and the indulgent father. This was one of his parts in the popular comedy he was performing,—a make-up he had adopted and which suited him about as well as the masks worn on the classic stage by paternal actors, who seen from one side, were the image of geniality, and from the other showed lips drawn down in chronic ill-temper. Let us hasten to say that in private the genial side descended to the level of the other, so that generally the indulgent man disappeared to give place to the brutal husband and domineering father.

'Why the devil does that foolish girl, who pretends to wish to speak to me, not come into my study? and why on earth does she want to speak to me at all?'

He was turning this thought over in his brain for the twentieth time, when the door opened and Eugénie appeared, attired in a figured black satin dress, her hair dressed and gloves on, as if she were going to the Italian Opera.

'Well, Eugénie, what is it you want with me? and why in this solemn drawing-room when the study is so comfortable?'

'I quite understand why you ask, sir,' said Eugénie, making a sign that her father might be seated, 'and in fact your two questions suggest fully the theme of our conversation. I will answer them both, and contrary to the usual method, the last first, because it is the least difficult. I have chosen the drawing-room, sir, as our place of meeting, in order to avoid the disagreeable impressions and influences of a banker's study. Those gilded cashbooks, drawers locked like gates of fortresses, heaps of bank-bills, come from I know not where, and the quantities of letters from England, Holland, Spain, India, China, and Peru, have generally a strange influence on a father's mind, and make him forget that there is in the world an interest greater and more sacred than the good opinion of his correspondents. I have, therefore, chosen this drawing-room, where you see, smiling and happy in their magnificent frames, your portrait, mine, my mother's, and all sorts of rural landscapes and touching pastorals. I rely much on external impressions; perhaps, with regard to you, they are immaterial, but I should be no artist if I had not some fancies.'

'Very well,' replied M. Danglars, who had listened to all this preamble with imperturbable coolness, but without understanding a word, since

like every man burdened with thoughts of the past, he was occupied with seeking the thread of his own ideas in those of the speaker.

'There is, then, the second point cleared up, or nearly so,' said Eugénie, without the least confusion, and with that masculine pointedness which distinguished her gesture and her language; 'and you appear satisfied with the explanation. Now, let us return to the first. You ask me why I have requested this interview; I will tell you in two words, sir; I will not marry count Andrea Cavalcanti.'

Danglars leaped from his chair and raised his eyes and arms towards heaven. 'Yes, indeed, sir,' continued Eugénie, still quite calm; 'you are astonished, I see; for since this little affair began, I have not manifested the slightest opposition, and yet I am always sure, when the opportunity arrives, to oppose a determined and absolute will to people who have not consulted me, and things which displease me. However, this time, my tranquillity, or passiveness as philosophers say, proceeded from another source; it proceeded from a wish, like a submissive and devoted daughter' (a slight smile was observable on the purple lips of the young girl), 'to practice obedience.'

'Well?' asked Danglars.

'Well, sir,' replied Eugénie, 'I have tried to the very last and now that the moment has come, I feel in spite of all my efforts that it is impossible.'

'But,' said Danglars, whose weak mind was at first quite overwhelmed with the weight of this pitiless logic, marking evident premeditation and force of will, 'what is your reason for this refusal, Eugénie? what reason do you assign?'

'My reason?' replied the young girl. 'Well, it is not that the man is more ugly, more foolish, or more disagreeable than any other; no, M. Andrea Cavalcanti may appear to those who look at men's faces and figures as a very good specimen of his kind. It is not, either, that my heart is less touched by him than any other; that would be a schoolgirl's reason, which I consider quite beneath me. I actually love no one, sir; you know it, do you not? I do not then see why, without real necessity, I should encumber my life with a perpetual companion. Has not some sage said, "Nothing too much"? and another, "I carry all my effects with me"? I have been taught these two aphorisms in Latin and in Greek; one is, I believe, from Phædrus, and the other from Bias. Well, my dear father, in the shipwreck

of life—for life is an eternal shipwreck of our hopes—I cast into the sea my useless encumbrance, that is all, and I remain with my own will, disposed to live perfectly alone, and consequently perfectly free.'

'Unhappy girl, unhappy girl!' murmured Danglars, turning pale, for he knew from long experience the solidity of the obstacle he had so suddenly encountered.

'Unhappy girl,' replied Eugénie, 'unhappy girl, do you say, sir? No, indeed; the exclamation appears quite theatrical and affected. Happy, on the contrary, for what am I in want of? The world calls me beautiful. It is something to be well received. I like a favourable reception; it expands the countenance, and those around me do not then appear so ugly. I possess a share of wit, and a certain relative sensibility, which enables me to draw from life in general, for the support of mine, all I meet with that is good, like the monkey who cracks the nut to get at its contents. I am rich, for you have one of the first fortunes in France. I am your only daughter, and you are not so exacting as the fathers of the Porte Saint-Martin and Gaîté, who disinherit their daughters for not giving them grandchildren. Besides, the provident law has deprived you of the power to disinherit me, at least entirely, as it has also of the power to compel me to marry Monsieur This or Monsieur That. And so—being, beautiful, witty, somewhat talented, as the comic operas say, and rich—and that is happiness, sir—why do you call me unhappy?'

Danglars, seeing his daughter smiling, and proud even to insolence, could not entirely repress his brutal feelings, but they betrayed themselves only by an exclamation. Under the fixed and inquiring gaze levelled at him from under those beautiful black eyebrows, he prudently turned away, and calmed himself immediately, daunted by the power of a resolute mind.

'Truly, my daughter,' replied he with a smile, 'you are all you boast of being, excepting one thing; I will not too hastily tell you which, but would rather leave you to guess it.'

Eugénie looked at Danglars, much surprised that one flower of her crown of pride, with which she had so superbly decked herself, should be disputed.

'My daughter,' continued the banker, 'you have perfectly explained to me the sentiments which influence a girl like you, who is determined she

Chapter XCV

Father and Daughter

We saw in a preceding chapter how Madame Danglars went formally to announce to Madame de Villefort the approaching marriage of Eugénie Danglars and M. Andrea Cavalcanti. This formal announcement, which implied or appeared to imply, the approval of all the persons concerned in this momentous affair, had been preceded by a scene to which our readers must be admitted. We beg them to take one step backward, and to transport themselves, the morning of that day of great catastrophes, into the showy, gilded salon we have before shown them, and which was the pride of its owner, Baron Danglars.

In this room, at about ten o'clock in the morning, the banker himself had been walking to and fro for some minutes thoughtfully and in evident uneasiness, watching both doors, and listening to every sound. When his patience was exhausted, he called his valet.

'Étienne,' said he, 'see why Mademoiselle Eugénie has asked me to meet her in the drawing-room, and why she makes me wait so long.'

Having given this vent to his ill-humor, the baron became more calm; Mademoiselle Danglars had that morning requested an interview with her father, and had fixed on the gilded drawing-room as the spot. The singularity of this step, and above all its formality, had not a little surprised the banker, who had immediately obeyed his daughter by repairing first to the drawing-room. Étienne soon returned from his errand.

'Mademoiselle's lady's maid says, sir, that mademoiselle is finishing her toilette, and will be here shortly.'

Danglars nodded, to signify that he was satisfied. To the world and to his servants Danglars assumed the character of the good-natured man

be unsafe; but the report did not prevent the new occupant establishing himself there with his modest furniture the same day at five o'clock. The lease was drawn up for three, six, or nine years by the new tenant, who, according to the rule of the proprietor, paid six months in advance.

This new tenant, who, as we have said, was an Italian, was called Il Signor Giacomo Busoni. Workmen were immediately called in, and that same night the passengers at the end of the faubourg saw with surprise that carpenters and masons were occupied in repairing the lower part of the tottering house.

will not marry; now it remains for me to tell you the motives of a father like me, who has decided that his daughter shall marry.'

Eugénie bowed, not as a submissive daughter, but as an adversary prepared for a discussion.

'My daughter,' continued Danglars, 'when a father asks his daughter to choose a husband, he has always some reason for wishing her to marry. Some are affected with the mania of which you spoke just now, that of living again in their grandchildren. This is not my weakness, I tell you at once; family joys have no charm for me. I may acknowledge this to a daughter whom I know to be philosophical enough to understand my indifference, and not to impute it to me as a crime.'

'This is not to the purpose,' said Eugénie; 'let us speak candidly, sir; I admire candour.'

'Oh,' said Danglars, 'I can, when circumstances render it desirable, adopt your system, although it may not be my general practice. I will therefore proceed. I have proposed to you to marry, not for your sake, for indeed I did not think of you in the least at the moment (you admire candour, and will now be satisfied, I hope); but because it suited me to marry you as soon as possible, on account of certain commercial speculations I am desirous of entering into.' Eugénie became uneasy. 'It is just as I tell you, I assure you, and you must not be angry with me, for you have sought this disclosure. I do not willingly enter into arithmetical explanations with an artist like you, who fears to enter my study lest she should imbibe disagreeable or anti-poetic impressions and sensations. But in that same banker's study, where you very willingly presented yourself yesterday to ask for the thousand francs I give you monthly for pocket-money, you must know, my dear young lady, that many things may be learned, useful even to a girl who will not marry. There one may learn, for instance, what, out of regard to your nervous susceptibility, I will inform you of in the drawing-room, namely, that the credit of a banker is his physical and moral life; that credit sustains him as breath animates the body; and M. de Monte Cristo once gave me a lecture on that subject, which I have never forgotten. There we may learn that as credit sinks, the body becomes a corpse, and this is what must happen very soon to the banker who is proud to own so good a logician as you for his daughter.'

But Eugénie, instead of stooping, drew herself up under the blow. 'Ruined?' said she.

'Exactly, my daughter; that is precisely what I mean,' said Danglars, almost digging his nails into his breast, while he preserved on his harsh features the smile of the heartless though clever man; 'ruined—yes, that is it.'

'Ah!' said Eugénie.

'Yes, ruined! Now it is revealed, this secret so full of horror, as the tragic poet says. Now, my daughter, learn from my lips how you may alleviate this misfortune, so far as it will affect you.'

'Oh,' cried Eugénie, 'you are a bad physiognomist, if you imagine I deplore on my own account the catastrophe of which you warn me. I ruined? and what will that signify to me? Have I not my talent left? Can I not, like Pasta, Malibran, Grisi, acquire for myself what you would never have given me, whatever might have been your fortune, a hundred or a hundred and fifty thousand livres per annum, for which I shall be indebted to no one but myself; and which, instead of being given as you gave me those poor twelve thousand francs, with sour looks and reproaches for my prodigality, will be accompanied with acclamations, with bravos, and with flowers? And if I do not possess that talent, which your smiles prove to me you doubt, should I not still have that ardent love of independence, which will be a substitute for wealth, and which in my mind supersedes even the instinct of self-preservation? No, I grieve not on my own account, I shall always find a resource; my books, my pencils, my piano, all the things which cost but little, and which I shall be able to procure, will remain my own.

Do you think that I sorrow for Madame Danglars? Undeceive yourself again; either I am greatly mistaken, or she has provided against the catastrophe which threatens you, and, which will pass over without affecting her. She has taken care for herself,—at least I hope so,—for her attention has not been diverted from her projects by watching over me. She has fostered my independence by professedly indulging my love for liberty. Oh, no, sir; from my childhood I have seen too much, and understood too much, of what has passed around me, for misfortune to have an undue power over me. From my earliest recollections, I have been beloved by no

Noirtier kept his eyes steadfastly fixed on the same spot. D'Avrigny followed the direction and saw that they were fixed on a bottle containing the mixture which he took every morning. 'Ah, indeed?' said d'Avrigny, struck with a sudden thought, 'has it occurred to you'—Noirtier did not let him finish.

'Yes,' said he.

'To prepare her system to resist poison?'

'Yes.'

'By accustoming her by degrees— '

'Yes, yes, yes,' said Noirtier, delighted to be understood.

'Of course. I had told you that there was brucine in the mixture I give you.'

'Yes.'

'And by accustoming her to that poison, you have endeavoured to neutralize the effect of a similar poison?' Noirtier's joy continued. 'And you have succeeded,' exclaimed d'Avrigny. 'Without that precaution Valentine would have died before assistance could have been procured. The dose has been excessive, but she has only been shaken by it; and this time, at any rate, Valentine will not die.'

A superhuman joy expanded the old man's eyes, which were raised towards heaven with an expression of infinite gratitude. At this moment Villefort returned.

'Here, doctor,' said he, 'is what you sent me for.'

'Was this prepared in your presence?'

'Yes,' replied the procureur.

'Have you not let it go out of your hands?'

'No.'

D'Avrigny took the bottle, poured some drops of the mixture it contained in the hollow of his hand, and swallowed them.

'Well,' said he, 'let us go to Valentine; I will give instructions to everyone, and you, M. de Villefort, will yourself see that no one deviates from them.' At the moment when d'Avrigny was returning to Valentine's room, accompanied by Villefort, an Italian priest, of serious demeanour and calm and firm tone, hired for his use the house adjoining the hotel of M. de Villefort. No one knew how the three former tenants of that house left it. About two hours afterwards its foundation was reported to

'We have no time to lose; I will question, and do you answer me.' Noirtier made a sign that he was ready to answer. 'Did you anticipate the accident which has happened to your granddaughter?'

'Yes.' D'Avrigny reflected a moment; then approaching Noirtier:

'Pardon what I am going to say,' added he, 'but no indication should be neglected in this terrible situation. Did you see poor Barrois die?' Noirtier raised his eyes to heaven.

'Do you know of what he died!' asked d'Avrigny, placing his hand on Noirtier's shoulder.

'Yes,' replied the old man.

'Do you think he died a natural death?' A sort of smile was discernible on the motionless lips of Noirtier.

'Then you have thought that Barrois was poisoned?'

'Yes.'

'Do you think the poison he fell a victim to was intended for him?'

'No.'

'Do you think the same hand which unintentionally struck Barrois has now attacked Valentine?'

'Yes.'

'Then will she die too?' asked d'Avrigny, fixing his penetrating gaze on Noirtier. He watched the effect of this question on the old man.

'No,' replied he with an air of triumph which would have puzzled the most clever diviner.

'Then you hope?' said d'Avrigny, with surprise.

'Yes.'

'What do you hope?' The old man made him understand with his eyes that he could not answer.

'Ah, yes, it is true,' murmured d'Avrigny. Then, turning to Noirtier,—'Do you hope the assassin will be tried?'

'No.'

'Then you hope the poison will take no effect on Valentine?'

'Yes.'

'It is no news to you,' added d'Avrigny, 'to tell you that an attempt has been made to poison her?' The old man made a sign that he entertained no doubt upon the subject. 'Then how do you hope Valentine will escape?'

one—so much the worse; that has naturally led me to love no one—so much the better—now you have my profession of faith.'

'Then,' said Danglars, pale with anger, which was not at all due to offended paternal love,—'then, mademoiselle, you persist in your determination to accelerate my ruin?'

'Your ruin? I accelerate your ruin? What do you mean? I do not understand you.'

'So much the better, I have a ray of hope left; listen.'

'I am all attention,' said Eugénie, looking so earnestly at her father that it was an effort for the latter to endure her unrelenting gaze.

'M. Cavalcanti,' continued Danglars, 'is about to marry you, and will place in my hands his fortune, amounting to three million livres.'

'That is admirable!' said Eugénie with sovereign contempt, smoothing her gloves out one upon the other.

'You think I shall deprive you of those three millions,' said Danglars; 'but do not fear it. They are destined to produce at least ten. I and a brother banker have obtained a grant of a railway, the only industrial enterprise which in these days promises to make good the fabulous prospects that Law once held out to the eternally deluded Parisians, in the fantastic Mississippi scheme. As I look at it, a millionth part of a railway is worth fully as much as an acre of waste land on the banks of the Ohio. We make in our case a deposit, on a mortgage, which is an advance, as you see, since we gain at least ten, fifteen, twenty, or a hundred livres' worth of iron in exchange for our money. Well, within a week I am to deposit four millions for my share; the four millions, I promise you, will produce ten or twelve.'

'But during my visit to you the day before yesterday, sir, which you appear to recollect so well,' replied Eugénie, 'I saw you arranging a deposit—is not that the term?—of five millions and a half; you even pointed it out to me in two drafts on the treasury, and you were astonished that so valuable a paper did not dazzle my eyes like lightning.'

'Yes, but those five millions and a half are not mine, and are only a proof of the great confidence placed in me; my title of popular banker has gained me the confidence of charitable institutions, and the five millions and a half belong to them; at any other time I should not have hesitated to make use of them, but the great losses I have recently sustained are

well known, and, as I told you, my credit is rather shaken. That deposit may be at any moment withdrawn, and if I had employed it for another purpose, I should bring on me a disgraceful bankruptcy. I do not despise bankruptcies, believe me, but they must be those which enrich, not those which ruin. Now, if you marry M. Cavalcanti, and I get the three millions, or even if it is thought I am going to get them, my credit will be restored, and my fortune, which for the last month or two has been swallowed up in gulfs which have been opened in my path by an inconceivable fatality, will revive. Do you understand me?'

'Perfectly; you pledge me for three millions, do you not?'

'The greater the amount, the more flattering it is to you; it gives you an idea of your value.'

'Thank you. One word more, sir; do you promise me to make what use you can of the report of the fortune M. Cavalcanti will bring without touching the money? This is no act of selfishness, but of delicacy. I am willing to help rebuild your fortune, but I will not be an accomplice in the ruin of others.'

'But since I tell you,' cried Danglars, 'that with these three million— '

'Do you expect to recover your position, sir, without touching those three million?'

'I hope so, if the marriage should take place and confirm my credit.'

'Shall you be able to pay M. Cavalcanti the five hundred thousand francs you promise for my dowry?'

'He shall receive them on returning from the mayor's[1].'

'Very well!'

'What next? what more do you want?'

'I wish to know if, in demanding my signature, you leave me entirely free in my person?'

'Absolutely.'

'Then, as I said before, sir,—very well; I am ready to marry M. Cavalcanti.'

'But what are you up to?'

'Ah, that is my affair. What advantage should I have over you, if knowing your secret I were to tell you mine?'

[1]The performance of the civil marriage.

Villefort went himself to find her; and d'Avrigny approached Noirtier.

'Have you something to tell me?' asked he. The old man winked his eyes expressively, which we may remember was his only way of expressing his approval.

'Privately?'

'Yes.'

'Well, I will remain with you.' At this moment Villefort returned, followed by the lady's maid; and after her came Madame de Villefort.

'What is the matter, then, with this dear child? she has just left me, and she complained of being indisposed, but I did not think seriously of it.'

The young woman with tears in her eyes and every mark of affection of a true mother, approached Valentine and took her hand. D'Avrigny continued to look at Noirtier; he saw the eyes of the old man dilate and become round, his cheeks turn pale and tremble; the perspiration stood in drops upon his forehead.

'Ah,' said he, involuntarily following Noirtier's eyes, which were fixed on Madame de Villefort, who repeated:

'This poor child would be better in bed. Come, Fanny, we will put her to bed.'

M. d'Avrigny, who saw that would be a means of his remaining alone with Noirtier, expressed his opinion that it was the best thing that could be done; but he forbade that anything should be given to her except what he ordered.

They carried Valentine away; she had revived, but could scarcely move or speak, so shaken was her frame by the attack. She had, however, just power to give one parting look to her grandfather, who in losing her seemed to be resigning his very soul. D'Avrigny followed the invalid, wrote a prescription, ordered Villefort to take a cabriolet, go in person to a chemist's to get the prescribed medicine, bring it himself, and wait for him in his daughter's room. Then, having renewed his injunction not to give Valentine anything, he went down again to Noirtier, shut the doors carefully, and after convincing himself that no one was listening:

'Do you,' said he, 'know anything of this young lady's illness?'

'Yes,' said the old man.

'Maximilian,' said he, 'return home. I command you not to stir—attempt nothing, not to let your countenance betray a thought, and I will send you tidings. Go.'

'Oh, count, you overwhelm me with that coolness. Have you, then, power against death? Are you superhuman? Are you an angel?' And the young man, who had never shrunk from danger, shrank before Monte Cristo with indescribable terror. But Monte Cristo looked at him with so melancholy and sweet a smile, that Maximilian felt the tears filling his eyes.

'I can do much for you, my friend,' replied the count. 'Go; I must be alone.'

Morrel, subdued by the extraordinary ascendancy Monte Cristo exercised over everything around him, did not endeavour to resist it. He pressed the count's hand and left. He stopped one moment at the door for Baptistin, whom he saw in the Rue Matignon, and who was running.

Meanwhile, Villefort and d'Avrigny had made all possible haste, Valentine had not revived from her fainting fit on their arrival, and the doctor examined the invalid with all the care the circumstances demanded, and with an interest which the knowledge of the secret intensified twofold. Villefort, closely watching his countenance and his lips, awaited the result of the examination. Noirtier, paler than even the young girl, more eager than Villefort for the decision, was watching also intently and affectionately.

At last d'Avrigny slowly uttered these words: 'She is still alive!'

'Still?' cried Villefort; 'oh, doctor, what a dreadful word is that.'

'Yes,' said the physician, 'I repeat it; she is still alive, and I am astonished at it.'

'But is she safe?' asked the father.

'Yes, since she lives.'

At that moment d'Avrigny's glance met Noirtier's eye. It glistened with such extraordinary joy, so rich and full of thought, that the physician was struck. He placed the young girl again on the chair,—her lips were scarcely discernible, they were so pale and white, as well as her whole face,—and remained motionless, looking at Noirtier, who appeared to anticipate and commend all he did.

'Sir,' said d'Avrigny to Villefort, 'call Mademoiselle Valentine's maid, if you please.'

Danglars bit his lips. 'Then,' said he, 'you are ready to pay the official visits, which are absolutely indispensable?'

'Yes,' replied Eugénie.

'And to sign the contract in three days?'

'Yes.'

'Then, in my turn, I also say, very well!'

Danglars pressed his daughter's hand in his. But, extraordinary to relate, the father did not say, 'Thank you, my child,' nor did the daughter smile at her father.

'Is the conference ended?' asked Eugénie, rising.

Danglars motioned that he had nothing more to say. Five minutes afterwards the piano resounded to the touch of Mademoiselle d'Armilly's fingers, and Mademoiselle Danglars was singing Brabantio's malediction on Desdemona. At the end of the piece Étienne entered, and announced to Eugénie that the horses were to the carriage, and that the baroness was waiting for her to pay her visits. We have seen them at Villefort's; they proceeded then on their course.

his hands in his turn; 'you love Valentine,—that daughter of an accursed race!'

Never had Morrel witnessed such an expression—never had so terrible an eye flashed before his face—never had the genius of terror he had so often seen, either on the battle-field or in the murderous nights of Algeria, shaken around him more dreadful fire. He drew back terrified.

As for Monte Cristo, after this ebullition he closed his eyes as if dazzled by internal light. In a moment he restrained himself so powerfully that the tempestuous heaving of his breast subsided, as turbulent and foaming waves yield to the sun's genial influence when the cloud has passed. This silence, self-control, and struggle lasted about twenty seconds, then the count raised his pallid face.

'See,' said he, 'my dear friend, how God punishes the most thoughtless and unfeeling men for their indifference, by presenting dreadful scenes to their view. I, who was looking on, an eager and curious spectator,—I, who was watching the working of this mournful tragedy,—I, who like a wicked angel was laughing at the evil men committed protected by secrecy (a secret is easily kept by the rich and powerful), I am in my turn bitten by the serpent whose tortuous course I was watching, and bitten to the heart!'

Morrel groaned.

'Come, come,' continued the count, 'complaints are unavailing, be a man, be strong, be full of hope, for I am here and will watch over you.'

Morrel shook his head sorrowfully.

'I tell you to hope. Do you understand me?' cried Monte Cristo. 'Remember that I never uttered a falsehood and am never deceived. It is twelve o'clock, Maximilian; thank heaven that you came at noon rather than in the evening, or tomorrow morning. Listen, Morrel—it is noon; if Valentine is not now dead, she will not die.'

'How so?' cried Morrel, 'when I left her dying?'

Monte Cristo pressed his hands to his forehead. What was passing in that brain, so loaded with dreadful secrets? What does the angel of light or the angel of darkness say to that mind, at once implacable and generous? God only knows.

Monte Cristo raised his head once more, and this time he was calm as a child awaking from its sleep.