

An instant after they were on the deck.

‘Captain,’ said Felton, ‘this is the person of whom I spoke to you, and whom you must convey safe and sound to France.’

‘For a thousand pistoles,’ said the captain.

‘I have paid you five hundred of them.’

‘That’s correct,’ said the captain.

‘And here are the other five hundred,’ replied Milady, placing her hand upon the bag of gold.

‘No,’ said the captain, ‘I make but one bargain; and I have agreed with this young man that the other five hundred shall not be due to me till we arrive at Boulogne.’

‘And shall we arrive there?’

‘Safe and sound, as true as my name’s Jack Butler.’

‘Well,’ said Milady, ‘if you keep your word, instead of five hundred, I will give you a thousand pistoles.’

‘Hurrah for you, then, my beautiful lady,’ cried the captain; ‘and may God often send me such passengers as your Ladyship!’

‘Meanwhile,’ said Felton, ‘convey me to the little bay of—; you know it was agreed you should put in there.’

The captain replied by ordering the necessary manoeuvres, and toward seven o’clock in the morning the little vessel cast anchor in the bay that had been named.

During this passage, Felton related everything to Milady—how, instead of going to London, he had chartered the little vessel; how he had returned; how he had scaled the wall by fastening cramps in the interstices of the stones, as he ascended, to give him foothold; and how, when he had reached the bars, he fastened his ladder. Milady knew the rest.

On her side, Milady tried to encourage Felton in his project; but at the first words which issued from her mouth, she plainly saw that the young fanatic stood more in need of being moderated than urged.

It was agreed that Milady should wait for Felton till ten o’clock; if he did not return by ten o’clock she was to sail.

In that case, and supposing he was at liberty, he was to rejoin her in France, at the convent of the Carmelites at Béthune.

## Chapter LIX

### What Took Place at Portsmouth--August 23, 1628



ELTON took leave of Milady as a brother about to go for a mere walk takes leave of his sister, kissing her hand.

His whole body appeared in its ordinary state of calmness, only an unusual fire beamed from his eyes, like the effects of a fever; his brow was more pale than it generally was; his teeth were clenched, and his speech had a short dry accent which indicated that something dark was at work within him.

As long as he remained in the boat which conveyed him to land, he kept his face toward Milady, who, standing on the deck, followed him with her eyes. Both were free from the fear of pursuit; nobody ever came into Milady’s apartment before nine o’clock, and it would require three hours to go from the castle to London.

Felton jumped onshore, climbed the little ascent which led to the top of the cliff, saluted Milady a last time, and took his course toward the city.

At the end of a hundred paces, the ground began to decline, and he could only see the mast of the sloop.

He immediately ran in the direction of Portsmouth, which he saw at nearly half a league before him, standing out in the haze of the morning, with its houses and towers.

Beyond Portsmouth the sea was covered with vessels whose masts, like a forest of poplars despoiled by the winter, bent with each breath of the wind.

Felton, in his rapid walk, reviewed in his mind all the accusations against the favourite of James I. and Charles I, furnished by two years of premature meditation and a long sojourn among the Puritans.

When he compared the public crimes of this minister—startling crimes, European crimes, if so we may say—with the private and unknown crimes with which Milady had charged him, Felton found that the more culpable of the two men which formed the character of Buckingham was the one of whom the public knew not the life. This was because his love, so strange, so new, and so ardent, made him view the infamous and imaginary accusations of Milady de Winter as, through a magnifying glass, one views as frightful monsters atoms in reality imperceptible by the side of an ant.

The rapidity of his walk heated his blood still more; the idea that he left behind him, exposed to a frightful vengeance, the woman he loved, or rather whom he adored as a saint, the emotion he had experienced, present fatigue—all together exalted his mind above human feeling.

He entered Portsmouth about eight o'clock in the morning. The whole population was on foot; drums were beating in the streets and in the port; the troops about to embark were marching toward the sea.

Felton arrived at the palace of the Admiralty, covered with dust, and streaming with perspiration. His countenance, usually so pale, was purple with heat and passion. The sentinel wanted to repulse him; but Felton called to the officer of the post, and drawing from his pocket the letter of which he was the bearer, he said, 'A pressing message from Lord de Winter.'

At the name of Lord de Winter, who was known to be one of his Grace's most intimate friends, the officer of the post gave orders to let Felton pass, who, besides, wore the uniform of a naval officer.

Felton darted into the palace.

At the moment he entered the vestibule, another man was entering likewise, dusty, out of breath, leaving at the gate a post horse, which, on reaching the palace, tumbled on his foreknees.

Felton and he addressed Patrick, the duke's confidential lackey, at the same moment. Felton named Lord de Winter; the unknown would not name anybody, and pretended that it was to the duke alone he would make himself known. Each was anxious to gain admission before the other.

'Alas!' said Felton, looking at those beautiful hands, and shaking his head sorrowfully.

'Oh, it's nothing, nothing!' cried Milady. 'I remember now.'

Milady looked around her, as if in search of something.

'It is there,' said Felton, touching the bag of money with his foot.

They drew near to the sloop. A sailor on watch hailed the boat; the boat replied.

'What vessel is that?' asked Milady.

'The one I have hired for you.'

'Where will it take me?'

'Where you please, after you have put me on shore at Portsmouth.'

'What are you going to do at Portsmouth?' asked Milady.

'Accomplish the orders of Lord de Winter,' said Felton, with a gloomy smile.

'What orders?' asked Milady.

'You do not understand?' asked Felton.

'No; explain yourself, I beg.'

'As he mistrusted me, he determined to guard you himself, and sent me in his place to get Buckingham to sign the order for your transportation.'

'But if he mistrusted you, how could he confide such an order to you?'

'How could I know what I was the bearer of?'

'That's true! And you are going to Portsmouth?'

'I have no time to lose. Tomorrow is the twenty-third, and Buckingham sets sail tomorrow with his fleet.'

'He sets sail tomorrow! Where for?'

'For La Rochelle.'

'He need not sail!' cried Milady, forgetting her usual presence of mind.

'Be satisfied,' replied Felton; 'he will not sail.'

Milady started with joy. She could read to the depths of the heart of this young man; the death of Buckingham was written there at full length.

'Felton,' cried she, 'you are as great as Judas Maccabeus! If you die, I will die with you; that is all I can say to you.'

'Silence!' cried Felton; 'we are here.'

In fact, they touched the sloop.

Felton mounted the ladder first, and gave his hand to Milady, while the sailors supported her, for the sea was still much agitated.

Milady breathed a deep sigh and fainted.

Felton continued to descend. Near the bottom of the ladder, when he found no more support for his feet, he clung with his hands; at length, arrived at the last step, he let himself hang by the strength of his wrists, and touched the ground. He stooped down, picked up the bag of money, and placed it between his teeth. Then he took Milady in his arms, and set off briskly in the direction opposite to that which the patrol had taken. He soon left the pathway of the patrol, descended across the rocks, and when arrived on the edge of the sea, whistled.

A similar signal replied to him; and five minutes after, a boat appeared, rowed by four men.

The boat approached as near as it could to the shore; but there was not depth enough of water for it to touch land. Felton walked into the sea up to his middle, being unwilling to trust his precious burden to anybody.

Fortunately the storm began to subside, but still the sea was disturbed. The little boat bounded over the waves like a nut-shell.

‘To the sloop,’ said Felton, ‘and row quickly.’

The four men bent to their oars, but the sea was too high to let them get much hold of it.

However, they left the castle behind; that was the principal thing. The night was extremely dark. It was almost impossible to see the shore from the boat; they would therefore be less likely to see the boat from the shore.

A black point floated on the sea. That was the sloop. While the boat was advancing with all the speed its four rowers could give it, Felton untied the cord and then the handkerchief which bound Milady’s hands together. When her hands were loosed he took some sea water and sprinkled it over her face.

Milady breathed a sigh, and opened her eyes.

‘Where am I?’ said she.

‘Saved!’ replied the young officer.

‘Oh, saved, saved!’ cried she. ‘Yes, there is the sky; here is the sea! The air I breathe is the air of liberty! Ah, thanks, Felton, thanks!’

The young man pressed her to his heart.

‘But what is the matter with my hands!’ asked Milady; ‘it seems as if my wrists had been crushed in a vice.’

Milady held out her arms; her wrists were bruised.

Patrick, who knew Lord de Winter was in affairs of the service, and in relations of friendship with the duke, gave the preference to the one who came in his name. The other was forced to wait, and it was easily to be seen how he cursed the delay.

The valet led Felton through a large hall in which waited the deputies from La Rochelle, headed by the Prince de Soubise, and introduced him into a closet where Buckingham, just out of the bath, was finishing his toilet, upon which, as at all times, he bestowed extraordinary attention.

‘Lieutenant Felton, from Lord de Winter,’ said Patrick.

‘From Lord de Winter!’ repeated Buckingham; ‘let him come in.’

Felton entered. At that moment Buckingham was throwing upon a couch a rich toilet robe, worked with gold, in order to put on a blue velvet doublet embroidered with pearls.

‘Why didn’t the baron come himself?’ demanded Buckingham. ‘I expected him this morning.’

‘He desired me to tell your Grace,’ replied Felton, ‘that he very much regretted not having that honour, but that he was prevented by the guard he is obliged to keep at the castle.’

‘Yes, I know that,’ said Buckingham; ‘he has a prisoner.’

‘It is of that prisoner that I wish to speak to your Grace,’ replied Felton.

‘Well, then, speak!’

‘That which I have to say of her can only be heard by yourself, my Lord!’

‘Leave us, Patrick,’ said Buckingham; ‘but remain within sound of the bell. I shall call you presently.’

Patrick went out.

‘We are alone, sir,’ said Buckingham; ‘speak!’

‘My Lord,’ said Felton, ‘the Baron de Winter wrote to you the other day to request you to sign an order of embarkation relative to a young woman named Charlotte Backson.’

‘Yes, sir; and I answered him, to bring or send me that order and I would sign it.’

‘Here it is, my Lord.’

‘Give it to me,’ said the duke.

And taking it from Felton, he cast a rapid glance over the paper, and perceiving that it was the one that had been mentioned to him, he placed it on the table, took a pen, and prepared to sign it.

'Pardon, my Lord,' said Felton, stopping the duke; 'but does your Grace know that the name of Charlotte Backson is not the true name of this young woman?'

'Yes, sir, I know it,' replied the duke, dipping the quill in the ink.

'Then your Grace knows her real name?' asked Felton, in a sharp tone.

'I know it'; and the duke put the quill to the paper. Felton grew pale.

'And knowing that real name, my Lord,' replied Felton, 'will you sign it all the same?'

'Doubtless,' said Buckingham, 'and rather twice than once.'

'I cannot believe,' continued Felton, in a voice that became more sharp and rough, 'that your Grace knows that it is to Milady de Winter this relates.'

'I know it perfectly, although I am astonished that you know it.'

'And will your Grace sign that order without remorse?'

Buckingham looked at the young man haughtily.

'Do you know, sir, that you are asking me very strange questions, and that I am very foolish to answer them?'

'Reply to them, my Lord,' said Felton; 'the circumstances are more serious than you perhaps believe.'

Buckingham reflected that the young man, coming from Lord de Winter, undoubtedly spoke in his name, and softened.

'Without remorse,' said he. 'The baron knows, as well as myself, that Milady de Winter is a very guilty woman, and it is treating her very favourably to commute her punishment to transportation.' The duke put his pen to the paper.

'You will not sign that order, my Lord!' said Felton, making a step toward the duke.

'I will not sign this order! And why not?'

'Because you will look into yourself, and you will do justice to the lady.'

'I should do her justice by sending her to Tyburn,' said Buckingham. 'This lady is infamous.'

'My Lord, Milady de Winter is an angel; you know that she is, and I demand her liberty of you.'

'You ask that?'

'Put your two hands together. Cross them; that's right!'

Felton tied her two wrists together with his handkerchief, and then with a cord over the handkerchief.

'What are you doing?' asked Milady, with surprise.

'Pass your arms around my neck, and fear nothing.'

'But I shall make you lose your balance, and we shall both be dashed to pieces.'

'Don't be afraid. I am a sailor.'

Not a second was to be lost. Milady passed her two arms round Felton's neck, and let herself slip out of the window. Felton began to descend the ladder slowly, step by step. Despite the weight of two bodies, the blast of the hurricane shook them in the air.

All at once Felton stopped.

'What is the matter?' asked Milady.

'Silence,' said Felton, 'I hear footsteps.'

'We are discovered!'

There was a silence of several seconds.

'No,' said Felton, 'it is nothing.'

'But what, then, is the noise?'

'That of the patrol going their rounds.'

'Where is their road?'

'Just under us.'

'They will discover us!'

'No, if it does not lighten.'

'But they will run against the bottom of the ladder.'

'Fortunately it is too short by six feet.'

'Here they are! My God!'

'Silence!'

Both remained suspended, motionless and breathless, within twenty paces of the ground, while the patrol passed beneath them laughing and talking. This was a terrible moment for the fugitives.

The patrol passed. The noise of their retreating footsteps and the murmur of their voices soon died away.

'Now,' said Felton, 'we are safe.'

'Nothing, nothing, only shut the window. Go to bed, or at least lie down in your clothes. As soon as I have done I will knock on one of the panes of glass. But will you be able to follow me?'

'Oh, yes!'

'Your wound?'

'Gives me pain, but will not prevent my walking.'

'Be ready, then, at the first signal.'

Milady shut the window, extinguished the lamp, and went, as Felton had desired her, to lie down on the bed. Amid the moaning of the storm she heard the grinding of the file upon the bars, and by the light of every flash she perceived the shadow of Felton through the panes.

She passed an hour without breathing, panting, with a cold sweat upon her brow, and her heart oppressed by frightful agony at every movement she heard in the corridor.

There are hours which last a year.

At the expiration of an hour, Felton tapped again.

Milady sprang out of bed and opened the window. Two bars removed formed an opening for a man to pass through.

'Are you ready?' asked Felton.

'Yes. Must I take anything with me?'

'Money, if you have any.'

'Yes; fortunately they have left me all I had.'

'So much the better, for I have expended all mine in chartering a vessel.'

'Here!' said Milady, placing a bag full of louis in Felton's hands.

Felton took the bag and threw it to the foot of the wall.

'Now,' said he, 'will you come?'

'I am ready.'

Milady mounted upon a chair and passed the upper part of her body through the window. She saw the young officer suspended over the abyss by a ladder of ropes. For the first time an emotion of terror reminded her that she was a woman.

The dark space frightened her.

'I expected this,' said Felton.

'It's nothing, it's nothing!' said Milady. 'I will descend with my eyes shut.'

'Have you confidence in me?' said Felton.

'Bah! Are you mad, to talk to me thus?' said Buckingham.

'My Lord, excuse me! I speak as I can; I restrain myself. But, my Lord, think of what you're about to do, and beware of going too far!'

'What do you say? God pardon me!' cried Buckingham, 'I really think he threatens me!'

'No, my Lord, I still plead. And I say to you: one drop of water suffices to make the full vase overflow; one slight fault may draw down punishment upon the head spared, despite many crimes.'

'Mr. Felton,' said Buckingham, 'you will withdraw, and place yourself at once under arrest.'

'You will hear me to the end, my Lord. You have seduced this young girl; you have outraged, defiled her. Repair your crimes toward her; let her go free, and I will exact nothing else from you.'

'You will exact!' said Buckingham, looking at Felton with astonishment, and dwelling upon each syllable of the three words as he pronounced them.

'My Lord,' continued Felton, becoming more excited as he spoke, 'my Lord, beware! All England is tired of your iniquities; my Lord, you have abused the royal power, which you have almost usurped; my Lord, you are held in horror by God and men. God will punish you hereafter, but I will punish you here!'

'Ah, this is too much!' cried Buckingham, making a step toward the door.

Felton barred his passage.

'I ask it humbly of you, my Lord,' said he; 'sign the order for the liberation of Milady de Winter. Remember that she is a woman whom you have dishonoured.'

'Withdraw, sir,' said Buckingham, 'or I will call my attendant, and have you placed in irons.'

'You shall not call,' said Felton, throwing himself between the duke and the bell placed on a stand encrusted with silver. 'Beware, my Lord, you are in the hands of God!'

'In the hands of the devil, you mean!' cried Buckingham, raising his voice so as to attract the notice of his people, without absolutely shouting.

'Sign, my Lord; sign the liberation of Milady de Winter,' said Felton, holding out a paper to the duke.

'By force? You are joking! Holloa, Patrick!'

'Sign, my Lord!'

'Never.'  
'Never?'

'Help!' shouted the duke; and at the same time he sprang toward his sword. But Felton did not give him time to draw it. He held the knife with which Milady had stabbed herself, open in his bosom; at one bound he was upon the duke.

At that moment Patrick entered the room, crying, 'A letter from France, my Lord.'

'From France!' cried Buckingham, forgetting everything in thinking from whom that letter came.

Felton took advantage of this moment, and plunged the knife into his side up to the handle.

'Ah, traitor,' cried Buckingham, 'you have killed me!'

'Murder!' screamed Patrick.

Felton cast his eyes round for means of escape, and seeing the door free, he rushed into the next chamber, in which, as we have said, the deputies from La Rochelle were waiting, crossed it as quickly as possible, and rushed toward the staircase; but upon the first step he met Lord de Winter, who, seeing him pale, confused, livid, and stained with blood both on his hands and face, seized him by the throat, crying, 'I knew it! I guessed it! But too late by a minute, unfortunate, unfortunate that I am!'

Felton made no resistance. Lord de Winter placed him in the hands of the guards, who led him, while awaiting further orders, to a little terrace commanding the sea; and then the baron hastened to the duke's chamber.

At the cry uttered by the duke and the scream of Patrick, the man whom Felton had met in the antechamber rushed into the chamber.

He found the duke reclining upon a sofa, with his hand pressed upon the wound.

'Laporte,' said the duke, in a dying voice, 'Laporte, do you come from her?'  
'Yes, monseigneur,' replied the faithful cloak bearer of Anne of Austria, 'but too late, perhaps.'

'Silence, Laporte, you may be overheard. Patrick, let no one enter. Oh, I cannot tell what she says to me! My God, I am dying!'

And the duke swooned.

Felton. He was yielding to your infernal influence; but I will save him. He will never see you again; all is over. Get your clothes together. Tomorrow you will go. I had fixed the embarkation for the twenty-fourth; but I have reflected that the more promptly the affair takes place the more sure it will be. Tomorrow, by twelve o'clock, I shall have the order for your exile, signed, *Buckingham*. If you speak a single word to anyone before going aboard ship, my sergeant will blow your brains out. He has orders to do so. If when on the ship you speak a single word to anyone before the captain permits you, the captain will have you thrown into the sea. That is agreed upon.

*Au revoir*, then; that is all I have to say today. Tomorrow I will see you again, to take my leave.' With these words the baron went out. Milady had listened to all this menacing tirade with a smile of disdain on her lips, but rage in her heart.

Supper was served. Milady felt that she stood in need of all her strength. She did not know what might take place during this night which approached so menacingly—for large masses of cloud rolled over the face of the sky, and distant lightning announced a storm.

The storm broke about ten o'clock. Milady felt a consolation in seeing nature partake of the disorder of her heart. The thunder growled in the air like the passion and anger in her thoughts. It appeared to her that the blast as it swept along disheveled her brow, as it bowed the branches of the trees and bore away their leaves. She howled as the hurricane howled; and her voice was lost in the great voice of nature, which also seemed to groan with despair.

All at once she heard a tap at her window, and by the help of a flash of lightning she saw the face of a man appear behind the bars.

She ran to the window and opened it.

'Felton!' cried she. 'I am saved.'

'Yes,' said Felton; 'but silence, silence! I must have time to file through these bars. Only take care that I am not seen through the wicker.'

'Oh, it is a proof that the Lord is on our side, Felton,' replied Milady. 'They have closed up the grating with a board.'

'That is well; God has made them senseless,' said Felton.

'But what must I do?' asked Milady.

Were her fears realized? Was Felton, suspected by the baron, about to fail her at the decisive moment? She had only one day left. Lord de Winter had announced her embarkation for the twenty-third, and it was now the morning of the twenty-second.

Nevertheless she still waited patiently till the hour for dinner.

Although she had eaten nothing in the morning, the dinner was brought in at its usual time. Milady then perceived, with terror, that the uniform of the soldiers who guarded her was changed.

Then she ventured to ask what had become of Felton.

She was told that he had left the castle an hour before on horseback. She inquired if the baron was still at the castle. The soldier replied that he was, and that he had given orders to be informed if the prisoner wished to speak to him.

Milady replied that she was too weak at present, and that her only desire was to be left alone.

The soldier went out, leaving the dinner served.

Felton was sent away. The marines were removed. Felton was then mistrusted.

This was the last blow to the prisoner.

Left alone, she arose. The bed, which she had kept from prudence and that they might believe her seriously wounded, burned her like a bed of fire. She cast a glance at the door; the baron had had a plank nailed over the grating. He no doubt feared that by this opening she might still by some diabolical means corrupt her guards.

Milady smiled with joy. She was free now to give way to her transports without being observed. She traversed her chamber with the excitement of a furious maniac or of a tigress shut up in an iron cage. *Certes*, if the knife had been left in her power, she would now have thought, not of killing herself, but of killing the baron.

At six o'clock Lord de Winter came in. He was armed at all points. This man, in whom Milady till that time had only seen a very simple gentleman, had become an admirable jailer. He appeared to foresee all, to divine all, to anticipate all.

A single look at Milady apprised him of all that was passing in her mind. 'Ay!' said he, 'I see; but you shall not kill me today. You have no longer a weapon; and besides, I am on my guard. You had begun to pervert my poor

Meanwhile, Lord de Winter, the deputies, the leaders of the expedition, the officers of Buckingham's household, had all made their way into the chamber. Cries of despair resounded on all sides. The news, which filled the palace with tears and groans, soon became known, and spread itself throughout the city. The report of a cannon announced that something new and unexpected had taken place.

Lord de Winter tore his hair.

'Too late by a minute!' cried he, 'too late by a minute! Oh, my God, my God! what a misfortune!'

He had been informed at seven o'clock in the morning that a rope ladder floated from one of the windows of the castle; he had hastened to Milady's chamber, had found it empty, the window open, and the bars filed, had remembered the verbal caution d'Arragnan had transmitted to him by his messenger, had trembled for the duke, and running to the stable without taking time to have a horse saddled, had jumped upon the first he found, had galloped off like the wind, had alighted below in the courtyard, had ascended the stairs precipitately, and on the top step, as we have said, had encountered Felton.

The duke, however, was not dead. He recovered a little, reopened his eyes, and hope revived in all hearts.

'Gentlemen,' said he, 'leave me alone with Patrick and Laporte—ah, is that you, De Winter? You sent me a strange madman this morning! See the state in which he has put me.'

'Oh, my Lord!' cried the baron, 'I shall never console myself.'

'And you would be quite wrong, my dear De Winter,' said Buckingham, holding out his hand to him. 'I do not know the man who deserves being regretted during the whole life of another man; but leave us, I pray you.'

The baron went out sobbing.

There only remained in the closet of the wounded duke Laporte and Patrick.

A physician was sought for, but none was yet found.

'You will live, my Lord, you will live!' repeated the faithful servant of Anne of Austria, on his knees before the duke's sofa.

'What has she written to me?' said Buckingham, feebly, streaming with blood, and suppressing his agony to speak of her he loved, 'what has she written to me? Read me her letter.'

'Oh, my Lord!' said Laporte.

‘Obey, Laporte, do you not see I have no time to lose?’

Laporte broke the seal, and placed the paper before the eyes of the duke; but Buckingham in vain tried to make out the writing.

‘Read!’ said he, ‘read! I cannot see. Read, then! For soon, perhaps, I shall not hear, and I shall die without knowing what she has written to me.’

Laporte made no further objection, and read:

*My Lord,*

By that which, since I have known you, have suffered by you and for you, I conjure you, if you have any care for my repose, to countermand those great armaments which you are preparing against France, to put an end to a war of which it is publicly said religion is the ostensible cause, and of which, it is generally whispered, your love for me is the concealed cause. This war may not only bring great catastrophes upon England and France, but misfortune upon you, my Lord, for which I should never console myself.

Be careful of your life, which is menaced, and which will be dear to me from the moment I am not obliged to see an enemy in you.

*Your affectionate*

ANNE

Buckingham collected all his remaining strength to listen to the reading of the letter; then, when it was ended, as if he had met with a bitter disappointment, he asked, ‘Have you nothing else to say to me by the living voice, Laporte?’

‘The queen charged me to tell you to watch over yourself, for she had advice that your assassination would be attempted.’

‘And is that all—is that all?’ replied Buckingham, impatiently.

‘She likewise charged me to tell you that she still loved you.’

‘Ah,’ said Buckingham, ‘God be praised! My death, then, will not be to her as the death of a stranger!’

## Chapter LVIII

### Escape



As Lord de Winter had thought, Milady’s wound was not dangerous. So soon as she was left alone with the woman whom the baron had summoned to her assistance she opened her eyes.

However, necessary to affect weakness and pain—not a very difficult task for so finished an actress as Milady. Thus the poor woman was completely the dupe of the prisoner, whom, notwithstanding her hints, she persisted in watching all night.

But the presence of this woman did not prevent Milady from thinking.

There was no longer a doubt that Felton was convinced; Felton was hers. If an angel appeared to that young man as an accuser of Milady, he would take him, in the mental disposition in which he now found himself, for a messenger sent by the devil.

Milady smiled at this thought, for Felton was now her only hope—her only means of safety.

But Lord de Winter might suspect him; Felton himself might now be watched!

Toward four o’clock in the morning the doctor arrived; but since the time Milady stabbed herself, however short, the wound had closed. The doctor could therefore measure neither the direction nor the depth of it; he only satisfied himself by Milady’s pulse that the case was not serious.

In the morning Milady, under the pretext that she had not slept well in the night and wanted rest, sent away the woman who attended her.

She had one hope, which was that Felton would appear at the breakfast hour; but Felton did not come.