is God.

30029m

Above us all, sir, was Monte Cristos response, in a tone and with an emphasis so deep that Villefort involuntarily shuddered. I have my pride for men"serpents always ready to threaten everyone who would pass without crushing them under foot. But I lay aside that pride before God, who has taken me from nothing to make me what I am.

Then, count, I admire you, said Villefort, who, for the first time in this strange conversation, used the aristocratic form to the unknown personage, whom, until now, he had only called monsieur. Yes, and I say to you, if you are really strong, really superior, really pious, or impenetrable, which you were right in saying amounts to the same thing"then be proud, sir, for that is the characteristic of predominance. Yet you have unquestionably some ambition.

I have, sir.

And what may it be?

I too, as happens to every man once in his life, have been taken by

Satan into the highest mountain in the earth, and when there he showed me all the kingdoms of the world, and as he said before, so said he to me, ~Child of earth, what wouldst thou have to make thee adore me? I reflected long, for a gnawing ambition had long preyed upon me, and then I replied, ~Listen,"I have always heard of Providence, and yet I have never seen him, or anything that resembles him, or which can make me believe that he exists. I wish to be Providence myself, for I feel that the most beautiful, noblest, most sublime thing in the world, is to recompense and punish. Satan bowed his head, and groaned. ~You mistake, he said, ~Providence does exist, only you have never seen him, because the child of God is as invisible as the parent. You have seen nothing that resembles him, because he works by secret springs, and moves by hidden ways. All I can do for you is to make you one of the agents of that Providence. The bargain was concluded. I may sacrifice my soul, but what matters it? added Monte Cristo. If the thing were to do again, I would again do it.

Villefort looked at Monte Cristo with extreme amazement.

Count, he inquired, have you any relations?

No, sir, I am alone in the world.

So much the worse.

Why? asked Monte Cristo.

Because then you might witness a spectacle calculated to break down your pride. You say you fear nothing but death?

I did not say that I feared it; I only said that death alone could check the execution of my plans.

And old age?

My end will be achieved before I grow old.

And madness?

I have been nearly mad; and you know the axiom,"\_non bis in idem\_. It is an axiom of criminal law, and, consequently, you understand its full application.

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Sir, continued Villefort, there is something to fear besides death, old age, and madness. For instance, there is apoplexy"that lightning-stroke which strikes but does not destroy you, and yet which brings everything to an end. You are still yourself as now, and yet you are yourself no longer; you who, like Ariel, verge on the angelic, are but an inert mass, which, like Caliban, verges on the brutal; and this is called in human tongues, as I tell you, neither more nor less than apoplexy. Come, if so you will, count, and continue this conversation at my house, any day you may be willing to see an adversary capable of understanding and anxious to refute you, and I will show you my father, M. Noirtier de Villefort, one of the most fiery Jacobins of the French Revolution; that is to say, he had the most remarkable audacity, seconded by a most powerful organization"a man who has not, perhaps, like yourself seen all the kingdoms of the earth, but who has helped to overturn one of the greatest; in fact, a man who believed himself, like you, one of the envoys, not of God, but of a supreme being; not of Providence, but of fate. Well, sir, the rupture of a blood-vessel on the lobe of the brain has destroyed all this, not in a day, not in an hour, but in a second. M. Noirtier, who, on the previous night, was the old Jacobin, the old senator, the old Carbonaro, laughing at the guillotine, the cannon, and the dagger"M. Noirtier, playing with revolutions"M. Noirtier, for whom France was a vast chess-board, from which pawns, rooks, knights, and queens were to disappear, so that the king was checkmated"M. Noirtier, the redoubtable, was the next morning \_poor M. Noirtier\_, the helpless old man, at the tender mercies of the weakest creature in the household, that is, his grandchild, Valentine; a dumb and frozen carcass, in fact, living painlessly on, that time may be given for his frame to decompose without his consciousness of its decay.

Alas, sir, said Monte Cristo this spectacle is neither strange to my eye nor my thought. I am something of a physician, and have, like my

fellows, sought more than once for the soul in living and in dead matter; yet, like Providence, it has remained invisible to my eyes, although present to my heart. A hundred writers since Socrates, Seneca, St. Augustine, and Gall, have made, in verse and prose, the comparison you have made, and yet I can well understand that a fathers sufferings may effect great changes in the mind of a son. I will call on you, sir, since you bid me contemplate, for the advantage of my pride, this terrible spectacle, which must have been so great a source of sorrow to your family.

It would have been so unquestionably, had not God given me so large a compensation. In contrast with the old man, who is dragging his way to the tomb, are two children just entering into life"Valentine, the daughter by my first wife"Mademoiselle Ren e de Saint-M ran"and Edward, the boy whose life you have this day saved.

And what is your deduction from this compensation, sir? inquired Monte Cristo.

My deduction is, replied Villefort, that my father, led away by his passions, has committed some fault unknown to human justice, but marked by the justice of God. That God, desirous in his mercy to punish but one person, has visited this justice on him alone.

Monte Cristo with a smile on his lips, uttered in the depths of his soul a groan which would have made Villefort fly had he but heard it. Adieu, sir, said the magistrate, who had risen from his seat; I leave you, bearing a remembrance of you"a remembrance of esteem, which I hope will not be disagreeable to you when you know me better; for I am not a man to bore my friends, as you will learn. Besides, you have made an eternal friend of Madame de Villefort.

The count bowed, and contented himself with seeing Villefort to the door of his cabinet, the procureur being escorted to his carriage by two footmen, who, on a signal from their master, followed him with every mark of attention. When he had gone, Monte Cristo breathed a profound sigh, and said:

Enough of this poison, let me now seek the antidote.

Then sounding his bell, he said to Ali, who entered:

I am going to madames chamber"have the carriage ready at one oclock.

Chapter 49. Hayd e

It will be recollected that the new, or rather old, acquaintances of the Count of Monte Cristo, residing in the Rue Meslay, were no other than Maximilian, Julie, and Emmanuel.

The very anticipations of delight to be enjoyed in his forthcoming visits"the bright, pure gleam of heavenly happiness it diffused over the almost deadly warfare in which he had voluntarily engaged, illumined his whole countenance with a look of ineffable joy and calmness, as, immediately after Villeforts departure, his thoughts flew back to the cheering prospect before him, of tasting, at least, a brief respite from the fierce and stormy passions of his mind. Even Ali, who had hastened to obey the Counts summons, went forth from his masters presence in charmed amazement at the unusual animation and pleasure depicted on features ordinarily so stern and cold; while, as though dreading to put to flight the agreeable ideas hovering over his patrons meditations, whatever they were, the faithful Nubian walked on tiptoe towards the door, holding his breath, lest its faintest sound should dissipate his masters happy reverie.

It was noon, and Monte Cristo had set apart one hour to be passed in the apartments of Hayd e, as though his oppressed spirit could not all at once admit the feeling of pure and unmixed joy, but required a gradual succession of calm and gentle emotions to prepare his mind to receive full and perfect happiness, in the same manner as ordinary natures demand to be inured by degrees to the reception of strong or violent sensations.

The young Greek, as we have already said, occupied apartments wholly unconnected with those of the count. The rooms had been fitted up in

strict accordance with Oriental ideas; the floors were covered with the richest carpets Turkey could produce; the walls hung with brocaded silk of the most magnificent designs and texture; while around each chamber luxurious divans were placed, with piles of soft and yielding cushions, that needed only to be arranged at the pleasure or convenience of such as sought repose.

HaydÃ© had three French maids, and one who was a Greek. The first three remained constantly in a small waiting-room, ready to obey the summons of a small golden bell, or to receive the orders of the Romaic slave, who knew just enough French to be able to transmit her mistress's wishes to the three other waiting-women; the latter had received most peremptory instructions from Monte Cristo to treat HaydÃ© with all the deference they would observe to a queen.

The young girl herself generally passed her time in the chamber at the farther end of her apartments. This was a sort of boudoir, circular, and lighted only from the roof, which consisted of rose-colored glass. HaydÃ© was reclining upon soft downy cushions, covered with blue satin spotted with silver; her head, supported by one of her exquisitely moulded arms, rested on the divan immediately behind her, while the other was employed in adjusting to her lips the coral tube of a rich narghile, through whose flexible pipe she drew the smoke fragrant by its passage through perfumed water. Her attitude, though perfectly natural for an Eastern woman would, in a European, have been deemed too full of coquettish straining after effect.

Her dress, which was that of the women of Epirus, consisted of a pair of white satin trousers, embroidered with pink roses, displaying feet so exquisitely formed and so delicately fair, that they might well have been taken for Parian marble, had not the eye been undeceived by their movements as they constantly shifted in and out of a pair of little slippers with upturned toes, beautifully ornamented with gold and pearls. She wore a blue and white-striped vest, with long open sleeves, trimmed with silver loops and buttons of pearls, and a sort of bodice, which, closing only from the centre to the waist, exhibited the whole of the ivory throat and upper part of the bosom; it was fastened with three magnificent diamond clasps. The junction of the bodice and drawers was entirely concealed by one of the many-colored scarves, whose brilliant hues and rich silken fringe have rendered them so precious in the eyes of Parisian belles.

Tilted on one side of her head she had a small cap of gold-colored silk, embroidered with pearls; while on the other a purple rose mingled its glowing colors with the luxuriant masses of her hair, of which the blackness was so intense that it was tinged with blue.

The extreme beauty of the countenance, that shone forth in loveliness that mocked the vain attempts of dress to augment it, was peculiarly and purely Grecian; there were the large, dark, melting eyes, the finely formed nose, the coral lips, and pearly teeth, that belonged to her race and country.

And, to complete the whole, HaydÃ© was in the very springtide and fulness of youthful charms"she had not yet numbered more than nineteen or twenty summers.

Monte Cristo summoned the Greek attendant, and bade her inquire whether it would be agreeable to her mistress to receive his visit. HaydÃ©'s only reply was to direct her servant by a sign to withdraw the tapestried curtain that hung before the door of her boudoir, the framework of the opening thus made serving as a sort of border to the graceful tableau presented by the young girl's picturesque attitude and appearance.

As Monte Cristo approached, she leaned upon the elbow of the arm that held the narghile, and extending to him her other hand, said, with a smile of captivating sweetness, in the sonorous language spoken by the women of Athens and Sparta:

Why demand permission ere you enter? Are you no longer my master, or have I ceased to be your slave?

Monte Cristo returned her smile.  
HaydÃ©e, said he, you well know.  
Why do you address me so coldly"so distantly? asked the young Greek.  
Have I by any means displeased you? Oh, if so, punish me as you will;  
but do not"do not speak to me in tones and manner so formal and  
constrained.  
HaydÃ©e, replied the count, you know that you are now in France, and  
are free.  
Free to do what? asked the young girl.  
Free to leave me.  
Leave you? Why should I leave you?  
That is not for me to say; but we are now about to mix in society"to  
visit and be visited.  
I dont wish to see anybody but you.  
And should you see one whom you could prefer, I would not be so  
unjust""  
I have never seen anyone I preferred to you, and I have never loved  
anyone but you and my father.  
My poor child, replied Monte Cristo, that is merely because your  
father and myself are the only men who have ever talked to you.  
I dont want anybody else to talk to me. My father said I was his  
~joy"you style me your ~love,"and both of you have called me ~my  
child.  
Do you remember your father, HaydÃ©e?  
The young Greek smiled.  
He is here, and here, said she, touching her eyes and her heart.  
And where am I? inquired Monte Cristo laughingly.  
You? cried she, with tones of thrilling tenderness, you are  
everywhere! Monte Cristo took the delicate hand of the young girl in  
his, and was about to raise it to his lips, when the simple child of  
nature hastily withdrew it, and presented her cheek.  
You now understand, HaydÃ©e, said the count, that from this moment  
you are absolutely free; that here you exercise unlimited sway, and are  
at liberty to lay aside or continue the costume of your country, as it  
may suit your inclination. Within this mansion you are absolute  
mistress of your actions, and may go abroad or remain in your  
apartments as may seem most agreeable to you. A carriage waits your  
orders, and Ali and Myrtho will accompany you whithersoever you desire  
to go. There is but one favor I would entreat of you.  
Speak.  
Guard carefully the secret of your birth. Make no allusion to the  
past; nor upon any occasion be induced to pronounce the names of your  
illustrious father or ill-fated mother.  
I have already told you, my lord, that I shall see no one.  
It is possible, HaydÃ©e, that so perfect a seclusion, though  
conformable with the habits and customs of the East, may not be  
practicable in Paris. Endeavor, then, to accustom yourself to our  
manner of living in these northern climes as you did to those of Rome,  
Florence, Milan, and Madrid; it may be useful to you one of these days,  
whether you remain here or return to the East.  
The young girl raised her tearful eyes towards Monte Cristo as she said  
with touching earnestness, Whether \_we\_ return to the East, you mean  
to say, my lord, do you not?  
My child, returned Monte Cristo you know full well that whenever we  
part, it will be no fault or wish of mine; the tree forsakes not the