'As happy as it is permitted to a human creature to be,' replied Maximilian. 'She married the man she loved, who remained faithful to us in our fallen fortunes—Emmanuel Herbaut.'

Monte Cristo smiled imperceptibly.

'I live there during my leave of absence,' continued Maximilian; 'and I shall be, together with my brother-in-law Emmanuel, at the disposition of the Count, whenever he thinks fit to honour us.'

'One minute,' cried Albert, without giving Monte Cristo the time to reply. 'Take care, you are going to immure a traveller, Sinbad the Sailor, a man who comes to see Paris; you are going to make a patriarch of him.'

'Oh, no,' said Morrel; 'my sister is five-and-twenty, my brother-in-law is thirty, they are gay, young, and happy. Besides, the count will be in his own house, and only see them when he thinks fit to do so.'

'Thanks, monsieur,' said Monte Cristo; 'I shall content myself with being presented to your sister and her husband, if you will do me the honour to introduce me; but I cannot accept the offer of anyone of these gentlemen, since my habitation is already prepared.'

'What,' cried Morcerf; 'you are, then, going to a hotel—that will be very dull for you.'

'Was I so badly lodged at Rome?' said Monte Cristo smiling.

'*Parbleu!* at Rome you spent fifty thousand piastres in furnishing your apartments, but I presume that you are not disposed to spend a similar sum every day.'

'It is not that which deterred me,' replied Monte Cristo; 'but as I determined to have a house to myself, I sent on my valet de chambre, and he ought by this time to have bought the house and furnished it.'

'But you have, then, a valet de chambre who knows Paris?' said Beauchamp.

'It is the first time he has ever been in Paris. He is black, and cannot speak,' returned Monte Cristo.

'It is Ali!' cried Albert, in the midst of the general surprise.

'Yes, Ali himself, my Nubian mute, whom you saw, I think, at Rome.'

'Certainly,' said Morcerf; 'I recollect him perfectly. But how could you charge a Nubian to purchase a house, and a mute to furnish it?—he will do everything wrong.'

'Undeceive yourself, monsieur,' replied Monte Cristo; 'I am quite sure, that, on the contrary, he will choose everything as I wish. He knows my

tastes, my caprices, my wants. He has been here a week, with the instinct of a hound, hunting by himself. He will arrange everything for me. He knew, that I should arrive today at ten o'clock; he was waiting for me at nine at the Barrière de Fontainebleau. He gave me this paper; it contains the number of my new abode; read it yourself,' and Monte Cristo passed a paper to Albert.

'Ah, that is really original,' said Beauchamp.

'And very princely,' added Château-Renaud.

'What, do you not know your house?' asked Debray.

'No,' said Monte Cristo; 'I told you I did not wish to be behind my time; I dressed myself in the carriage, and descended at the viscount's door.' The young men looked at each other; they did not know if it was a comedy Monte Cristo was playing, but every word he uttered had such an air of simplicity, that it was impossible to suppose what he said was false—besides, why should he tell a falsehood?

'We must content ourselves, then,' said Beauchamp, 'with rendering the count all the little services in our power. I, in my quality of journalist, open all the theatres to him.'

'Thanks, monsieur,' returned Monte Cristo, 'my steward has orders to take a box at each theatre.'

'Is your steward also a Nubian?' asked Debray.

'No, he is a countryman of yours, if a Corsican is a countryman of anyone's. But you know him, M. de Morcerf.'

'Is it that excellent M. Bertuccio, who understands hiring windows so well?'

'Yes, you saw him the day I had the honour of receiving you; he has been a soldier, a smuggler—in fact, everything. I would not be quite sure that he has not been mixed up with the police for some trifle—a stab with a knife, for instance.'

'And you have chosen this honest citizen for your steward,' said Debray. 'Of how much does he rob you every year?'

'On my word,' replied the count, 'not more than another. I am sure he answers my purpose, knows no impossibility, and so I keep him.'

'Then,' continued Château-Renaud, 'since you have an establishment, a steward, and a hotel in the Champs-Élysées, you only want a mistress.'

Albert smiled. He thought of the fair Greek he had seen in the count's box at the Argentina and Valle theatres.

'I have something better than that,' said Monte Cristo; 'I have a slave. You procure your mistresses from the opera, the Vaudeville, or the Variétés; I purchased mine at Constantinople; it cost me more, but I have nothing to fear.'

'But you forget,' replied Debray, laughing, 'that we are Franks by name and franks by nature, as King Charles said, and that the moment she puts her foot in France your slave becomes free.'

'Who will tell her?'

'The first person who sees her.'

'She only speaks Romaic.'

'That is different.'

'But at least we shall see her,' said Beauchamp, 'or do you keep eunuchs as well as mutes?'

'Oh, no,' replied Monte Cristo; 'I do not carry brutalism so far. Everyone who surrounds me is free to quit me, and when they leave me will no longer have any need of me or anyone else; it is for that reason, perhaps, that they do not quit me.'

They had long since passed to dessert and cigars.

'My dear Albert,' said Debray, rising, 'it is half-past two. Your guest is charming, but you leave the best company to go into the worst sometimes. I must return to the minister's. I will tell him of the count, and we shall soon know who he is.'

'Take care,' returned Albert; 'no one has been able to accomplish that.'

'Oh, we have three millions for our police; it is true they are almost always spent beforehand, but, no matter, we shall still have fifty thousand francs to spend for this purpose.'

'And when you know, will you tell me?'

'I promise you. *Au revoir*, Albert. Gentlemen, good morning.'

As he left the room, Debray called out loudly, 'My carriage.'

'Bravo,' said Beauchamp to Albert; 'I shall not go to the Chamber, but I have something better to offer my readers than a speech of M. Danglars.'

'For heaven's sake, Beauchamp,' returned Morcerf, 'do not deprive me of the merit of introducing him everywhere. Is he not peculiar?'

an effect on Morrel, he was not mistaken—Maximilian started as if he had been electrified.

'Thomson & French,' said he; 'do you know this house, monsieur?'

'They are my bankers in the capital of the Christian world,' returned the count quietly. 'Can my influence with them be of any service to you?'

'Oh, count, you could assist me perhaps in researches which have been, up to the present, fruitless. This house, in past years, did ours a great service, and has, I know not for what reason, always denied having rendered us this service.'

'I shall be at your orders,' said Monte Cristo bowing.

'But,' continued Morcerf, '*à propos* of Danglars,—we have strangely wandered from the subject. We were speaking of a suitable habitation for the Count of Monte Cristo. Come, gentlemen, let us all propose some place. Where shall we lodge this new guest in our great capital?'

'Faubourg Saint-Germain,' said Château-Renaud. 'The count will find there a charming hotel, with a court and garden.'

'Bah! Château-Renaud,' returned Debray, 'you only know your dull and gloomy Faubourg Saint-Germain; do not pay any attention to him, count—live in the Chaussée d'Antin, that's the real centre of Paris.'

'Boulevard de l'Opéra,' said Beauchamp; 'the second floor—a house with a balcony. The count will have his cushions of silver cloth brought there, and as he smokes his chibouque, see all Paris pass before him.'

'You have no idea, then, Morrel?' asked Château-Renaud; 'you do not propose anything.'

'Oh, yes,' returned the young man, smiling; 'on the contrary, I have one, but I expected the count would be tempted by one of the brilliant proposals made him, yet as he has not replied to any of them, I will venture to offer him a suite of apartments in a charming hotel, in the Pompadour style, that my sister has inhabited for a year, in the Rue Meslay.'

'You have a sister?' asked the count.

'Yes, monsieur, a most excellent sister.'

'Married?'

'Nearly nine years.'

'Happy?' asked the count again.

anyone to introduce you—with your name, and your fortune, and your talent' (Monte Cristo bowed with a somewhat ironical smile) 'you can present yourself everywhere, and be well received. I can be useful in one way only—if knowledge of Parisian habits, of the means of rendering yourself comfortable, or of the bazaars, can assist, you may depend upon me to find you a fitting dwelling here. I do not dare offer to share my apartments with you, as I shared yours at Rome—I, who do not profess egotism, but am yet egotist *par excellence*; for, except myself, these rooms would not hold a shadow more, unless that shadow were feminine.'

'Ah,' said the count, 'that is a most conjugal reservation; I recollect that at Rome you said something of a projected marriage. May I congratulate you?'

'The affair is still in projection.'

'And he who says in "projection," means already decided,' said Debray.

'No,' replied Morcerf, 'my father is most anxious about it; and I hope, ere long, to introduce you, if not to my wife, at least to my betrothed—Mademoiselle Eugénie Danglars.'

'Eugénie Danglars,' said Monte Cristo; 'tell me, is not her father Baron Danglars?'

'Yes,' returned Morcerf, 'a baron of a new creation.'

'What matter,' said Monte Cristo 'if he has rendered the State services which merit this distinction?'

'Enormous ones,' answered Beauchamp. 'Although in reality a Liberal, he negotiated a loan of six millions for Charles X., in 1829, who made him a baron and chevalier of the Legion of honour; so that he wears the ribbon, not, as you would think, in his waistcoat-pocket, but at his button-hole.'

'Ah,' interrupted Morcerf, laughing, 'Beauchamp, Beauchamp, keep that for the *Corsaire* or the *Charivari*, but spare my future father-in-law before me.' Then, turning to Monte Cristo, 'You just now spoke his name as if you knew the baron?'

'I do not know him,' returned Monte Cristo; 'but I shall probably soon make his acquaintance, for I have a credit opened with him by the house of Richard & Blount, of London, Arstein & Eskeles of Vienna, and Thomson & French at Rome.' As he pronounced the two last names, the count glanced at Maximilian Morrel. If the stranger expected to produce

'He is more than that,' replied Château-Renaud; 'he is one of the most extraordinary men I ever saw in my life. Are you coming, Morrel?'

'Directly I have given my card to the count, who has promised to pay us a visit at Rue Meslay, № 14.'

'Be sure I shall not fail to do so,' returned the count, bowing.

And Maximilian Morrel left the room with the Baron de Château-Renaud, leaving Monte Cristo alone with Morcerf.

'My dear count,' cried Morcerf, 'you are at fault—you, one of the most formidable logicians I know—and you must see it clearly proved that instead of being an egotist, you are a philanthropist. Ah, you call yourself Oriental, a Levantine, Maltese, Indian, Chinese; your family name is Monte Cristo; Sinbad the Sailor is your baptismal appellation, and yet the first day you set foot in Paris you instinctively display the greatest virtue, or rather the chief defect, of us eccentric Parisians,—that is, you assume the vices you have not, and conceal the virtues you possess.'

'My dear vicomte,' returned Monte Cristo, 'I do not see, in all I have done, anything that merits, either from you or these gentlemen, the pretended eulogies I have received. You were no stranger to me, for I knew you from the time I gave up two rooms to you, invited you to breakfast with me, lent you one of my carriages, witnessed the Carnival in your company, and saw with you from a window in the Piazza del Popolo the execution that affected you so much that you nearly fainted. I will appeal to any of these gentlemen, could I leave my guest in the hands of a hideous bandit, as you term him? Besides, you know, I had the idea that you could introduce me into some of the Paris salons when I came to France. You might some time ago have looked upon this resolution as a vague project, but today you see it was a reality, and you must submit to it under penalty of breaking your word.'

'I will keep it,' returned Morcerf; 'but I fear that you will be much disappointed, accustomed as you are to picturesque events and fantastic horizons. Amongst us you will not meet with any of those episodes with which your adventurous existence has so familiarized you; our Chimborazo is Mortmartre, our Himalaya is Mount Valérien, our Great Desert is the plain of Grenelle, where they are now boring an artesian well to water the caravans. We have plenty of thieves, though not so many as is said; but these thieves stand in far more dread of a policeman than a lord. France is so prosaic, and Paris so civilized a city, that you will not find in its eighty-five departments—I say eighty-five, because I do not include Corsica—you will not find, then, in these eighty-five departments a single hill on which there is not a telegraph, or a grotto in which the commissary of police has not put up a gaslamp. There is but one service I can render you, and for that I place myself entirely at your orders, that is, to present, or make my friends present, you everywhere; besides, you have no need of

of Rome who ordinarily have so little respect for anything. I assure you, Franz and I were lost in admiration.'

'Nothing more simple,' returned the count. 'I had known the famous Vampa for more than ten years. When he was quite a child, and only a shepherd, I gave him a few gold pieces for showing me my way, and he, in order to repay me, gave me a poniard, the hilt of which he had carved with his own hand, and which you may have seen in my collection of arms. In after years, whether he had forgotten this interchange of presents, which ought to have cemented our friendship, or whether he did not recollect me, he sought to take me, but, on the contrary, it was I who captured him and a dozen of his band. I might have handed him over to Roman justice, which is somewhat expeditious, and which would have been particularly so with him; but I did nothing of the sort—I suffered him and his band to depart.'

'With the condition that they should sin no more,' said Beauchamp, laughing. 'I see they kept their promise.'

'No, monsieur,' returned Monte Cristo 'upon the simple condition that they should respect myself and my friends. Perhaps what I am about to say may seem strange to you, who are socialists, and vaunt humanity and your duty to your neighbour, but I never seek to protect a society which does not protect me, and which I will even say, generally occupies itself about me only to injure me; and thus by giving them a low place in my esteem, and preserving a neutrality towards them, it is society and my neighbour who are indebted to me.'

'Bravo,' cried Château-Renaud; 'you are the first man I ever met sufficiently courageous to preach egotism. Bravo, count, bravo!'

'It is frank, at least,' said Morrel. 'But I am sure that the count does not regret having once deviated from the principles he has so boldly avowed.'

'How have I deviated from those principles, monsieur?' asked Monte Cristo, who could not help looking at Morrel with so much intensity, that two or three times the young man had been unable to sustain that clear and piercing glance.

'Why, it seems to me,' replied Morrel, 'that in delivering M. de Morcerf, whom you did not know, you did good to your neighbour and to society.'

'Of which he is the brightest ornament,' said Beauchamp, drinking off a glass of champagne.

Chapter XLI

The Presentation

When Albert found himself alone with Monte Cristo, 'My dear count,' said he, 'allow me to commence my services as *cicerone* by showing you a specimen of a bachelor's apartment. You, who are accustomed to the palaces of Italy, can amuse yourself by calculating in how many square feet a young man who is not the worst lodged in Paris can live. As we pass from one room to another, I will open the windows to let you breathe.'

Monte Cristo had already seen the breakfast-room and the salon on the ground floor. Albert led him first to his *atelier*, which was, as we have said, his favourite apartment. Monte Cristo quickly appreciated all that Albert had collected here—old cabinets, Japanese porcelain, Oriental stuffs, Venetian glass, arms from all parts of the world—everything was familiar to him; and at the first glance he recognized their date, their country, and their origin.

Morcerf had expected he should be the guide; on the contrary, it was he who, under the count's guidance, followed a course of archæology, mineralogy, and natural history.

They descended to the first floor; Albert led his guest into the salon. The salon was filled with the works of modern artists; there were landscapes by Dupré, with their long reeds and tall trees, their lowing oxen and marvellous skies; Delacroix's Arabian cavaliers, with their long white burnouses, their shining belts, their damasked arms, their horses, who tore each other with their teeth while their riders contended fiercely with their maces; *aquarelles* of Boulanger, representing Notre Dame de Paris with that vigour that makes the artist the rival of the poet; there were paintings by Diaz, who makes his flowers more beautiful than flowers, his

suns more brilliant than the sun; designs by Decamp, as vividly coloured as those of Salvator Rosa, but more poetic; *pastels* by Giraud and Müller, representing children like angels and women with the features of a virgin; sketches torn from the album of Dauzats' 'Travels in the East,' that had been made in a few seconds on the saddle of a camel, or beneath the dome of a mosque—in a word, all that modern art can give in exchange and as recompense for the art lost and gone with ages long since past.

Albert expected to have something new this time to show to the traveller, but, to his great surprise, the latter, without seeking for the signatures, many of which, indeed, were only initials, named instantly the author of every picture in such a manner that it was easy to see that each name was not only known to him, but that each style associated with it had been appreciated and studied by him. From the salon they passed into the bedchamber; it was a model of taste and simple elegance. A single portrait, signed by Léopold Robert, shone in its carved and gilded frame. This portrait attracted the Count of Monte Cristo's attention, for he made three rapid steps in the chamber, and stopped suddenly before it.

It was the portrait of a young woman of five or six-and-twenty, with a dark complexion, and light and lustrous eyes, veiled beneath long lashes. She wore the picturesque costume of the Catalan fisherwomen, a red and black bodice, and golden pins in her hair. She was looking at the sea, and her form was outlined on the blue ocean and sky. The light was so faint in the room that Albert did not perceive the pallor that spread itself over the count's visage, or the nervous heaving of his chest and shoulders. Silence prevailed for an instant, during which Monte Cristo gazed intently on the picture.

'You have there a most charming mistress, viscount,' said the count in a perfectly calm tone; 'and this costume—a ball costume, doubtless—becomes her admirably.'

'Ah, monsieur,' returned Albert, 'I would never forgive you this mistake if you had seen another picture beside this. You do not know my mother; she it is whom you see here. She had her portrait painted thus six or eight years ago. This costume is a fancy one, it appears, and the resemblance is so great that I think I still see my mother the same as she was in 1830. The countess had this portrait painted during the count's absence. She doubtless intended giving him an agreeable surprise; but, strange to say,

"four persons have been assassinated in the Rue St. Denis" or "the Faubourg St. Germain;"

"ten, fifteen, or twenty thieves, have been arrested in a *café* on the Boulevard du Temple, or in the Thermes de Julien,"—and yet these same men deny the existence of the bandits in the Maremma, the Campagna di Romana, or the Pontine Marshes. Tell them yourself that I was taken by bandits, and that without your generous intercession I should now have been sleeping in the Catacombs of St. Sebastian, instead of receiving them in my humble abode in the Rue du Helder.'

'Ah,' said Monte Cristo 'you promised me never to mention that circumstance.'

'It was not I who made that promise,' cried Morcerf; 'it must have been someone else whom you have rescued in the same manner, and whom you have forgotten. Pray speak of it, for I shall not only, I trust, relate the little I do know, but also a great deal I do not know.'

'It seems to me,' returned the count, smiling, 'that you played a sufficiently important part to know as well as myself what happened.'

'Well, you promise me, if I tell all I know, to relate, in your turn, all that I do not know?'

'That is but fair,' replied Monte Cristo.

'Well,' said Morcerf, 'for three days I believed myself the object of the attentions of a masque, whom I took for a descendant of Tullia or Poppæa, while I was simply the object of the attentions of a *contadina*, and I say *contadina* to avoid saying peasant girl. What I know is, that, like a fool, a greater fool than he of whom I spoke just now, I mistook for this peasant girl a young bandit of fifteen or sixteen, with a beardless chin and slim waist, and who, just as I was about to imprint a chaste salute on his lips, placed a pistol to my head, and, aided by seven or eight others, led, or rather dragged me, to the Catacombs of St. Sebastian, where I found a highly educated brigand chief perusing Cæsar's *Commentaries*, and who deigned to leave off reading to inform me, that unless the next morning, before six o'clock, four thousand piastres were paid into his account at his banker's, at a quarter past six I should have ceased to exist. The letter is still to be seen, for it is in Franz d'Épinay's possession, signed by me, and with a postscript of M. Luigi Vampa. This is all I know, but I know not, count, how you contrived to inspire so much respect in the bandits

the admirable emerald than to see the pills that it passed from hand to hand.

'And is it your cook who prepares these pills?' asked Beauchamp.

'Oh, no, monsieur,' replied Monte Cristo; 'I do not thus betray my enjoyments to the vulgar. I am a tolerable chemist, and prepare my pills myself.'

'This is a magnificent emerald, and the largest I have ever seen,' said Château-Renaud, 'although my mother has some remarkable family jewels.'

'I had three similar ones,' returned Monte Cristo. 'I gave one to the Sultan, who mounted it in his sabre; another to our holy father the Pope, who had it set in his tiara, opposite to one nearly as large, though not so fine, given by the Emperor Napoleon to his predecessor, Pius VII. I kept the third for myself, and I had it hollowed out, which reduced its value, but rendered it more commodious for the purpose I intended.'

Everyone looked at Monte Cristo with astonishment; he spoke with so much simplicity that it was evident he spoke the truth, or that he was mad. However, the sight of the emerald made them naturally incline to the former belief.

'And what did these two sovereigns give you in exchange for these magnificent presents?' asked Debray.

'The Sultan, the liberty of a woman,' replied the Count; 'the Pope, the life of a man; so that once in my life I have been as powerful as if heaven had brought me into the world on the steps of a throne.'

'And it was Peppino you saved, was it not?' cried Morcerf; 'it was for him that you obtained pardon?'

'Perhaps,' returned the count, smiling.

'My dear count, you have no idea what pleasure it gives me to hear you speak thus,' said Morcerf.

'I had announced you beforehand to my friends as an enchanter of the *Arabian Nights*, a wizard of the Middle Ages; but the Parisians are so subtle in paradoxes that they mistake for caprices of the imagination the most incontestable truths, when these truths do not form a part of their daily existence. For example, here is Debray who reads, and Beauchamp who prints, every day, "A member of the Jockey Club has been stopped and robbed on the Boulevard;"

this portrait seemed to displease my father, and the value of the picture, which is, as you see, one of the best works of Léopold Robert, could not overcome his dislike to it. It is true, between ourselves, that M. de Morcerf is one of the most assiduous peers at the Luxembourg, a general renowned for theory, but a most mediocre amateur of art. It is different with my mother, who paints exceedingly well, and who, unwilling to part with so valuable a picture, gave it to me to put here, where it would be less likely to displease M. de Morcerf, whose portrait, by Gros, I will also show you. Excuse my talking of family matters, but as I shall have the honour of introducing you to the count, I tell you this to prevent you making any allusions to this picture. The picture seems to have a malign influence, for my mother rarely comes here without looking at it, and still more rarely does she look at it without weeping. This disagreement is the only one that has ever taken place between the count and countess, who are still as much united, although married more than twenty years, as on the first day of their wedding.' Monte Cristo glanced rapidly at Albert, as if to seek a hidden meaning in his words, but it was evident the young man uttered them in the simplicity of his heart.

'Now,' said Albert, 'that you have seen all my treasures, allow me to offer them to you, unworthy as they are. Consider yourself as in your own house, and to put yourself still more at your ease, pray accompany me to the apartments of M. de Morcerf, he whom I wrote from Rome an account of the services you rendered me, and to whom I announced your promised visit, and I may say that both the count and countess anxiously desire to thank you in person. You are somewhat *blasé* I know, and family scenes have not much effect on Sinbad the Sailor, who has seen so many others. However, accept what I propose to you as an initiation into Parisian life—a life of politeness, visiting, and introductions.'

Monte Cristo bowed without making any answer; he accepted the offer without enthusiasm and without regret, as one of those conventions of society which every gentleman looks upon as a duty. Albert summoned his servant, and ordered him to acquaint M. and Madame de Morcerf of the arrival of the Count of Monte Cristo. Albert followed him with the count. When they arrived at the antechamber, above the door was visible a shield, which, by its rich ornaments and its harmony with the rest of the

furniture, indicated the importance the owner attached to this blazon. Monte Cristo stopped and examined it attentively.

'Azure seven merlets, or, placed bender,' said he. 'These are, doubtless, your family arms? Except the knowledge of blazons, that enables me to decipher them, I am very ignorant of heraldry—I, a count of a fresh creation, fabricated in Tuscany by the aid of a commandery of St. Stephen, and who would not have taken the trouble had I not been told that when you travel much it is necessary. Besides, you must have something on the panels of your carriage, to escape being searched by the custom-house officers. Excuse my putting such a question to you.'

'It is not indiscreet,' returned Morcerf, with the simplicity of conviction. 'You have guessed rightly. These are our arms, that is, those of my father, but they are, as you see, joined to another shield, which has gules, a silver tower, which are my mother's. By her side I am Spanish, but the family of Morcerf is French, and, I have heard, one of the oldest of the south of France.'

'Yes,' replied Monte Cristo 'these blazons prove that. Almost all the armed pilgrims that went to the Holy Land took for their arms either a cross, in honour of their mission, or birds of passage, in sign of the long voyage they were about to undertake, and which they hoped to accomplish on the wings of faith. One of your ancestors had joined the Crusades, and supposing it to be only that of St. Louis, that makes you mount to the thirteenth century, which is tolerably ancient.'

'It is possible,' said Morcerf; 'my father has in his study a genealogical tree which will tell you all that, and on which I made commentaries that would have greatly edified d'Hozier and Jaucourt. At present I no longer think of it, and yet I must tell you that we are beginning to occupy ourselves greatly with these things under our popular government.'

'Well, then, your government would do well to choose from the past something better than the things that I have noticed on your monuments, and which have no heraldic meaning whatever. As for you, viscount,' continued Monte Cristo to Morcerf, 'you are more fortunate than the government, for your arms are really beautiful, and speak to the imagination. Yes, you are at once from Provence and Spain; that explains, if the portrait you showed me be like, the dark hue I so much admired on the visage of the noble Catalan.'

'No,' replied the count; 'I was forced to go out of my road to obtain some information near Nîmes, so that I was somewhat late, and therefore I did not choose to stop.'

'And you ate in your carriage?' asked Morcerf.

'No, I slept, as I generally do when I am weary without having the courage to amuse myself, or when I am hungry without feeling inclined to eat.'

'But you can sleep when you please, monsieur?' said Morrel.

'Yes.'

'You have a recipe for it?'

'An infallible one.'

'That would be invaluable to us in Africa, who have not always any food to eat, and rarely anything to drink.'

'Yes,' said Monte Cristo; 'but, unfortunately, a recipe excellent for a man like myself would be very dangerous applied to an army, which might not awake when it was needed.'

'May we inquire what is this recipe?' asked Debray.

'Oh, yes,' returned Monte Cristo; 'I make no secret of it. It is a mixture of excellent opium, which I fetched myself from Canton in order to have it pure, and the best hashish which grows in the East—that is, between the Tigris and the Euphrates. These two ingredients are mixed in equal proportions, and formed into pills. Ten minutes after one is taken, the effect is produced. Ask Baron Franz d'Épinay; I think he tasted them one day.'

'Yes,' replied Morcerf, 'he said something about it to me.'

'But,' said Beauchamp, who, as became a journalist, was very incredulous, 'you always carry this drug about you?'

'Always.'

'Would it be an indiscretion to ask to see those precious pills?' continued Beauchamp, hoping to take him at a disadvantage.

'No, monsieur,' returned the count; and he drew from his pocket a marvellous casket, formed out of a single emerald and closed by a golden lid which unscrewed and gave passage to a small greenish coloured pellet about the size of a pea. This ball had an acrid and penetrating odor. There were four or five more in the emerald, which would contain about a dozen. The casket passed around the table, but it was more to examine