

'He has gone to make his report, and to say that all the pigeons are at this moment in the dovecot.'

'Well, then, let us all fly,' said Athos, 'and leave nobody here but Planchet to bring us news.'

'A minute. Aramis, whom we have sent for!'

'That's true,' said Athos; 'we must wait for Aramis.'

At that moment Aramis entered.

The matter was all explained to him, and the friends gave him to understand that among all his high connections he must find a place for Kitry.

Aramis reflected for a minute, and then said, colouring, 'Will it be really rendering you a service, d'Arragnan?'

'I shall be grateful to you all my life.'

'Very well. Madame de Bois-Tracy asked me, for one of her friends who resides in the provinces, I believe, for a trustworthy maid. If you can, my dear d'Arragnan, answer for Mademoiselle—'

'Oh, monsieur, be assured that I shall be entirely devoted to the person who will give me the means of quitting Paris.'

'Then,' said Aramis, 'this falls out very well.'

He placed himself at the table and wrote a little note which he sealed with a ring, and gave the billet to Kitry.

'And now, my dear girl,' said d'Arragnan, 'you know that it is not good for any of us to be here. Therefore let us separate. We shall meet again in better days.'

'And whenever we find each other, in whatever place it may be,' said Kitry, 'you will find me loving you as I love you today.'

'Dicers' oaths!' said Athos, while d'Arragnan went to conduct Kitry downstairs.

An instant afterward the three young men separated, agreeing to meet again at four o'clock with Athos, and leaving Planchet to guard the house.

Aramis returned home, and Athos and d'Arragnan busied themselves about pledging the sapphire.

As the Gascon had foreseen, they easily obtained three hundred pistoles on the ring. Still further, the Jew told them that if they would sell it to him, as it would make a magnificent pendant for earrings, he would give five hundred pistoles for it.

Athos and d'Arragnan, with the activity of two soldiers and the knowledge of two connoisseurs, hardly required three hours to purchase the entire equipment of the Musketeer. Besides, Athos was very easy, and a noble to his fingers' ends. When a thing suited him he paid the price demanded, without thinking to ask for any abatement. D'Arragnan would have remonstrated at this; but Athos put his hand upon his shoulder, with a smile, and d'Arragnan understood that it was all very well for such a little Gascon gentleman as himself to drive a bargain, but not for a man who had the bearing of a prince. The Musketeer met with a superb Andalusian horse, black as jet, nostrils of fire, legs clean and elegant, rising six years. He examined him, and found him sound and without blemish. They asked a thousand livres for him.

He might perhaps have been bought for less; but while d'Arragnan was discussing the price with the dealer, Athos was counting out the money on the table.

Grimaud had a stout, short Picard cob, which cost three hundred livres.

But when the saddle and arms for Grimaud were purchased, Athos had not a sou left of his hundred and fifty pistoles. D'Arragnan offered his friend a part of his share which he should return when convenient.

But Athos only replied to this proposal by shrugging his shoulders.

'How much did the Jew say he would give for the sapphire if he purchased it?' said Athos.

'Five hundred pistoles.'

'That is to say, two hundred more—a hundred pistoles for you and a hundred pistoles for me. Well, now, that would be a real fortune to us, my friend; let us go back to the Jew's again.'

'What! will you—'

'This ring would certainly only recall very bitter remembrances; then we shall never be masters of three hundred pistoles to redeem it, so that we really should lose two hundred pistoles by the bargain. Go and tell him the ring is his, d'Arragnan, and bring back the two hundred pistoles with you.'

'Reflect, Athos!'

'Ready money is needful for the present time, and we must learn how to make sacrifices. Go, d'Arragnan, go; Grimaud will accompany you with his musketoon.'

A half hour afterward, d'Artagnan returned with the two thousand livres, and without having met with any accident.

It was thus Athos found at home resources which he did not expect.

'Meanwhile, Kitty, when we are about to separate, and you are no longer jealous of me—'

'Monsieur Chevalier, far off or near,' said Kitty, 'I shall always love you.' 'Where the devil will constancy niche itself next?' murmured Athos.

'And I, also,' said d'Artagnan, 'I also. I shall always love you; be sure of that.

But now answer me. I attach great importance to the question I am about to put to you. Did you never hear talk of a young woman who was carried off one night?'

'There, now! Oh, Monsieur Chevalier, do you love that woman still?'

'No, no; it is one of my friends who loves her—Monsieur Athos, this gentleman here.'

'I?' cried Athos, with an accent like that of a man who perceives he is about to tread upon an adder.

'You, to be sure!' said d'Artagnan, pressing Athos's hand. 'You know the interest we both take in this poor little Madame Bonacieux. Besides, Kitty will tell nothing; will you, Kitty? You understand, my dear girl,' continued d'Artagnan, 'she is the wife of that frightful baboon you saw at the door as you came in.'

'Oh, my God! You remind me of my fright! If he should have known me again!'

'How? know you again? Did you ever see that man before?'

'He came twice to Milady's.'

'That's it. About what time?'

'Why, about fifteen or eighteen days ago.'

'Exactly so.'

'And yesterday evening he came again.'

'Yesterday evening?'

'Yes, just before you came.'

'My dear Athos, we are enveloped in a network of spies. And do you believe he knew you again, Kitty?'

'I pulled down my hood as soon as I saw him, but perhaps it was too late.'

'Go down, Athos—he mistrusts you less than me—and see if he be still at his door.'

Athos went down and returned immediately.

'He has gone,' said he, 'and the house door is shut.'

They arrived without accident at the Rue des Fossoyeurs. Bonacieux was standing at the door, and looked at d'Arragnan hatefully.

'Make haste, dear lodger,' said he; 'there is a very pretty girl waiting for you upstairs; and you know women don't like to be kept waiting.'

'That's Kitty!' said d'Arragnan to himself, and darted into the passage.

Sure enough! Upon the landing leading to the chamber, and crouching against the door, he found the poor girl, all in a tremble. As soon as she perceived him, she cried, 'You have promised your protection; you have promised to save me from her anger. Remember, it is you who have ruined me!'

'Yes, yes, to be sure, Kitty,' said d'Arragnan; 'be at ease, my girl. But what happened after my departure?'

'How can I tell!' said Kitty. 'The lackeys were brought by the cries she made. She was mad with passion. There exist no imprecations she did not pour out against you. Then I thought she would remember it was through my chamber you had penetrated hers, and that then she would suppose I was your accomplice; so I took what little money I had and the best of my things, and I got away.'

'Poor dear girl! But what can I do with you? I am going away the day after tomorrow.'

'Do what you please, Monsieur Chevalier. Help me out of Paris; help me out of France!'

'I cannot take you, however, to the siege of La Rochelle,' said d'Arragnan.

'No; but you can place me in one of the provinces with some lady of your acquaintance—in your own country, for instance.'

'My dear little love! In my country the ladies do without chambermaids. But stop! I can manage your business for you. Planchet, go and find Aramis. Request him to come here directly. We have something very important to say to him.'

'I understand,' said Athos; 'but why not Porthos? I should have thought that his duchess—'

'Oh, Porthos's duchess is dressed by her husband's clerks,' said d'Arragnan, laughing. 'Besides, Kitty would not like to live in the Rue aux Ours. Isn't it so, Kitty?'

'I do not care where I live,' said Kitty, 'provided I am well concealed, and nobody knows where I am.'

Chapter XXXIX

A Vision



Four o'clock the four friends were all assembled with Athos. Their anxiety about their outfits had all disappeared, and each countenance only preserved the expression of its own secret disquiet—for behind all present happiness is concealed a fear for the future.

Suddenly Planchet entered, bringing two letters for d'Arragnan.

The one was a little billet, genteelly folded, with a pretty seal in green wax on which was impressed a dove bearing a green branch.

The other was a large square epistle, resplendent with the terrible arms of his Eminence the cardinal duke.

At the sight of the little letter the heart of d'Arragnan bounded, for he believed he recognized the handwriting, and although he had seen that writing but once, the memory of it remained at the bottom of his heart.

He therefore seized the little epistle, and opened it eagerly.

'Be,' said the letter, 'on Thursday next, at from six to seven o'clock in the evening, on the road to Chailiot, and look carefully into the carriages that pass; but if you have any consideration for your own life or that of those who love you, do not speak a single word, do not make a movement which may lead anyone to believe you have recognized her who exposes herself to everything for the sake of seeing you but for an instant.'

No signature.

'That's a snare,' said Athos; 'don't go, d'Arragnan.'

'And yet,' replied d'Arragnan, 'I think I recognize the writing.'

'It may be counterfeited,' said Athos. 'Between six and seven o'clock the road of Chaillot is quite deserted; you might as well go and ride in the forest of Bondy.'

'But suppose we all go,' said d'Arragnan; 'what the devil! They won't devour us all four, four lackeys, horses, arms, and all!'

'And besides, it will be a chance for displaying our new equipments,' said Porthos.

'But if it is a woman who writes,' said Aramis, 'and that woman desires not to be seen, remember, you compromise her, d'Arragnan; which is not the part of a gentleman.'

'We will remain in the background,' said Porthos, 'and he will advance alone.'

'Yes; but a pistol shot is easily fired from a carriage which goes at a gallop.'

'Bah!' said d'Arragnan, 'they will miss me; if they fire we will ride after the carriage, and exterminate those who may be in it. They must be enemies.'

'He is right,' said Porthos, 'battle. Besides, we must try our own arms.'

'Bah, let us enjoy that pleasure,' said Aramis, with his mild and careless manner.

'As you please,' said Athos.

'Gentlemen,' said d'Arragnan, 'it is half past four, and we have scarcely time to be on the road of Chaillot by six.'

'Besides, if we go out too late, nobody will see us,' said Porthos, 'and that will be a pity. Let us get ready, gentlemen.'

'But this second letter,' said Athos, 'you forget that; it appears to me, however, that the seal denotes that it deserves to be opened. For my part, I declare, d'Arragnan, I think it of much more consequence than the little piece of waste paper you have so cunningly slipped into your bosom.'

D'Arragnan blushed.

'Well,' said he, 'let us see, gentlemen, what are his Eminence's commands,' and d'Arragnan unsealed the letter and read,

M. d'Arragnan, of the king's Guards, company Dessessart, is expected at the Palais-Cardinal this evening, at eight o'clock.

'Sell a jewel which came from my mother! I vow I should consider it a profanation.'

'Pledge it, then; you can borrow at least a thousand crowns on it. With that sum you can extricate yourself from your present difficulties; and when you are full of money again, you can redeem it, and take it back cleansed from its ancient stains, as it will have passed through the hands of usurers.'

Athos smiled.

'You are a capital companion, d'Arragnan,' said he; 'your never-failing cheerfulness raises poor souls in affliction. Well, let us pledge the ring, but upon one condition.'

'What?'

'That there shall be five hundred crowns for you, and five hundred crowns for me.'

'Don't dream it, Athos. I don't need the quarter of such a sum—I who am still only in the Guards—and by selling my saddles, I shall procure it. What do I want? A horse for Planchet, that's all. Besides, you forget that I have a ring likewise.'

'To which you attach more value, it seems, than I do to mine; at least, I have thought so.'

'Yes, for in any extreme circumstance it might not only extricate us from some great embarrassment, but even a great danger. It is not only a valuable diamond, but it is an enchanted talisman.'

'I don't at all understand you, but I believe all you say to be true. Let us return to my ring, or rather to yours. You shall take half the sum that will be advanced upon it, or I will throw it into the Seine; and I doubt, as was the case with Polycrates, whether any fish will be sufficiently complaisant to bring it back to us.'

'Well, I will take it, then,' said d'Arragnan.

At this moment Grimaud returned, accompanied by Planchet; the latter, anxious about his master and curious to know what had happened to him, had taken advantage of the opportunity and brought the garments himself.

D'Arragnan dressed himself, and Athos did the same. When the two were ready to go out, the latter made Grimaud the sign of a man taking aim, and the lackey immediately took down his musketoön, and prepared to follow his master.

'There is something horribly mysterious under all this, Athos; this woman is one of the cardinal's spies, I am sure of that.'

'In that case, take care! If the cardinal does not hold you in high admiration for the affair of London, he entertains a great hatred for you; but as, considering everything, he cannot accuse you openly, and as hatred must be satisfied, particularly when it's a cardinal's hatred, take care of yourself. If you go out, do not go out alone; when you eat, use every precaution. Mistrust everything, in short, even your own shadow.'

'Fortunately,' said d'Arragnan, 'all this will be only necessary till after to-morrow evening, for when once with the army, we shall have, I hope, only men to dread.'

'In the meantime,' said Athos, 'I renounce my plan of seclusion, and wherever you go, I will go with you. You must return to the Rue des Fossoyeurs; I will accompany you.'

'But however near it may be,' replied d'Arragnan, 'I cannot go thither in this guise.'

'That's true,' said Athos, and he rang the bell.

Grimaud entered.

Athos made him a sign to go to d'Arragnan's residence, and bring back some clothes. Grimaud replied by another sign that he understood perfectly, and set off.

'All this will not advance your outfit,' said Athos; 'for if I am not mistaken, you have left the best of your apparel with Milady, and she will certainly not have the politeness to return it to you. Fortunately, you have the sapphire.'

'The jewel is yours, my dear Athos! Did you not tell me it was a family jewel?'

'Yes, my grandfather gave two thousand crowns for it, as he once told me. It formed part of the nuptial present he made his wife, and it is magnificent. My mother gave it to me, and I, fool as I was, instead of keeping the ring as a holy relic, gave it to this wretch.'

'Then, my friend, take back this ring, to which I see you attach much value.'

'I take back the ring, after it has passed through the hands of that infamous creature? Never; that ring is defiled, d'Arragnan.'

'Sell it, then.'

LA HOUDINIÈRE,
CAPTAIN OF THE GUARDS

'The devil!' said Athos; 'here's a rendezvous much more serious than the other.'

'I will go to the second after attending the first,' said d'Arragnan. 'One is for seven o'clock, and the other for eight; there will be time for both.'

'Hum! I would not go at all,' said Aramis. 'A gallant knight cannot decline a rendezvous with a lady; but a prudent gentleman may excuse himself from not waiting on his Eminence, particularly when he has reason to believe he is not invited to make his compliments.'

'I am of Aramis's opinion,' said Porthos.

'Gentlemen,' replied d'Arragnan, 'I have already received by Monsieur de Cavois a similar invitation from his Eminence. I neglected it, and on the morrow a serious misfortune happened to me—Constance disappeared. Whatever may ensue, I will go.'

'If you are determined,' said Athos, 'do so.'

'But the Bastille?' said Aramis.

'Bah! you will get me out if they put me there,' said d'Arragnan.

'To be sure we will,' replied Aramis and Porthos, with admirable promptness and decision, as if that were the simplest thing in the world, 'to be sure we will get you out; but meantime, as we are to set off the day after tomorrow, you would do much better not to risk this Bastille.'

'Let us do better than that,' said Athos; 'do not let us leave him during the whole evening. Let each of us wait at a gate of the palace with three Musketeers behind him; if we see a close carriage, at all suspicious in appearance, come out, let us fall upon it. It is a long time since we have had a skirmish with the Guards of Monsieur the Cardinal; Monsieur de Tréville must think us dead.'

'To a certainty, Athos,' said Aramis, 'you were meant to be a general of the army! What do you think of the plan, gentlemen?'

'Admirable!' replied the young men in chorus.

'Well,' said Porthos, 'I will run to the hôtel, and engage our comrades to hold themselves in readiness by eight o'clock; the rendezvous, the Place du Palais-Cardinal. Meantime, you see that the lackeys saddle the horses.'

'I have no horse,' said d'Artagnan; 'but that is of no consequence, I can take one of Monsieur de Tréville's.'

'That is not worth while,' said Aramis, 'you can have one of mine.'

'One of yours! how many have you, then?' asked d'Artagnan.

'Three,' replied Aramis, smiling.

'*Certes*,' cried Athos, 'you are the best-mounted poet of France or Navarre.'

'Well, my dear Aramis, you don't want three horses? I cannot comprehend what induced you to buy three!'

'Therefore I only purchased two,' said Aramis.

'The third, then, fell from the clouds, I suppose?'

'No, the third was brought to me this very morning by a groom out of livery, who would not tell me in whose service he was, and who said he had received orders from his master.'

'Or his mistress,' interrupted d'Artagnan.

'That makes no difference,' said Aramis, colouring; 'and who affirmed, as I said, that he had received orders from his master or mistress to place the horse in my stable, without informing me whence it came.'

'It is only to poets that such things happen,' said Athos, gravely.

'Well, in that case, we can manage famously,' said d'Artagnan; 'which of the two horses will you ride—that which you bought or the one that was given to you?'

'That which was given to me, assuredly. You cannot for a moment imagine, d'Artagnan, that I would commit such an offence toward—'

'The unknown giver,' interrupted d'Artagnan.

'Or the mysterious benefactress,' said Athos.

'The one you bought will then become useless to you?'

'Nearly so.'

'And you selected it yourself?'

'With the greatest care. The safety of the horseman, you know, depends almost always upon the goodness of his horse.'

'Well, transfer it to me at the price it cost you?'

'I was going to make you the offer, my dear d'Artagnan, giving you all the time necessary for repaying me such a trifle.'

'How much did it cost you?'

'Eight hundred livres.'

'*The other*?' said Athos, in so stifled a voice that d'Artagnan scarcely heard him.

'Yes, she of whom you told me one day at Amiens.'

Athos uttered a groan, and let his head sink on his hands.

'This is a woman of twenty-six or twenty-eight years.'

'Fair,' said Athos, 'is she not?'

'Very.'

'Blue and clear eyes, of a strange brilliancy, with black eyelids and eyebrows?'

'Yes.'

'Tall, well-made? She has lost a tooth, next to the eyetooth on the left?'

'Yes.'

'The *fleur-de-lis* is small, rosy in colour, and looks as if efforts had been made to efface it by the application of poultices?'

'Yes.'

'But you say she is English?'

'She is called Milady, but she may be French. Lord de Winter is only her brother-in-law.'

'I will see her, d'Artagnan!'

'Beware, Athos, beware. You tried to kill her; she is a woman to return you the like, and not to fail.'

'She will not dare to say anything; that would be to denounce herself.'

'She is capable of anything or everything. Did you ever see her furious?'

'No,' said Athos.

'A tigris, a panther! Ah, my dear Athos, I am greatly afraid I have drawn a terrible vengeance on both of us!'

D'Artagnan then related all—the mad passion of Milady and her menaces of death.

'You are right; and upon my soul, I would give my life for a hair,' said Athos.

'Fortunately, the day after tomorrow we leave Paris. We are going according to all probability to La Rochelle, and once gone—'

'She will follow you to the end of the world, Athos, if she recognizes you. Let her, then, exhaust her vengeance on me alone!'

'My dear friend, of what consequence is it if she kills me?' said Athos. 'Do you, perchance, think I set any great store by life?'

'Hold your tongue, you stupid fellow!' said the young man; 'I am d'Arragnan; don't you know me? Where is your master?'

'You, Monsieur d'Arragnan!' cried Grimaud, 'impossible.'

'Grimaud,' said Athos, coming out of his apartment in a dressing gown, 'Grimaud, I thought I heard you permitting yourself to speak?'

'Ah, monsieur, it is—'

'Silence!'

Grimaud contented himself with pointing d'Arragnan out to his master with his finger.

Athos recognized his comrade, and phlegmatic as he was, he burst into a laugh which was quite excused by the strange masquerade before his eyes—petticoats falling over his shoes, sleeves tucked up, and moustaches stiff with agitation.

'Don't laugh, my friend!' cried d'Arragnan; 'for heaven's sake, don't laugh, for upon my soul, it's no laughing matter!'

And he pronounced these words with such a solemn air and with such a real appearance of terror, that Athos eagerly seized his hand, crying, 'Are you wounded, my friend? How pale you are!'

'No, but I have just met with a terrible adventure! Are you alone, Athos?'

'*Parbleu!* whom do you expect to find with me at this hour?'

'Well, well!' and d'Arragnan rushed into Athos's chamber.

'Come, speak!' said the latter, closing the door and bolting it, that they might not be disturbed. 'Is the king dead? Have you killed the cardinal? You are quite upset! Come, come, tell me; I am dying with curiosity and uneasiness!'

'Athos,' said d'Arragnan, getting rid of his female garments, and appearing in his shirt, 'prepare yourself to hear an incredible, an unheard-of story.'

'Well, but put on this dressing gown first,' said the Musketeer to his friend. D'Arragnan donned the robe as quickly as he could, mistaking one sleeve for the other, so greatly was he still agitated.

'Well?' said Athos.

'Well,' replied d'Arragnan, bending his mouth to Athos's ear, and lowering his voice, 'Miliady is marked with a *fleur-de-lis* upon her shoulder!'

'Ah!' cried the Musketeer, as if he had received a ball in his heart.

'Let us see,' said d'Arragnan. 'Are you *sure* that the *other* is dead?'

'Here are forty double pistoles, my dear friend,' said d'Arragnan, taking the sum from his pocket; 'I know that is the coin in which you were paid for your poems.'

'You are rich, then?' said Aramis.

'Rich? Richest, my dear fellow!'

And d'Arragnan chinked the remainder of his pistoles in his pocket.

'Send your saddle, then, to the hôtel of the Musketeers, and your horse can be brought back with ours.'

'Very well; but it is already five o'clock, so make haste.'

A quarter of an hour afterward Porthos appeared at the end of the Rue Férou on a very handsome *genet*. Mousqueton followed him upon an Auvergne horse, small but very handsome. Porthos was resplendent with joy and pride.

At the same time, Aramis made his appearance at the other end of the street upon a superb English charger. Bazin followed him upon a roan, holding by the halter a vigorous Mecklenburg horse; this was d'Arragnan's mount.

The two Musketeers met at the gate. Athos and d'Arragnan watched their approach from the window.

'The devil!' cried Aramis, 'you have a magnificent horse there, Porthos.'

'Yes,' replied Porthos, 'it is the one that ought to have been sent to me at first. A bad joke of the husband's substituted the other; but the husband has been punished since, and I have obtained full satisfaction.'

Planchet and Grimaud appeared in their turn, leading their masters' steeds. D'Arragnan and Athos put themselves into saddle with their companions, and all four set forward; Athos upon a horse he owed to a woman, Aramis on a horse he owed to his mistress, Porthos on a horse he owed to his procurator's wife, and d'Arragnan on a horse he owed to his good fortune—the best mistress possible.

The lackeys followed.

As Porthos had foreseen, the cavalcade produced a good effect; and if Mme. Coquenard had met Porthos and seen what a superb appearance he made upon his handsome Spanish *genet*, she would not have regretted the bleeding she had inflicted upon the strongbox of her husband.

Near the Louvre the four friends met with M. de Tréville, who was returning from St. Germain; he stopped them to offer his compliments upon their appointments, which in an instant drew round them a hundred gapers.

D'Arragnan profited by the circumstance to speak to M. de Tréville of the letter with the great red seal and the cardinal's arms. It is well understood that he did not breathe a word about the other.

M. de Tréville approved of the resolution he had adopted, and assured him that if on the morrow he did not appear, he himself would undertake to find him, let him be where he might.

At this moment the clock of La Samaritaine struck six; the four friends pleaded an engagement, and took leave of M. de Tréville.

A short gallop brought them to the road of Chailot; the day began to decline, carriages were passing and repassing. D'Arragnan, keeping at some distance from his friends, darted a scrutinizing glance into every carriage that appeared, but saw no face with which he was acquainted.

At length, after waiting a quarter of an hour and just as twilight was beginning to thicken, a carriage appeared, coming at a quick pace on the road of Sévres. A presentiment instantly told d'Arragnan that this carriage contained the person who had appointed the rendezvous; the young man was himself astonished to find his heart beat so violently. Almost instantly a female head was put out at the window, with two fingers placed upon her mouth, either to enjoin silence or to send him a kiss. D'Arragnan uttered a slight cry of joy; this woman, or rather this apparition—for the carriage passed with the rapidity of a vision—was Mme. Bonacieux.

By an involuntary movement and in spite of the injunction given, d'Arragnan put his horse into a gallop, and in a few strides overtook the carriage; but the window was hermetically closed, the vision had disappeared.

D'Arragnan then remembered the injunction: 'If you value your own life or that of those who love you, remain motionless, and as if you had seen nothing.'

He stopped, therefore, trembling not for himself but for the poor woman who had evidently exposed herself to great danger by appointing this rendezvous.

The carriage pursued its way, still going at a great pace, till it dashed into Paris, and disappeared.

D'Arragnan remained fixed to the spot, astounded and not knowing what to think. If it was Mme. Bonacieux and if she was returning to Paris, why this fugitive rendezvous, why this simple exchange of a glance, why this lost kiss? If, on the other side, it was not she—which was still quite possible—

Chapter XXXVIII

How, Without Incommoding Himself, Athos Procures His Equipment



D'ARRAGNAN was so completely bewildered that without taking any heed of what might become of Kitty he ran at full speed across half Paris, and did not stop till he came to Athos's door. The confusion of his mind, the terror which spurred him on, the cries of some of the patrol who started in pursuit of him, and the hooting of the people who, notwithstanding the early hour, were going to their work, only made him precipitate his course.

He crossed the court, ran up the two flights to Athos's apartment, and knocked at the door enough to break it down.

Grimaud came, rubbing his half-open eyes, to answer this noisy summons, and d'Arragnan sprang with such violence into the room as nearly to overturn the astonished lackey.

In spite of his habitual silence, the poor lad this time found his speech.

'Holloa, there!' cried he; 'what do you want, you strumper? What's your business here, you hussy?'

D'Arragnan threw off his hood, and disengaged his hands from the folds of the cloak. At sight of the moustaches and the naked sword, the poor devil perceived he had to deal with a man. He then concluded it must be an assassin.

'Help! murder! help!' cried he.