Determined to put the advice of M. de Tréville in practice instantly, d'Artagnan directed his course toward the Rue des Fossoyeurs, in order to superintend the packing of his valise. On approaching the house, he perceived M. Bonacieux in morning costume, standing at his threshold. All that the prudent Planchet had said to him the preceding evening about the sinister character of the old man recurred to the mind of d'Artagnan, who looked at him with more attention than he had done before. In fact, in addition to that yellow, sickly paleness which indicates the insinuation of the bile in the blood, and which might, besides, be accidental, d'Artagnan remarked something perfidiously significant in the play of the wrinkled features of his countenance. A rogue does not laugh in the same way that an honest man does; a hypocrite does not shed the tears of a man of good faith. All falsehood is a mask; and however well made the mask may be, with a little attention we may always succeed in distinguishing it from the true face.

It appeared, then, to d'Artagnan that M. Bonacieux wore a mask, and likewise that that mask was most disagreeable to look upon. In consequence of this feeling of repugnance, he was about to pass without speaking to him, but, as he had done the day before, M. Bonacieux accosted him.

'Well, young man,' said he, 'we appear to pass rather gay nights! Seven o'clock in the morning! *Peste!* You seem to reverse ordinary customs, and come home at the hour when other people are going out.'

'No one can reproach you for anything of the kind, Monsieur Bonacieux,' said the young man; 'you are a model for regular people. It is true that when a man possesses a young and pretty wife, he has no need to seek happiness elsewhere. Happiness comes to meet him, does it not, Monsieur Bonacieux?'

Bonacieux became as pale as death, and grinned a ghastly smile.

'Ah, ah!' said Bonacieux, 'you are a jocular companion! But where the devil were you gadding last night, my young master? It does not appear to be very clean in the crossroads.'

D'Artagnan glanced down at his boots, all covered with mud; but that same glance fell upon the shoes and stockings of the mercer, and it might have been said they had been dipped in the same mud heap. Both were stained with splashes of mud of the same appearance.

Then a sudden idea crossed the mind of d'Artagnan. That little stout man, short and elderly, that sort of lackey, dressed in dark clothes, treated without ceremony by the men wearing swords who composed the escort, was Bonacieux himself. The husband had presided at the abduction of his wife.

A terrible inclination seized d'Artagnan to grasp the mercer by the throat and strangle him; but, as we have said, he was a very prudent youth, and he restrained himself. However, the revolution which appeared upon his countenance was so visible that Bonacieux was terrified at it, and he endeavoured to draw back a step or two; but as he was standing before the half of the door which was shut, the obstacle compelled him to keep his place.

'Ah, but you are joking, my worthy man!' said d'Artagnan. 'It appears to me that if my boots need a sponge, your stockings and shoes stand in equal need of a brush. May you not have been philandering a little also, Monsieur Bonacieux? Oh, the devil! That's unpardonable in a man of your age, and who besides, has such a pretty wife as yours.'

'Oh, Lord! no,' said Bonacieux, 'but yesterday I went to St. Mandé to make some inquiries after a servant, as I cannot possibly do without one; and the roads were so bad that I brought back all this mud, which I have not yet had time to remove.'

The place named by Bonacieux as that which had been the object of his journey was a fresh proof in support of the suspicions d'Artagnan had conceived. Bonacieux had named Mandé because Mandé was in an exactly opposite direction from St. Cloud. This probability afforded him his first consolation. If Bonacieux knew where his wife was, one might, by extreme means, force the mercer to open his teeth and let his secret escape. The question, then, was how to change this probability into a certainty.

'Pardon, my dear Monsieur Bonacieux, if I don't stand upon ceremony,' said d'Artagnan, 'but nothing makes one so thirsty as want of sleep. I am parched with thirst. Allow me to take a glass of water in your apartment; you know that is never refused among neighbours.'

Without waiting for the permission of his host, d'Artagnan went quickly into the house, and cast a rapid glance at the bed. It had not been used. Bonacieux had not been abed. He had only been back an hour or two; he

Chapter XXV

Porthos

INSTEAD of returning directly home, d'Artagnan alighted at the door of M. de Tréville, and ran quickly up the stairs. This time he had decided to relate all that had passed. M. de Tréville would doubtless give him good advice as to the whole affair. Besides, as M. de Tréville saw the queen almost daily, he might be able to draw from her Majesty some intelligence of the poor young woman, whom they were doubtless making pay very dearly for her devotedness to her mistress.

M. de Tréville listened to the young man's account with a seriousness which proved that he saw something else in this adventure besides a love affair. When d'Artagnan had finished, he said, 'Hum! All this savours of his Eminence, a league off.'

'But what is to be done?' said d'Artagnan.

'Nothing, absolutely nothing, at present, but quitting Paris, as I told you, as soon as possible. I will see the queen; I will relate to her the details of the disappearance of this poor woman, of which she is no doubt ignorant. These details will guide her on her part, and on your return, I shall perhaps have some good news to tell you. Rely on me.'

D'Artagnan knew that, although a Gascon, M. de Tréville was not in the habit of making promises, and that when by chance he did promise, he more than kept his word. He bowed to him, then, full of gratitude for the past and for the future; and the worthy captain, who on his side felt a lively interest in this young man, so brave and so resolute, pressed his hand kindly, wishing him a pleasant journey.

had accompanied his wife to the place of her confinement, or else at least to the first relay.

'Thanks, Monsieur Bonacieux,' said d'Artagnan, emptying his glass, 'that is all I wanted of you. I will now go up into my apartment. I will make Planchet brush my boots; and when he has done, I will, if you like, send him to you to brush your shoes.'

He left the mercer quite astonished at his singular farewell, and asking himself if he had not been a little inconsiderate.

At the top of the stairs he found Planchet in a great fright.

'Ah, monsieur!' cried Planchet, as soon as he perceived his master, 'here is more trouble. I thought you would never come in.'

'What's the matter now, Planchet?' demanded d'Artagnan.

'Oh! I give you a hundred, I give you a thousand times to guess, monsieur, the visit I received in your absence.'

'When?'

'About half an hour ago, while you were at Monsieur de Tréville's.'

'Who has been here? Come, speak.'

'Monsieur de Cavois.'

'Monsieur de Cavois?'

'In person.'

'The captain of the cardinal's Guards?'

'Himself.'

'Did he come to arrest me?'

'I have no doubt that he did, monsieur, for all his wheedling manner.'

'Was he so sweet, then?'

'Indeed, he was all honey, monsieur.'

'Indeed!'

'He came, he said, on the part of his Eminence, who wished you well, and to beg you to follow him to the Palais-Royal[1].'

'What did you answer him?'

'That the thing was impossible, seeing that you were not at home, as he could see.'

'Well, what did he say then?'

[1] It was called the Palais-Cardinal before Richelieu gave it to the King.

impreScriptible rights which it imperiously insists upon, even with the saddest hearts.

Toward six o'clock d'Artagnan awoke with that uncomfortable feeling which generally accompanies the break of day after a bad night. He was not long in making his toilet. He examined himself to see if advantage had been taken of his sleep, and having found his diamond ring on his finger, his purse in his pocket, and his pistols in his belt, he rose, paid for his bottle, and went out to try if he could have any better luck in his search after his lackey than he had had the night before. The first thing he perceived through the damp gray mist was honest Planchet, who, with the two horses in hand, awaited him at the door of a little blind cabaret, before which d'Artagnan had passed without even a suspicion of its existence.

'That you must not fail to call upon him in the course of the day; and then he added in a low voice, 'Tell your master that his Eminence is very well disposed toward him, and that his fortune perhaps depends upon this interview.''

'The snare is rather *maladroit* for the cardinal,' replied the young man, smiling.

'Oh, I saw the snare, and I answered you would be quite in despair on your return.

"Where has he gone?" asked Monsieur de Cavois.

"To Troyes, in Champagne," I answered.

"And when did he set out?"

"Yesterday evening."'

'Planchet, my friend,' interrupted d'Artagnan, 'you are really a precious fellow.'

'You will understand, monsieur, I thought there would be still time, if you wish, to see Monsieur de Cavois to contradict me by saying you were not yet gone. The falsehood would then lie at my door, and as I am not a gentleman, I may be allowed to lie.'

'Be of good heart, Planchet, you shall preserve your reputation as a veracious man. In a quarter of an hour we set off.'

'That's the advice I was about to give Monsieur; and where are we going, may I ask, without being too curious?'

'*Pardieu!* In the opposite direction to that which you said I was gone. Besides, are you not as anxious to learn news of Grimaud, Mousqueton, and Bazin as I am to know what has become of Athos, Porthos, and Aramis?'

'Yes, monsieur,' said Planchet, 'and I will go as soon as you please. Indeed, I think provincial air will suit us much better just now than the air of Paris. So then— '

'So then, pack up our luggage, Planchet, and let us be off. On my part, I will go out with my hands in my pockets, that nothing may be suspected. You may join me at the Hôtel des Gardes. By the way, Planchet, I think you are right with respect to our host, and that he is decidedly a frightfully low wretch.'

'Ah, monsieur, you may take my word when I tell you anything. I am a physiognomist, I assure you.'

D'Artagnan went out first, as had been agreed upon. Then, in order that he might have nothing to reproach himself with, he directed his steps, for the last time, toward the residences of his three friends. No news had been received of them; only a letter, all perfumed and of an elegant writing in small characters, had come for Aramis. D'Artagnan took charge of it. Ten minutes afterward Planchet joined him at the stables of the Hôtel des Gardes. D'Artagnan, in order that there might be no time lost, had saddled his horse himself.

'That's well,' said he to Planchet, when the latter added the portmanteau to the equipment. 'Now saddle the other three horses.'

'Do you think, then, monsieur, that we shall travel faster with two horses apiece?' said Planchet, with his shrewd air.

'No, Monsieur Jester,' replied d'Artagnan; 'but with our four horses we may bring back our three friends, if we should have the good fortune to find them living.'

'Which is a great chance,' replied Planchet, 'but we must not despair of the mercy of God.'

'Amen!' said d'Artagnan, getting into his saddle.

As they went from the Hôtel des Gardes, they separated, leaving the street at opposite ends, one having to quit Paris by the Barrière de la Villette and the other by the Barrière Montmartre, to meet again beyond St. Denis—a strategic manoeuvre which, having been executed with equal punctuality, was crowned with the most fortunate results. D'Artagnan and Planchet entered Pierrefitte together.

Planchet was more courageous, it must be admitted, by day than by night. His natural prudence, however, never forsook him for a single instant. He had forgotten not one of the incidents of the first journey, and he looked upon everybody he met on the road as an enemy. It followed that his hat was forever in his hand, which procured him some severe reprimands from d'Artagnan, who feared that his excess of politeness would lead people to think he was the lackey of a man of no consequence.

Nevertheless, whether the passengers were really touched by the urbanity of Planchet or whether this time nobody was posted on the young man's road, our two travellers arrived at Chantilly without any accident, and alighted at the tavern of Great St. Martin, the same at which they had stopped on their first journey.

'Which?'

'The short one.'

'Oh, he was not a gentleman, I'll answer for it; besides, he did not wear a sword, and the others treated him with small consideration.'

'Some lackey,' murmured d'Artagnan. 'Poor woman, poor woman, what have they done with you?'

'You have promised to be secret, my good monsieur?' said the old man.

'And I renew my promise. Be easy, I am a gentleman. A gentleman has but his word, and I have given you mine.'

With a heavy heart, d'Artagnan again bent his way toward the ferry. Sometimes he hoped it could not be Mme. Bonacieux, and that he should find her next day at the Louvre; sometimes he feared she had had an intrigue with another, who, in a jealous fit, had surprised her and carried her off. His mind was torn by doubt, grief, and despair.

'Oh, if I had my three friends here,' cried he, 'I should have, at least, some hopes of finding her; but who knows what has become of them?'

It was past midnight; the next thing was to find Planchet. D'Artagnan went successively into all the cabarets in which there was a light, but could not find Planchet in any of them.

At the sixth he began to reflect that the search was rather dubious. D'Artagnan had appointed six o'clock in the morning for his lackey, and wherever he might be, he was right.

Besides, it came into the young man's mind that by remaining in the environs of the spot on which this sad event had passed, he would, perhaps, have some light thrown upon the mysterious affair. At the sixth cabaret, then, as we said, d'Artagnan stopped, asked for a bottle of wine of the best quality, and placing himself in the darkest corner of the room, determined thus to wait till daylight; but this time again his hopes were disappointed, and although he listened with all his ears, he heard nothing, amid the oaths, coarse jokes, and abuse which passed between the labourers, servants, and carters who comprised the honourable society of which he formed a part, which could put him upon the least track of her who had been stolen from him. He was compelled, then, after having swallowed the contents of his bottle, to pass the time as well as to evade suspicion, to fall into the easiest position in his corner and to sleep, whether well or ill. D'Artagnan, be it remembered, was only twenty years old, and at that age sleep has its

in clothes of a dark colour, who ascended the ladder very carefully, looked suspiciously in at the window of the pavilion, came down as quietly as he had gone up, and whispered, "It is she!" Immediately, he who had spoken to me approached the door of the pavilion, opened it with a key he had in his hand, closed the door and disappeared, while at the same time the other two men ascended the ladder. The little old man remained at the coach door; the coachman took care of his horses, the lackey held the saddlehorses. All at once great cries resounded in the pavilion, and a woman came to the window, and opened it, as if to throw herself out of it; but as soon as she perceived the other two men, she fell back and they went into the chamber. Then I saw no more; but I heard the noise of breaking furniture. The woman screamed, and cried for help; but her cries were soon stifled. Two of the men appeared, bearing the woman in their arms, and carried her to the carriage, into which the little old man got after her. The leader closed the window, came out an instant after by the door, and satisfied himself that the woman was in the carriage. His two companions were already on horseback. He sprang into his saddle; the lackey took his place by the coachman; the carriage went off at a quick pace, escorted by the three horsemen, and all was over. From that moment I have neither seen nor heard anything.'

D'Artagnan, entirely overcome by this terrible story, remained motionless and mute, while all the demons of anger and jealousy were howling in his heart.

'But, my good gentleman,' resumed the old man, upon whom this mute despair certainly produced a greater effect than cries and tears would have done, 'do not take on so; they did not kill her, and that's a comfort.'

'Can you guess,' said d'Artagnan, 'who was the man who headed this infernal expedition?'

'I don't know him.'

'But as you spoke to him you must have seen him.'

'Oh, it's a description you want?'

'Exactly so.'

'A tall, dark man, with black moustaches, dark eyes, and the air of a gentleman.'

'That's the man!' cried d'Artagnan, 'again he, forever he! He is my demon, apparently. And the other?'

The host, on seeing a young man followed by a lackey with two extra horses, advanced respectfully to the door. Now, as they had already travelled eleven leagues, d'Artagnan thought it time to stop, whether Porthos were or were not in the inn. Perhaps it would not be prudent to ask at once what had become of the Musketeer. The result of these reflections was that d'Artagnan, without asking information of any kind, alighted, commended the horses to the care of his lackey, entered a small room destined to receive those who wished to be alone, and desired the host to bring him a bottle of his best wine and as good a breakfast as possible—a desire which further corroborated the high opinion the innkeeper had formed of the traveller at first sight.

D'Artagnan was therefore served with miraculous celerity. The regiment of the Guards was recruited among the first gentlemen of the kingdom; and d'Artagnan, followed by a lackey, and travelling with four magnificent horses, despite the simplicity of his uniform, could not fail to make a sensation. The host desired himself to serve him; which d'Artagnan perceiving, ordered two glasses to be brought, and commenced the following conversation.

'My faith, my good host,' said d'Artagnan, filling the two glasses, 'I asked for a bottle of your best wine, and if you have deceived me, you will be punished in what you have sinned; for seeing that I hate drinking by myself, you shall drink with me. Take your glass, then, and let us drink. But what shall we drink to, so as to avoid wounding any susceptibility? Let us drink to the prosperity of your establishment.'

'Your Lordship does me much honour,' said the host, 'and I thank you sincerely for your kind wish.'

'But don't mistake,' said d'Artagnan, 'there is more selfishness in my toast than perhaps you may think—for it is only in prosperous establishments that one is well received. In hôtels that do not flourish, everything is in confusion, and the traveller is a victim to the embarrassments of his host. Now, I travel a great deal, particularly on this road, and I wish to see all innkeepers making a fortune.'

'It seems to me,' said the host, 'that this is not the first time I have had the honour of seeing Monsieur.'

'Bah, I have passed perhaps ten times through Chantilly, and out of the ten times I have stopped three or four times at your house at least. Why

I was here only ten or twelve days ago. I was conducting some friends, Musketeers, one of whom, by the by, had a dispute with a stranger—a man who sought a quarrel with him, for I don't know what.'

'Exactly so,' said the host; 'I remember it perfectly. It is not Monsieur Porthos that your Lordship means?'

'Yes, that is my companion's name. My God, my dear host, tell me if anything has happened to him?'

'Your Lordship must have observed that he could not continue his journey.'

'Why, to be sure, he promised to rejoin us, and we have seen nothing of him.'

'He has done us the honour to remain here.'

'What, he had done you the honour to remain here?'

'Yes, monsieur, in this house; and we are even a little uneasy— '

'On what account?'

'Of certain expenses he has contracted.'

'Well, but whatever expenses he may have incurred, I am sure he is in a condition to pay them.'

'Ah, monsieur, you infuse genuine balm into my blood. We have made considerable advances; and this very morning the surgeon declared that if Monsieur Porthos did not pay him, he should look to me, as it was I who had sent for him.'

'Porthos is wounded, then?'

'I cannot tell you, monsieur.'

'What! You cannot tell me? Surely you ought to be able to tell me better than any other person.'

'Yes; but in our situation we must not say all we know—particularly as we have been warned that our ears should answer for our tongues.'

'Well, can I see Porthos?'

'Certainly, monsieur. Take the stairs on your right; go up the first flight and knock at Number One. Only warn him that it is you.'

'Why should I do that?'

'Because, monsieur, some mischief might happen to you.'

'Of what kind, in the name of wonder?'

'Monsieur Porthos may imagine you belong to the house, and in a fit of passion might run his sword through you or blow out your brains.'

D'Artagnan related his story simply, with the omission of names. He told how he had a rendezvous with a young woman before that pavilion, and how, not seeing her come, he had climbed the linden tree, and by the light of the lamp had seen the disorder of the chamber.

The old man listened attentively, making a sign only that it was all so; and then, when d'Artagnan had ended, he shook his head with an air that announced nothing good.

'What do you mean?' cried d'Artagnan. 'In the name of heaven, explain yourself!'

'Oh! Monsieur,' said the old man, 'ask me nothing; for if I dared tell you what I have seen, certainly no good would befall me.'

'You have, then, seen something?' replied d'Artagnan. 'In that case, in the name of heaven,' continued he, throwing him a pistole, 'tell me what you have seen, and I will pledge you the word of a gentleman that not one of your words shall escape from my heart.'

The old man read so much truth and so much grief in the face of the young man that he made him a sign to listen, and repeated in a low voice: 'It was scarcely nine o'clock when I heard a noise in the street, and was wondering what it could be, when on coming to my door, I found that somebody was endeavouring to open it. As I am very poor and am not afraid of being robbed, I went and opened the gate and saw three men at a few paces from it. In the shadow was a carriage with two horses, and some saddlehorses. These horses evidently belonged to the three men, who were dressed as cavaliers. "Ah, my worthy gentlemen," cried I, "what do you want?" "You must have a ladder?" said he who appeared to be the leader of the party. "Yes, monsieur, the one with which I gather my fruit." "Lend it to us, and go into your house again; there is a crown for the annoyance we have caused you. Only remember this—if you speak a word of what you may see or what you may hear (for you will look and you will listen, I am quite sure, however we may threaten you), you are lost." At these words he threw me a crown, which I picked up, and he took the ladder. After shutting the gate behind them, I pretended to return to the house, but I immediately went out a back door, and stealing along in the shade of the hedge, I gained yonder clump of elder, from which I could hear and see everything. The three men brought the carriage up quietly, and took out of it a little man, stout, short, elderly, and commonly dressed

d'Artagnan did not for an instant doubt that it was Mme. Bonacieux whom the boatman had noticed.

D'Artagnan took advantage of the lamp which burned in the cabin of the ferryman to read the billet of Mme. Bonacieux once again, and satisfy himself that he had not been mistaken, that the appointment was at St. Cloud and not elsewhere, before the D'Estrées's pavilion and not in another street. Everything conspired to prove to d'Artagnan that his presentiments had not deceived him, and that a great misfortune had happened.

He again ran back to the château. It appeared to him that something might have happened at the pavilion in his absence, and that fresh information awaited him. The lane was still deserted, and the same calm soft light shone through the window.

D'Artagnan then thought of that cottage, silent and obscure, which had no doubt seen all, and could tell its tale. The gate of the enclosure was shut; but he leaped over the hedge, and in spite of the barking of a chained-up dog, went up to the cabin.

No one answered to his first knocking. A silence of death reigned in the cabin as in the pavilion; but as the cabin was his last resource, he knocked again.

It soon appeared to him that he heard a slight noise within—a timid noise which seemed to tremble lest it should be heard.

Then d'Artagnan ceased knocking, and prayed with an accent so full of anxiety and promises, terror and cajolery, that his voice was of a nature to reassure the most fearful. At length an old, worm-eaten shutter was opened, or rather pushed ajar, but closed again as soon as the light from a miserable lamp which burned in the corner had shone upon the baldric, sword belt, and pistol pommels of d'Artagnan. Nevertheless, rapid as the movement had been, d'Artagnan had had time to get a glimpse of the head of an old man.

'In the name of heaven!' cried he, 'listen to me; I have been waiting for someone who has not come. I am dying with anxiety. Has anything particular happened in the neighbourhood? Speak!'

The window was again opened slowly, and the same face appeared, only it was now still more pale than before.

'What have you done to him, then?'

'We have asked him for money.'

'The devil! Ah, I can understand that. It is a demand that Porthos takes very ill when he is not in funds; but I know he must be so at present.'

'We thought so, too, monsieur. As our house is carried on very regularly, and we make out our bills every week, at the end of eight days we presented our account; but it appeared we had chosen an unlucky moment, for at the first word on the subject, he sent us to all the devils. It is true he had been playing the day before.'

'Playing the day before! And with whom?'

'Lord, who can say, monsieur? With some gentleman who was travelling this way, to whom he proposed a game of *lansquenet*.'

'That's it, then, and the foolish fellow lost all he had?'

'Even to his horse, monsieur; for when the gentleman was about to set out, we perceived that his lackey was saddling Monsieur Porthos's horse, as well as his master's. When we observed this to him, he told us all to trouble ourselves about our own business, as this horse belonged to him. We also informed Monsieur Porthos of what was going on; but he told us we were scoundrels to doubt a gentleman's word, and that as he had said the horse was his, it must be so.'

'That's Porthos all over,' murmured d'Artagnan.

'Then,' continued the host, 'I replied that as from the moment we seemed not likely to come to a good understanding with respect to payment, I hoped that he would have at least the kindness to grant the favour of his custom to my brother host of the Golden Eagle; but Monsieur Porthos replied that, my house being the best, he should remain where he was. This reply was too flattering to allow me to insist on his departure. I confined myself then to begging him to give up his chamber, which is the handsomest in the hôtel, and to be satisfied with a pretty little room on the third floor; but to this Monsieur Porthos replied that as he every moment expected his mistress, who was one of the greatest ladies in the court, I might easily comprehend that the chamber he did me the honour to occupy in my house was itself very mean for the visit of such a personage. Nevertheless, while acknowledging the truth of what he said, I thought proper to insist; but without even giving himself the trouble to enter into any discussion with me, he took one of his pistols, laid it on his table, day

and night, and said that at the first word that should be spoken to him about removing, either within the house or out of it, he would blow out the brains of the person who should be so imprudent as to meddle with a matter which only concerned himself. Since that time, monsieur, nobody entered his chamber but his servant.'

'What! Mousqueton is here, then?'

'Oh, yes, monsieur. Five days after your departure, he came back, and in a very bad condition, too. It appears that he had met with disagreeableness, likewise, on his journey. Unfortunately, he is more nimble than his master; so that for the sake of his master, he puts us all under his feet, and as he thinks we might refuse what he asked for, he takes all he wants without asking at all.'

'The fact is,' said d'Artagnan, 'I have always observed a great degree of intelligence and devotedness in Mousqueton.'

'That is possible, monsieur; but suppose I should happen to be brought in contact, even four times a year, with such intelligence and devotedness—why, I should be a ruined man!'

'No, for Porthos will pay you.'

'Hum!' said the host, in a doubtful tone.

'The favourite of a great lady will not be allowed to be inconvenienced for such a paltry sum as he owes you.'

'If I durst say what I believe on that head— '

'What you believe?'

'I ought rather to say, what I know.'

'What you know?'

'And even what I am sure of.'

'And of what are you so sure?'

'I would say that I know this great lady.'

'You?'

'Yes; I.'

'And how do you know her?'

'Oh, monsieur, if I could believe I might trust in your discretion.'

'Speak! By the word of a gentleman, you shall have no cause to repent of your confidence.'

'Well, monsieur, you understand that uneasiness makes us do many things.'

bloody spots staining the cloth and the curtains. He hastened to descend into the street, with a frightful beating at his heart; he wished to see if he could find other traces of violence.

The little soft light shone on in the calmness of the night. D'Artagnan then perceived a thing that he had not before remarked—for nothing had led him to the examination—that the ground, trampled here and hoofmarked there, presented confused traces of men and horses. Besides, the wheels of a carriage, which appeared to have come from Paris, had made a deep impression in the soft earth, which did not extend beyond the pavilion, but turned again toward Paris.

At length d'Artagnan, in pursuing his researches, found near the wall a woman's torn glove. This glove, wherever it had not touched the muddy ground, was of irreproachable odour. It was one of those perfumed gloves that lovers like to snatch from a pretty hand.

As d'Artagnan pursued his investigations, a more abundant and more icy sweat rolled in large drops from his forehead; his heart was oppressed by a horrible anguish; his respiration was broken and short. And yet he said, to reassure himself, that this pavilion perhaps had nothing in common with Mme. Bonacieux; that the young woman had made an appointment with him before the pavilion, and not in the pavilion; that she might have been detained in Paris by her duties, or perhaps by the jealousy of her husband.

But all these reasons were combated, destroyed, overthrown, by that feeling of intimate pain which, on certain occasions, takes possession of our being, and cries to us so as to be understood unmistakably that some great misfortune is hanging over us.

Then d'Artagnan became almost wild. He ran along the high road, took the path he had before taken, and reaching the ferry, interrogated the boatman.

About seven o'clock in the evening, the boatman had taken over a young woman, wrapped in a black mantle, who appeared to be very anxious not to be recognized; but entirely on account of her precautions, the boatman had paid more attention to her and discovered that she was young and pretty.

There were then, as now, a crowd of young and pretty women who came to St. Cloud, and who had reasons for not being seen, and yet