'And yet here are two culprits.'

'Yes; but only one of these two is about to die; the other has many years to live.'

'If the pardon is to come, there is no time to lose.'

'And see, here it is,' said the count. At the moment when Peppino reached the foot of the *mandaïa*, a priest arrived in some haste, forced his way through the soldiers, and, advancing to the chief of the brotherhood, gave him a folded paper. The piercing eye of Peppino had noticed all. The chief took the paper, unfolded it, and, raising his hand, 'Heaven be praised, and his Holiness also,' said he in a loud voice; 'here is a pardon for one of the prisoners!'

'A pardon!' cried the people with one voice; 'a pardon!'

At this cry Andrea raised his head.

'Pardon for whom?' cried he.

Peppino remained breathless.

'A pardon for Peppino, called Rocca Priori,' said the principal friar. And he passed the paper to the officer commanding the carbineers, who read and returned it to him.

'For Peppino!' cried Andrea, who seemed roused from the torpor in which he had been plunged. 'Why for him and not for me? We ought to die together. I was promised he should die with me. You have no right to put me to death alone. I will not die alone—I will not!'

And he broke from the priests struggling and raving like a wild beast, and striving desperately to break the cords that bound his hands. The executioner made a sign, and his two assistants leaped from the scaffold and seized him.

'What is going on?' asked Franz of the count; for, as all the talk was in the Roman dialect, he had not perfectly understood it.

'Do you not see?' returned the count, 'that this human creature who is about to die is furious that his fellow-sufferer does not perish with him? and, were he able, he would rather tear him to pieces with his teeth and nails than let him enjoy the life he himself is about to be deprived of. Oh, man, man—race of crocodiles,' cried the count, extending his clenched hands towards the crowd, 'how well do I recognize you there, and that at all times you are worthy of yourselves!'

Meanwhile Andrea and the two executioners were struggling on the ground, and he kept exclaiming, 'He ought to die!—he shall die!—I will not die alone!'

'Look, look,' cried the count, seizing the young men's hands; 'look, for on my soul it is curious. Here is a man who had resigned himself to his fate, who was going to the scaffold to die—like a coward, it is true, but he was about to die without resistance. Do you know what gave him strength? do you know what consoled him? It was, that another partook of his punishment—that another partook of his anguish—that another was to die before him! Lead two sheep to the butcher's, two oxen to the slaughterhouse, and make one of them understand that his companion will not die; the sheep will bleat for pleasure, the ox will bellow with joy. But man—man, whom God created in his own image—man, upon whom God has laid his first, his sole commandment, to love his neighbour—man, to whom God has given a voice to express his thoughts—what is his first cry when he hears his fellow-man is saved? A blasphemy. honour to man, this masterpiece of nature, this king of the creation!'

And the count burst into a laugh; a terrible laugh, that showed he must have suffered horribly to be able thus to laugh.

However, the struggle still continued, and it was dreadful to witness. The two assistants carried Andrea up to the scaffold; the people all took part against Andrea, and twenty thousand voices cried, 'Put him to death! put him to death!'

Franz sprang back, but the count seized his arm, and held him before the window.

'What are you doing?' said he. 'Do you pity him? If you heard the cry of "Mad dog!" you would take your gun—you would unhesitatingly shoot the poor beast, who, after all, was only guilty of having been bitten by another dog. And yet you pity a man who, without being bitten by one of his race, has yet murdered his benefactor; and who, now unable to kill anyone, because his hands are bound, wishes to see his companion in captivity perish. No, no—look, look!' The recommendation was needless. Franz was fascinated by the horrible spectacle.

The two assistants had borne Andrea to the scaffold, and there, in spite of his struggles, his bites, and his cries, had forced him to his knees. During this time the executioner had raised his mace, and signed to them to get out of the way; the criminal strove to rise, but, ere he had time, the mace fell on his left

temple. A dull and heavy sound was heard, and the man dropped like an ox on his face, and then turned over on his back.

The executioner let fall his mace, drew his knife, and with one stroke opened his throat, and mounting on his stomach, stamped violently on it with his feet. At every stroke a jet of blood sprang from the wound.

This time Franz could contain himself no longer, but sank, half fainting, into a seat.

Albert, with his eyes closed, was standing grasping the window-curtains.

The count was erect and triumphant, like the Avenging Angel!

Suddenly the tumult ceased, as if by magic, and the doors of the church opened. A brotherhood of penitents, clothed from head to foot in robes of gray sackcloth, with holes for the eyes, and holding in their hands lighted tapers, appeared first; the chief marched at the head. Behind the penitents came a man of vast stature and proportions. He was naked, with the exception of cloth drawers at the left side of which hung a large knife in a sheath, and he bore on his right shoulder a heavy iron sledge-hammer.

This man was the executioner.

He had, moreover, sandals bound on his feet by cords.

Behind the executioner came, in the order in which they were to die, first Peppino and then Andrea. Each was accompanied by two priests. Neither had his eyes bandaged.

Peppino walked with a firm step, doubtless aware of what awaited him. Andrea was supported by two priests. Each of them, from time to time, kissed the crucifix a confessor held out to them.

At this sight alone Franz felt his legs tremble under him. He looked at Albert—he was as white as his shirt, and mechanically cast away his cigar, although he had not half smoked it. The count alone seemed unmoved—nay, more, a slight colour seemed striving to rise in his pale cheeks. His nostrils dilated like those of a wild beast that scents its prey, and his lips, half opened, disclosed his white teeth, small and sharp like those of a jackal. And yet his features wore an expression of smiling tenderness, such as Franz had never before witnessed in them; his black eyes especially were full of kindness and pity.

However, the two culprits advanced, and as they approached their faces became visible. Peppino was a handsome young man of four or five-and-twenty, bronzed by the sun; he carried his head erect, and seemed on the watch to see on which side his liberator would appear. Andrea was short and fat; his visage, marked with brutal cruelty, did not indicate age; he might be thirty. In prison he had suffered his beard to grow; his head fell on his shoulder, his legs bent beneath him, and his movements were apparently automatic and unconscious.

'I thought,' said Franz to the count, 'that you told me there would be but one execution.'

'I told you true,' replied he coldly.

most suitable, on account of the *confetti* (sweetmeats), as they do not show the flour.'

Franz heard the words of the count but imperfectly, and he perhaps did not fully appreciate this new attention to their wishes; for he was wholly absorbed by the spectacle that the Piazza del Popolo presented, and by the terrible instrument that was in the centre.

It was the first time Franz had ever seen a guillotine,—we say guillotine, because the Roman *mandaïa* is formed on almost the same model as the French instrument.[2] The knife, which is shaped like a crescent, that cuts with the convex side, falls from a less height, and that is all the difference.

Two men, seated on the movable plank on which the victim is laid, were eating their breakfasts, while waiting for the criminal. Their repast consisted apparently of bread and sausages. One of them lifted the plank, took out a flask of wine, drank some, and then passed it to his companion. These two men were the executioner's assistants.

At this sight Franz felt the perspiration start forth upon his brow.

The prisoners, transported the previous evening from the Carceri Nuove to the little church of Santa Maria del Popolo, had passed the night, each accompanied by two priests, in a chapel closed by a grating, before which were two sentinels, who were relieved at intervals. A double line of carbineers, placed on each side of the door of the church, reached to the scaffold, and formed a circle around it, leaving a path about ten feet wide, and around the guillotine a space of nearly a hundred feet.

All the rest of the square was paved with heads. Many women held their infants on their shoulders, and thus the children had the best view. The Monte Pincio seemed a vast amphitheatre filled with spectators; the balconies of the two churches at the corner of the Via del Babuino and the Via di Ripetta were crammed; the steps even seemed a parti-coloured sea, that was impelled towards the portico; every niche in the wall held its living statue. What the count said was true—the most curious spectacle in life is that of death.

And yet, instead of the silence and the solemnity demanded by the occasion, laughter and jests arose from the crowd. It was evident that the execution was, in the eyes of the people, only the commencement of the Carnival.

[2] Dr. Guillotin got the idea of his famous machine from witnessing an execution in Italy.

Chapter XXXVI

The Carnival at Rome

When Franz recovered his senses, he saw Albert drinking a glass of water, of which, to judge from his pallor, he stood in great need; and the count, who was assuming his masquerade costume. He glanced mechanically towards the piazza—the scene was wholly changed; scaffold, executioners, victims, all had disappeared; only the people remained, full of noise and excitement. The bell of Monte Citorio, which only sounds on the pope's decease and the opening of the Carnival, was ringing a joyous peal.

'Well,' asked he of the count, 'what has, then, happened?'

'Nothing,' replied the count; 'only, as you see, the Carnival has commenced. Make haste and dress yourself.'

'In fact,' said Franz, 'this horrible scene has passed away like a dream.'

'It is but a dream, a nightmare, that has disturbed you.'

'Yes, that I have suffered; but the culprit?'

'That is a dream also; only he has remained asleep, while you have awakened; and who knows which of you is the most fortunate?'

'But Peppino—what has become of him?'

'Peppino is a lad of sense, who, unlike most men, who are happy in proportion as they are noticed, was delighted to see that the general attention was directed towards his companion. He profited by this distraction to slip away among the crowd, without even thanking the worthy priests who accompanied him. Decidedly man is an ungrateful and egotistical animal. But dress yourself; see, M. de Morcerf sets you the example.'

Albert was drawing on the satin pantaloon over his black trousers and varnished boots.

'Well, Albert,' said Franz, 'do you feel much inclined to join the revels? Come, answer frankly.'

'*Ma foi*, no,' returned Albert. 'But I am really glad to have seen such a sight; and I understand what the count said—that when you have once habituated yourself to a similar spectacle, it is the only one that causes you any emotion.' 'Without reflecting that this is the only moment in which you can study character,' said the count; 'on the steps of the scaffold death tears off the mask that has been worn through life, and the real visage is disclosed. It must be allowed that Andrea was not very handsome, the hideous scoundrel! Come, dress yourselves, gentlemen, dress yourselves.'

Franz felt it would be ridiculous not to follow his two companions' example. He assumed his costume, and fastened on the mask that scarcely equalled the pallor of his own face. Their toilet finished, they descended; the carriage awaited them at the door, filled with sweetmeats and bouquets. They fell into the line of carriages.

It is difficult to form an idea of the perfect change that had taken place. Instead of the spectacle of gloomy and silent death, the Piazza del Popolo presented a spectacle of gay and noisy mirth and revelry. A crowd of masks flowed in from all sides, emerging from the doors, descending from the windows. From every street and every corner drove carriages filled with clowns, harlequins, dominoes, mummers, pantomimists, Transteverins, knights, and peasants, screaming, fighting, gesticulating, throwing eggs filled with flour, confetti, nosegays, attacking, with their sarcasms and their missiles, friends and foes, companions and strangers, indiscriminately, and no one took offence, or did anything but laugh.

Franz and Albert were like men who, to drive away a violent sorrow, have recourse to wine, and who, as they drink and become intoxicated, feel a thick veil drawn between the past and the present. They saw, or rather continued to see, the image of what they had witnessed; but little by little the general vertigo seized them, and they felt themselves obliged to take part in the noise and confusion.

A handful of confetti that came from a neighboring carriage, and which, while it covered Morcerf and his two companions with dust, pricked his neck and that portion of his face uncovered by his mask like a hundred pins, incited him to join in the general combat, in which all the masks around him were

All three descended; the coachman received his master's orders, and drove down the Via del Babuino. While the three gentlemen walked along the Piazza di Spagna and the Via Frattina, which led directly between the Fiano and Rospoli palaces, Franz's attention was directed towards the windows of that last palace, for he had not forgotten the signal agreed upon between the man in the mantle and the Transtevere peasant.

'Which are your windows?' asked he of the count, with as much indifference as he could assume.

'The three last,' returned he, with a negligence evidently unaffected, for he could not imagine with what intention the question was put.

Franz glanced rapidly towards the three windows. The side windows were hung with yellow damask, and the centre one with white damask and a red cross. The man in the mantle had kept his promise to the Transteverin, and there could now be no doubt that he was the count.

The three windows were still untenanted. Preparations were making on every side; chairs were placed, scaffolds were raised, and windows were hung with flags. The masks could not appear; the carriages could not move about; but the masks were visible behind the windows, the carriages, and the doors.

Franz, Albert, and the count continued to descend the Corso. As they approached the Piazza del Popolo, the crowd became more dense, and above the heads of the multitude two objects were visible: the obelisk, surmounted by a cross, which marks the centre of the square, and in front of the obelisk, at the point where the three streets, del Babuino, del Corso, and di Ripetta, meet, the two uprights of the scaffold, between which glittered the curved knife of the *mandaïa*.

At the corner of the street they met the count's steward, who was awaiting his master. The window, let at an exorbitant price, which the count had doubtless wished to conceal from his guests, was on the second floor of the great palace, situated between the Via del Babuino and the Monte Pincio. It consisted, as we have said, of a small dressing-room, opening into a bedroom, and, when the door of communication was shut, the inmates were quite alone. On chairs were laid elegant masquerade costumes of blue and white satin. 'As you left the choice of your costumes to me,' said the count to the two friends, 'I have had these brought, as they will be the most worn this year; and they are

'Ah! yes,' returned the count, 'I know who he is, gentlemen; will you return to the salon? you will find good cigars on the centre table. I will be with you directly.'

The young men rose and returned into the salon, while the count, again apologizing, left by another door. Albert, who was a great smoker, and who had considered it no small sacrifice to be deprived of the cigars of the Café de Paris, approached the table, and uttered a cry of joy at perceiving some veritable *puros*.

'Well,' asked Franz, 'what think you of the Count of Monte Cristo?'

'What do I think?' said Albert, evidently surprised at such a question from his companion; 'I think he is a delightful fellow, who does the honours of his table admirably; who has travelled much, read much, is, like Brutus, of the Stoic school, and moreover,' added he, sending a volume of smoke up towards the ceiling, 'that he has excellent cigars.'

Such was Albert's opinion of the count, and as Franz well knew that Albert professed never to form an opinion except upon long reflection, he made no attempt to change it.

'But,' said he, 'did you observe one very singular thing?'

'What?'

'How attentively he looked at you.'

'At me?'

'Yes.'

Albert reflected. 'Ah,' replied he, sighing, 'that is not very surprising; I have been more than a year absent from Paris, and my clothes are of a most antiquated cut; the count takes me for a provincial. The first opportunity you have, undeceive him, I beg, and tell him I am nothing of the kind.'

Franz smiled; an instant after the count entered.

'I am now quite at your service, gentlemen,' said he. 'The carriage is going one way to the Piazza del Popolo, and we will go another; and, if you please, by the Corso. Take some more of these cigars, M. de Morcerf.'

'With all my heart,' returned Albert; 'Italian cigars are horrible. When you come to Paris, I will return all this.'

'I will not refuse; I intend going there soon, and since you allow me, I will pay you a visit. Come, we have not any time to lose, it is half-past twelve—let us set off.'

engaged. He rose in his turn, and seizing handfuls of confetti and sweetmeats, with which the carriage was filled, cast them with all the force and skill he was master of. The strife had fairly begun, and the recollection of what they had seen half an hour before was gradually effaced from the young men's minds, so much were they occupied by the gay and glittering procession they now beheld.

As for the Count of Monte Cristo, he had never for an instant shown any appearance of having been moved. Imagine the large and splendid Corso, bordered from one end to the other with lofty palaces, with their balconies hung with carpets, and their windows with flags. At these balconies are three hundred thousand spectators—Romans, Italians, strangers from all parts of the world, the united aristocracy of birth, wealth, and genius. Lovely women, yielding to the influence of the scene, bend over their balconies, or lean from their windows, and shower down confetti, which are returned by bouquets; the air seems darkened with the falling confetti and flying flowers. In the streets the lively crowd is dressed in the most fantastic costumes—gigantic cabbages walk gravely about, buffaloes' heads bellow from men's shoulders, dogs walk on their hind legs; in the midst of all this a mask is lifted, and, as in Callot's Temptation of St. Anthony, a lovely face is exhibited, which we would fain follow, but from which we are separated by troops of fiends. This will give a faint idea of the Carnival at Rome.

At the second turn, the count stopped the carriage, and requested permission to withdraw, leaving the vehicle at their disposal. Franz looked up—they were opposite the Rospoli Palace. At the centre window, the one hung with white damask with a red cross, was a blue domino, beneath which Franz's imagination easily pictured the beautiful Greek of the Argentina.

'Gentlemen,' said the count, springing out, 'when you are tired of being actors, and wish to become spectators of this scene, you know you have places at my windows. In the meantime, dispose of my coachman, my carriage, and my servants.'

We have forgotten to mention, that the count's coachman was attired in a bear-skin, exactly resembling Odry's in *The Bear and the Pasha*; and the two footmen behind were dressed up as green monkeys, with spring masks, with which they made grimaces at everyone who passed.

Franz thanked the count for his attention. As for Albert, he was busily occupied throwing bouquets at a carriage full of Roman peasants that was passing near him. Unfortunately for him, the line of carriages moved on again, and while he descended the Piazza del Popolo, the other ascended towards the Palazzo di Venezia.

'Ah, my dear fellow,' said he to Franz; 'you did not see?'

'What?'

'There,—that calash filled with Roman peasants.'

'No.'

'Well, I am convinced they are all charming women.'

'How unfortunate that you were masked, Albert,' said Franz; 'here was an opportunity of making up for past disappointments.'

'Oh,' replied he, half laughing, half serious; 'I hope the Carnival will not pass without some amends in one shape or the other.'

But, in spite of Albert's hope, the day passed unmarked by any incident, excepting two or three encounters with the carriage full of Roman peasants. At one of these encounters, accidentally or purposely, Albert's mask fell off. He instantly rose and cast the remainder of the bouquets into the carriage. Doubtless one of the charming females Albert had detected beneath their coquettish disguise was touched by his gallantry; for, as the carriage of the two friends passed her, she threw a bunch of violets. Albert seized it, and as Franz had no reason to suppose it was meant for him, he suffered Albert to retain it. Albert placed it in his button-hole, and the carriage went triumphantly on.

'Well,' said Franz to him; 'there is the beginning of an adventure.'

'Laugh if you please—I really think so. So I will not abandon this bouquet.'

'*Pardieu*,' returned Franz, laughing, 'in token of your ingratitude.'

The jest, however, soon appeared to become earnest; for when Albert and Franz again encountered the carriage with the *contadini*, the one who had thrown the violets to Albert, clapped her hands when she beheld them in his button-hole.

'Bravo, bravo,' said Franz; 'things go wonderfully. Shall I leave you? Perhaps you would prefer being alone?'

'No,' replied he; 'I will not be caught like a fool at a first disclosure by a rendezvous under the clock, as they say at the opera-balls. If the fair peasant wishes to carry matters any further, we shall find her, or rather, she will find us

'You will describe it to me,' replied Franz, 'and the recital from your lips will make as great an impression on me as if I had witnessed it. I have more than once intended witnessing an execution, but I have never been able to make up my mind; and you, Albert?'

'I,' replied the viscount,—'I saw Castaing executed, but I think I was rather intoxicated that day, for I had quitted college the same morning, and we had passed the previous night at a tavern.'

'Besides, it is no reason because you have not seen an execution at Paris, that you should not see one anywhere else; when you travel, it is to see everything. Think what a figure you will make when you are asked, "How do they execute at Rome?" and you reply, "I do not know!" And, besides, they say that the culprit is an infamous scoundrel, who killed with a log of wood a worthy canon who had brought him up like his own son. *Diable!* when a churchman is killed, it should be with a different weapon than a log, especially when he has behaved like a father. If you went to Spain, would you not see the bull-fights? Well, suppose it is a bull-fight you are going to see? Recollect the ancient Romans of the Circus, and the sports where they killed three hundred lions and a hundred men. Think of the eighty thousand applauding spectators, the sage matrons who took their daughters, and the charming Vestals who made with the thumb of their white hands the fatal sign that said, "Come, despatch the dying."'

'Shall you go, then, Albert?' asked Franz.

'*Ma foi*, yes; like you, I hesitated, but the count's eloquence decides me.'

'Let us go, then,' said Franz, 'since you wish it; but on our way to the Piazza del Popolo, I wish to pass through the Corso. Is this possible, count?'

'On foot, yes, in a carriage, no.'

'I will go on foot, then.'

'Is it important that you should go that way?'

'Yes, there is something I wish to see.'

'Well, we will go by the Corso. We will send the carriage to wait for us on the Piazza del Popolo, by the Via del Babuino, for I shall be glad to pass, myself, through the Corso, to see if some orders I have given have been executed.'

'Excellency,' said a servant, opening the door, 'a man in the dress of a penitent wishes to speak to you.'

The two young men arose and entered the breakfast-room.

During the meal, which was excellent, and admirably served, Franz looked repeatedly at Albert, in order to observe the impressions which he doubted not had been made on him by the words of their entertainer; but whether with his usual carelessness he had paid but little attention to him, whether the explanation of the Count of Monte Cristo with regard to duelling had satisfied him, or whether the events which Franz knew of had had their effect on him alone, he remarked that his companion did not pay the least regard to them, but on the contrary ate like a man who for the last four or five months had been condemned to partake of Italian cookery—that is, the worst in the world.

As for the count, he just touched the dishes; he seemed to fulfil the duties of a host by sitting down with his guests, and awaited their departure to be served with some strange or more delicate food. This brought back to Franz, in spite of himself, the recollection of the terror with which the count had inspired the Countess G—, and her firm conviction that the man in the opposite box was a vampire.

At the end of the breakfast Franz took out his watch.

'Well,' said the count, 'what are you doing?'

'You must excuse us, count,' returned Franz, 'but we have still much to do.'

'What may that be?'

'We have no masks, and it is absolutely necessary to procure them.'

'Do not concern yourself about that; we have, I think, a private room in the Piazza del Popolo; I will have whatever costumes you choose brought to us, and you can dress there.'

'After the execution?' cried Franz.

'Before or after, whichever you please.'

'Opposite the scaffold?'

'The scaffold forms part of the *fête*.'

'Count, I have reflected on the matter,' said Franz, 'I thank you for your courtesy, but I shall content myself with accepting a place in your carriage and at your window at the Rospoli Palace, and I leave you at liberty to dispose of my place at the Piazza del Popolo.'

'But I warn you, you will lose a very curious sight,' returned the count.

tomorrow; then she will give me some sign or other, and I shall know what I have to do.'

'On my word,' said Franz, 'you are as wise as Nestor and prudent as Ulysses, and your fair Circe must be very skilful or very powerful if she succeed in changing you into a beast of any kind.'

Albert was right; the fair unknown had resolved, doubtless, to carry the intrigue no farther; for although the young men made several more turns, they did not again see the calash, which had turned up one of the neighboring streets. Then they returned to the Rospoli Palace; but the count and the blue domino had also disappeared; the two windows, hung with yellow damask, were still occupied by the persons whom the count had invited.

At this moment the same bell that had proclaimed the beginning of the mascherata sounded the retreat. The file on the Corso broke the line, and in a second all the carriages had disappeared. Franz and Albert were opposite the Via delle Muratte; the coachman, without saying a word, drove up it, passed along the Piazza di Spagna and the Rospoli Palace and stopped at the door of the hotel. Signor Pastrini came to the door to receive his guests.

Franz hastened to inquire after the count, and to express regret that he had not returned in sufficient time; but Pastrini reassured him by saying that the Count of Monte Cristo had ordered a second carriage for himself, and that it had gone at four o'clock to fetch him from the Rospoli Palace.

The count had, moreover, charged him to offer the two friends the key of his box at the Argentina. Franz questioned Albert as to his intentions; but Albert had great projects to put into execution before going to the theatre; and instead of making any answer, he inquired if Signor Pastrini could procure him a tailor.

'A tailor,' said the host; 'and for what?'

'To make us between now and tomorrow two Roman peasant costumes,' returned Albert.

The host shook his head.

'To make you two costumes between now and tomorrow? I ask your excellencies' pardon, but this is quite a French demand; for the next week you will not find a single tailor who would consent to sew six buttons on a waistcoat if you paid him a crown a piece for each button.'

'Then I must give up the idea?'

'No; we have them ready-made. Leave all to me; and tomorrow, when you awake, you shall find a collection of costumes with which you will be satisfied.'

'My dear Albert,' said Franz, "leave all to our host; he has already proved himself full of resources; let us dine quietly, and afterwards go and see *l'Italienne à Alger!*

'Agreed,' returned Albert; 'but remember, Signor Pastrini, that both my friend and myself attach the greatest importance to having tomorrow the costumes we have asked for.'

The host again assured them they might rely on him, and that their wishes should be attended to; upon which Franz and Albert mounted to their apartments, and proceeded to disencumber themselves of their costumes. Albert, as he took off his dress, carefully preserved the bunch of violets; it was his token reserved for the morrow.

The two friends sat down to table; but they could not refrain from remarking the difference between the Count of Monte Cristo's table and that of Signor Pastrini. Truth compelled Franz, in spite of the dislike he seemed to have taken to the count, to confess that the advantage was not on Pastrini's side. During dessert, the servant inquired at what time they wished for the carriage. Albert and Franz looked at each other, fearing really to abuse the count's kindness. The servant understood them.

'His excellency the Count of Monte Cristo had,' he said, 'given positive orders that the carriage was to remain at their lordships' orders all day, and they could therefore dispose of it without fear of indiscretion.'

They resolved to profit by the count's courtesy, and ordered the horses to be harnessed, while they substituted evening dress for that which they had on, and which was somewhat the worse for the numerous combats they had sustained. This precaution taken, they went to the theatre, and installed themselves in the count's box. During the first act, the Countess G— entered. Her first look was at the box where she had seen the count the previous evening, so that she perceived Franz and Albert in the place of the very person concerning whom she had expressed so strange an opinion to Franz. Her opera-glass was so fixedly directed towards them, that Franz saw it would be cruel not to satisfy her curiosity; and, availing himself of one of the privileges of the spectators of the Italian theatres, who use their boxes to hold receptions, the two friends went to pay their respects to the countess. Scarcely had they entered, when

you send a ball through the head, or pass a sword through the breast, of that man who has planted madness in your brain, and despair in your heart. And remember, moreover, that it is often he who comes off victorious from the strife, absolved of all crime in the eyes of the world. No, no,' continued the count, 'had I to avenge myself, it is not thus I would take revenge.'

'Then you disapprove of duelling? You would not fight a duel?' asked Albert in his turn, astonished at this strange theory.

'Oh, yes,' replied the count; 'understand me, I would fight a duel for a trifle, for an insult, for a blow; and the more so that, thanks to my skill in all bodily exercises, and the indifference to danger I have gradually acquired, I should be almost certain to kill my man. Oh, I would fight for such a cause; but in return for a slow, profound, eternal torture, I would give back the same, were it possible; an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, as the Orientalists say,—our masters in everything,—those favoured creatures who have formed for themselves a life of dreams and a paradise of realities.'

'But,' said Franz to the count, 'with this theory, which renders you at once judge and executioner of your own cause, it would be difficult to adopt a course that would forever prevent your falling under the power of the law. Hatred is blind, rage carries you away; and he who pours out vengeance runs the risk of tasting a bitter draught.'

'Yes, if he be poor and inexperienced, not if he be rich and skilful; besides, the worst that could happen to him would be the punishment of which we have already spoken, and which the philanthropic French Revolution has substituted for being torn to pieces by horses or broken on the wheel. What matters this punishment, as long as he is avenged? On my word, I almost regret that in all probability this miserable Peppino will not be beheaded, as you might have had an opportunity then of seeing how short a time the punishment lasts, and whether it is worth even mentioning; but, really this is a most singular conversation for the Carnival, gentlemen; how did it arise? Ah, I recollect, you asked for a place at my window; you shall have it; but let us first sit down to table, for here comes the servant to inform us that breakfast is ready.'

As he spoke, a servant opened one of the four doors of the apartment, saying:

'*Al suo commodo!*'