

SARAH THE CREOLE

OR

A SNAKE IN THE GRASS

A DRAMA

IN

FIVE ACTS

BY

MORRIS BARNETT,

AUTHOR OF

*Monsieur Jacques—Spirit of the Rhine—Lilian Gervais—Bold Dragoons—Serve him Right—Power and Principle—
Tact—Borrowed Feathers, &c. &c.*

THOMAS HAILES LACY,
89, STRAND,

(Opposite Southampton Street, Covent Garden Market,)
LONDON.

109739

SARAH THE CREOLE.

First performed at the Royal Olympic Theatre.

CHARACTERS.

Colonel Dumont	(Aged 55)	Mr. FARREN.
Henri Vaudris	(Aged 40)	Mr. COMPTON.
George de Cerney	(Aged 30)	Mr. HOSKINS.
Julien Duplessis	(Aged 24)	Mr. W. FARREN, Jun.
Doctor Robert	(Aged 40)	Mr. W. SHALDERS.
Jerome	(Aged 50)	Mr. G. COOKE.
Notary's Clerk		Mr. CLIFTON.
Mademoiselle Sarah Blangi	(Aged 25)	Miss FANNY WALLACK.
Mademoiselle Alice Dumont	(Aged 19)	Miss GORDON.
Marie		MISS SHALDERS.

SCENE—PARIS.

TIME.—PRESENT.

COSTUMES.—Fashionable modern dresses.

✓ X6366819

[*This drama is the property of Thomas Hailes Lacy.*]

SARAH THE CREOLE.



A C T I.

SCENE I.—*A Handsome Room. Folding doors in flat—doors, R. and L.*

JULIEN *discovered seated, L.*—DE CERNY, R.

Enter SERVANT, c. from R., and remains at back.

SERVANT. The colonel has just finished his correspondence, and begs you to remain a few minutes.

DE C. Tell Colonel Dumont we wait his leisure.

Exit SERVANT, c. to R.

And most happy we are to wait, are we not, friend Julien?

JULIEN. The more so, that it is in your company, my dear De Cerney.

DE C. That's a compliment that obliges me to be exceedingly amiable; fortunately, in your society, the effort is as easy as the desire is natural.

JULIEN. You flatter!

DE C. Indeed, I do no such thing! You're a lover—so I have but to speak of the lady of your heart, and you will think each word I utter is the brightest poetry. Well, then, let us speak of Mademoiselle Alice Dumont. (*he rises.*)

JULIEN. Can you believe that—

CERNY. Perhaps I have been mistaken—if so, let us change the subject.

JULIEN. Assuredly, Mademoiselle Alice is an angel, and—

DE C. You love her.

JULIEN. Yes, I love her! but, unfortunately, the wishes of my family—

DE C. Your governor forbids the banns, eh ?

JULIEN. Because he is rich, and Colonel Dumont is poor.

DE C. There's no disputing that point. Old Dumont's losses have been enormous, that's a fact ; and his debts are tolerably heavy, that's another fact ; but, then his brother Fabrice is as rich as a diamond mine. Why, it's said that he has literally dieted upon Rajahs.

JULIEN. Oh, a wealthy Indian uncle is of doubtful reality.

DE C. Ah, but this is not a mere traditional Indian uncle, such as we find in novels, and see in comedies, meagre and bilious, and aged fifty ; but a decent looking fellow, very little, if any, beyond forty. His fortune, I assure you, is anything but doubtful—all realized by selling Carolina cotton, Birmingham kettles, and Manchester muslins.

JULIEN. Yes, but the family have neither heard of, or from him, for an eternity.

DE C. (*laughing.*) The greater the probability of his approaching return.

JULIEN. Ah, De Cerny, you have a happy temperament !

DE C. True ; it's all I haye.

JULIEN. You ! that only five years since, inherited a splendid property ?

DE C. Pshaw ! only a trifling three hundred thousand francs. Racing and diceing, and the ballet, have left me nearly aground. There's enough left, however, to cover three or four more years, and then—

JULIEN. You must marry some rich heiress.

DE C. My dear fellow, rich heiresses are very rare and greatly in demand. Besides, think of my reputation ; gamester ! fast man ! a smasher of hearts and gas lamps ! these we'll admit, are not first-rate recommendations.

JULIEN. You slander yourself.

DE C. (*laughing.*) That's not possible.

JULIAN. Marriage has converted the most hardened.

DE C. Now, there, I have you. Either I should render my wife wretched—place her in an attic, and—confound it ! I'm not exactly an executioner !—or, I should make her happy, but then I must renounce all my delicious habits—all my fascinating, dear, small vices—and I am too loyal a slave to pleasure to give it up easily ; such agreeable masters—

JULIEN. (L.) I understand ; yet I thought that Mademoiselle Sarah Blangi, the adopted daughter of Colonel Dumont—

DE C. (*sitting, r.*) Sarah, that beautiful plant, cultivated beneath the burning sun of the Antilles ? She's a delicious demon certainly, but dangerous. A being to love, but not

exactly a creature to marry. Besides, she has not a sous, and my creditors would never give their consent.

JULIEN. Hush ! the ladies are here. (*crosses R.*)

Enter SARAH and ALICE, L.—SARAH is dressed simply, in black crape.

ALICE. (*to SARAH.*) And I tell you, Sarah, it is very wrong.

DE C. What is it, my beautiful cousin ?

ALICE. (*L.*) Is it you, George ? ah !—and Monsieur Julien ! I am charmed to see you. You must aid me to scold Sarah ; I have been striving to persuade her, for more than a week, to have a similar dress to mine, and she still persists in wearing that gloomy black crape.

DE C. (*L. c.*) Which gives her the air of a lily in mourning. It's a spice of coquetry.

SARAH. (*R. c.*) No, Monsieur de Cerney, it is not coquetry, but reason. If Alice kindly forgets that I am her adopted sister, it is proper that I should remember it ; Colonel Dumont is not sufficiently rich for us both to indulge in similar extravagances—You are his daughter, Alice. (*with a constrained smile.*) I owe too much already to Colonel Dumont ! but I trust to be enabled some day to repay all.

JULIEN. (*R.*) What a noble heart !

DE C. It's quite touching, that's a fact.

Enter DUMONT, c. from R., with a letter.

COLONEL. (*C.*) Alice ! Sarah ! my children !

OMNES. What has happened ?

COLONEL. (*C.*) This has happened. My brother, Fabrice, has written to say that he embarked on the 15th of April—it is now the 1st of July ; the voyage takes three months ; so that he will be here at farthest, in a day or two.

SARAH. (*L. c.*) Here ? it cannot be ! (*aside.*) I am delighted !

ALICE. (*R. c.*) I am in raptures !

JULIEN. (*R.*) I share your happiness, and will leave you to the enjoyment of this welcome news—I will hasten to apprise my father of this unexpected pleasure. *Exit, c. to L.*

DE C. And he returns, no doubt, with crammed pockets.

COLONEL. Bless you ! as yet I know no more than you. (*looks over letter.*) Yes ! “ I bring with me a packet worth half-a-million francs, which shall be shared with you, and your darling Alice, with whom I shall not be sorry to become acquainted.” Excellent brother ! half a million ! a young fellow not above forty. True ; he began the world when he was only eighteen. Ah, friend De Cerney, if you had done the same !

DE C. (L.) Well, if I haven't scraped up half a million francs I'll undertake to dispose of it, in the shortest possible space of time.

COLONEL. (c.) De Cerney, you're a scapegrace ! Sarah ! call Jerome, and tell him to get the best room ready for my brother, the nabob.

SARAH. (*aside.*) The nabob is not here yet. (*goes up and calls.*) Jerome !

Enter JEROME, c. from L.

JEROME. Ma'amselle ! (SARAH *whispers to him.*) What, Master Fabrice ! I ! oh, dear me ! is it possible ?

COLONEL. He may be here, perhaps to-morrow—perhaps to-day, Jerome, there's no telling.

JEROME. (*affected to tears.*) Master Fabrice ! Oh, sir ! pardon me—I'm a donkey to cry ! but when I remember that I tried on his first pair of pantaloons. Bless my heart, that's twenty years ago. (*wiping his eyes.*) What a donkey I am.

COLONEL. Go, my good fellow, and prepare the yellow room—lose no time—stay, I'll go with you. I will soon be back, my children. I will take your arm, De Cerney.

DE C. (*crosses to c.*) Your servant, ladies. (*aside.*) I was decidedly wrong not to have proposed for Cousin Alice.

Exeunt DE CERNEY, DUMONT, and JEROME, c. to L.

ALICE. (R.) Ah, my good Sarah—you can conceive my joy—my happiness ! My poor father, whose entire fortune was lost, will now be rich again.

SARAH. (L.) Assuredly, fortune has favoured you.

ALICE. (R.) Dear Sarah, in what a strange tone you speak ; what is the matter with you ?

SARAH. (L.) The matter ? nothing ! it's the pleasure, the joy I feel.

ALICE. Pleasure ! joy ! You are a strange girl, Sarah, and if I did not know the affection you bear us, there are moments when I should be doubtful of your friendship. At times, when you grasp my hand, you look at me with such a strange expression—ay, as you do now ! Sarah, have you any cause of anger towards me ?

SARAH. Silly child ! why should I have ?

ALICE. Well, then, so much the better—but do be cheerful.

SARAH. I wish to be so. But I have no recollection of your uncle Fabrice, I was so young when I left the Antilles.

ALICE. I do not know him, but I feel that I shall love him.

SARAH. Of course, an uncle worth half a million ! Lovers will soon rain about you.

ALICE. The shower has already commenced.

SARAH. Indeed!

ALICE. You know Monsieur Julien?

SARAH. Julien! You love Julien?

ALICE. Well I think I do, that is—I don't quite know—I think him very handsome, and exceedingly amiable, and feel for him the warmest esteem.

SARAH. But love—

ALICE. Love?—to confess the truth, I hardly know what that is. But I think that I love him, as one should love a husband.

SARAH. And Julien, he loves you?

ALICE. To madness!

SARAH. Has he confessed it to you?

ALICE. No—but I am sure of it.

SARAH. Indeed!

ALICE. Is speech necessary to prove love? Is not the ardent look, the emotion of the voice, the beating heart, the trembling hand, more eloquent and convincing than words?

SARAH. But you may be deceived. (*sits.*)

ALICE. Oh, no! Now there *again*—those dark looks,

SARAH. (*rises.*) I congratulate you, you are very fortunate.

ALICE. And so will you be, Sarah.

SARAH. I?

ALICE. (*sits, r.*) And quickly, too.

SARAH. Quickly!

ALICE. In confidence; I know that my father is anxiously seeking a husband for *you*.

SARAH. (*contemptuously.*) Indeed! and whom may this husband be?

ALICE. Monsieur Morville! a very nice, intelligent, steady young man, who is certain of getting on; he has already a salary of a thousand crowns a year.

SARAH. (*ironically.*) A thousand crowns! truly? but really this is *too* splendid a prospect for *me*. And what is the position of this steady young man, who has already a salary of a thousand crowns a year?

ALICE. He is second clerk to Monsieur Duval, you know, at the corner of—

SARAH. A second clerk?

ALICE. And a most respectable young man, Sarah.

SARAH. Then why do you not marry him—you?

ALICE. Oh, that's a different thing. (*rises.*)

SARAH. (*bitterly.*) True! *you* may marry whom you choose—you have a father, you are rich, and I am poor; and you

exult in your power to humiliate me—to make me feel that I live but by your bounty, and that I ought to feel too happy to accept the husband, whom you would disdain. (*crosses R.*)

ALICE. Sarah, this is madness. *I reproach you?* You are very wicked to say such things to me.

SARAH. (*aside.*) I had nearly betrayed myself.

ALICE. Leave me! (*crosses R.*)

SARAH. Nay, Alice!

ALICE. No, I am angry—very angry with you! and I desire—

Enter DUMONT, c. from R., who perceives ALICE and SARAH seated back to back.

COLONEL. What is the matter my children?

ALICE. (*R., pouting.*) Nothing, father!

COLONEL. Then, wherefore this ill-humour!

(*SARAH wipes her eyes.*)

ALICE. Sarah is cruel, haughty, and unjust!

COLONEL. Ah! it's Sarah—she weeps! (*severely.*) Alice, ask Sarah's pardon.

ALICE. Ask her pardon! (*rises.*)

COLONEL. (*sternly.*) I command you.

ALICE. Oh, father! you have never spoken to me thus.

COLONEL. (*aside to ALICE.*) Remember well what I am about to say. Sarah has sacred titles to our devotion—there exists between us a deep debt, which we must both honourably discharge. Her smallest wish must be gratified. Alice, your father entreats this favour from you.

ALICE. (*astonished.*) Entreat me, father! I obey with joy! What is this mystery? (*she crosses to L., and goes to SARAH.*) Sarah, will you forgive me?

SARAH. Forgive you? It is *I* that should—

COLONEL. (*c.*) No, Sarah! no, my child! receive her apology, and ask not too much from her penitence.

SARAH. (*L.*) Nay, I was wrong—do I not love her sincerely?

Enter JEROME, c. from L.

JEROME. Colonel, Monsieur Julien requests a private interview.

SARAH. } (*aside.*) Julien!
ALICE. } (*aside.*) Julien!

JEROME. I requested him, colonel, to walk into the library.

COLONEL. Very well, I'll come to him. *Exit JEROME, c. to R.* Do you know his business, Alice? Oh, you need not blush, child. Come, now, kiss and be friends, and, remember, no

more quarrelling, for that is the only thing now that can trouble my repose.

Exit, R. D.

SARAH. (L.—*aside*.) Julien—a private interview! Can it be that—In pity to her, may she be mistaken!

ALICE. (R.—*aside—pensive*.) What could my father's words mean?

SARAH. What are you musing on, Alice?

ALICE. Oh, nothing!

SARAH. Nay, never deny it; you are thinking of Monsieur Julien. But, tell me, dear Alice, are you *certain* that it is your hand for which he has come to propose?

ALICE. (*laughing*.) I wouldn't swear it, for perhaps it may be for yours.

SARAH. (*aside*.) Insolent! Yet—

Enter DUMONT, R.

COLONEL. My dear children, I may now announce to you, that the object of Julien's visit was to propose for the hand of my daughter Alice.

ALICE. (L.) No! And what did you reply, father?

COLONEL. Well, I replied it was a question which you alone could answer, and he is now waiting—

ALICE. Waiting! Poor young man! It's very rude to keep people waiting. Let us hasten, dear father.

COLONEL. There's plenty of time.

ALICE. Very true—I quite forgot my dignity.

Crosses, R.—she assumes a dignified air, and enters the room, R., followed by DUMONT, laughing.

SARAH. It is true, then—'tis she he loves! I was mad to believe, for one instant, that he could prefer the poor orphan to the heiress of Fabrice Dumont. Well, 'tis better thus. This love slaked my thirst for vengeance. His image thrust itself, like a good angel, betwixt this hated family and my vow of vengeance, and I had forgotten the past! The past!—you know not, Alice, you know not, that twenty years have flown since your father caused *my* father to be shot down, like a mad dog, at the Antilles. But I know, and I remember! It sufficed not that your father murdered mine, but you have filched from me him I love, the husband of my heart, and of my young dreams! Oh, we have a terrible account to settle, Alice! Yet, patience! This marriage is not yet accomplished—ere it take place, Fabrice and his wealth must return from the Brazils. This letter shook me. If Doctor Robert has lacked address and courage! Oh, no—Doctor Robert knows his work, and if I be not deceived, the wealth of Fabrice has long ere this changed masters. (*crosses to R.*)

Enter HENRI VAUDRIS, c. from L.

VAUDRIS. (L.) Can I speak with Colonel Dumont, madame?

SARAH. (R.) The colonel is, at this moment, particularly engaged.

VAUDRIS. Oh, very well, I will wait.

SARAH. May I ask—

VAUDRIS. I am rather anxious, I may say, very anxious to speak to the Colonel himself, for having just arrived from the Brazils—

SARAH. The Brazils?

VAUDRIS. From Rio Janeiro—and the news I bring, I fear, that is, I imagine, will be anything but welcome.

SARAH. (*aside.*) The contract is not yet signed. (*running to door, R.*) Colonel Dumont! Alice!

VAUDRIS. The young lady is impetuous! Hem! the organ of impulsiveness.

SARAH. (*calling.*) Colonel Dumont!

Enter DUMONT and ALICE, R. D.

COLONEL. What is the matter?

SARAH. This gentleman desires to speak to you without delay.

COLONEL. (*advancing, R. C.*) Your pleasure, sir?

VAUDRIS. (L. C.) I would speak to you alone.

COLONEL. These young ladies are my daughters, sir, and you may—

VAUDRIS. (L.) Your daughters? oh, that alters the case, materially, very materially. Colonel Dumont, I have had the honour of being for many years the friend, the bosom friend of Monsieur Fabrice, your brother—I am Monsieur Henri Vaudris.

COLONEL. I am delighted to see you, sir; Fabrice has frequently spoken of you in his letters. You are welcome, sir, I know already, you are here to announce his arrival amongst us.

VAUDRIS. No, that is not what I came to announce. Colonel Dumont, your brother Fabrice will never return to France.

COLONEL. What say you?

VAUDRIS. I grieve to say, he is no more.

COLONEL } Dead?

& ALICE. }
SARAH. (R., *aside.*) Ah!

VAUDRIS. (L.) It is now about three months since, after a short illness of eight days, that he died in the arms of one Robert—who killed him. (*looking at SARAH.*)

COLONEL. (R. C.) It cannot be—it is impossible!

VAUDRIS. The wealth he had realized, has also disappeared.

(SARAH expresses satisfaction.)

COLONEL. It is a dream ! But this man of whom you spoke, this Robert ?

VAUDRIS. He disappeared at the same time, and the iron chest, which contained his wealth, also was missing.

COLONEL. My brother, my poor brother !

VAUDRIS. (*taking DUMONT aside, L.*) Colonel Dumont, a man like you should support all that Heaven, in its wisdom, inflicts. But pardon one word, you said that these two young ladies were your daughters.

COLONEL. No, only one.

VAUDRIS. Ay, the youngest is she not ? the other is a stranger ?

COLONEL. Not altogether.

VAUDRIS. I am glad of it, for she is an enemy.

COLONEL. An enemy !

VAUDRIS. Ay, for when I announced this melancholy event her eyes shot forth a ray of satanic delight—she saw I observed it. Beware of her, I say, beware of her.

COLONEL. I have nothing to fear from my children, sir—beware of them ? But who shall console *me*? (*he goes near to ALICE, who is weeping.*) My child, in the name of Heaven, weep not thus. (*folds her in his arms.*) Come, to your chamber, and pray to Heaven to send us strength and courage.

Exeunt DUMONT and ALICE, L.

VAUDRIS. (*L., approaching SARAH.*) It appears that these kind people have a strong affection for Monsieur Fabrice. I should not have thought that a brother whom they have not seen for twenty years should be so grievously deplored.

SARAH. (*R.*) Oh, sir, this misfortune will not only break the heart of Colonel Dumont, but utterly destroy the future prospects of his daughter, who was on the point of marriage, which it may be that the ruin of Colonel Dumont will prevent.

VAUDRIS. (*L.*) His ruin ?

SARAH. (*R.*) Yes ; his affairs are greatly embarrassed. They have been alone sustained by the name and credit of his brother, but now that poor Monsieur Fabrice is no more—ah ! it is too terrible !

VAUDRIS. (*aside.*) Hem ! Weep not thus—your tears positively pain me. (*aside.*)

“Behold and see with great surprise,
A crocodile with watery eyes !”

Re-enter DUMONT, L.

(to DUMONT.) Courage, Colonel Dumont—courage, my friend ! courage. *He bows and exit at back, c. to L.*

COLONEL. (L.) Sarah, my child, I would speak with you. You have greater strength, more energy of character than Alice, and I depend upon you to prepare her gently for the melancholy existence upon which we now must all enter. You know that we are now poor.

Enter JULIEN, c. from R., who remains at back.

SARAH. Poor ! but Alice is to marry Julien.

COLONEL. No—that union is now impossible. I know the family of Duplessis. They will oppose this marriage.

JULIEN. (*advancing, L.*) But you will permit me, at least, to protest against the will of my family. I have heard all, and I will inform them—

COLONEL. You will inform them, Julien, that Colonel Dumont is poor, and that he would scorn to accept the sacrifice you would make in wedding his daughter without a portion.

JULIEN. Believe me—

COLONEL. Never, Julien, never.

JULIEN. I will seek my father, I will throw myself at his feet, he will be touched by my tears—and soon, I feel, that he himself will entreat your consent to our union. *Exit, c. to L.*

SARAH. (*aside.*) He loves her !

COLONEL. Poor young man ! (*crosses R.*) You will apprise Alice of this new cause of grief. You will find in *your* heart sweet and healing words, in *mine*, there are only anguish and tears. *Exit, R. D.*

SARAH. Weeping, weeping and wailing in this temple of joy. Thus should it be. Weep on ! Each tear that falls is as a precious balm to my outraged heart. I will wrench the hand of Alice from Julien !

Enter a NOTARY'S CLERK, c. from L.

CLERK. (R.) I beg pardon, Mademoiselle ; I wish to speak to Colonel Dumont.

SARAH. The colonel has desired that he should not be disturbed ; but I am his ward, and—

CLERK. (*bowing.*) I am principal clerk to Monsieur Firman, the Notary, and the object of my visit is this. Three months since, my master received a deposit, the sum of five hundred thousand francs, and a sealed packet. (*takes paper from his pocket.*) This sum was remitted to him with the condition, that this packet should only be opened in the event of Monsieur

Fabrice Dumont presenting himself here, at the expiration of ninety days. As this term has now expired, Monsieur Firman has broken the seal and perused the contents of the packet, which bestows a dower of five hundred thousand francs, payable to Alice Dumont, on the day of her marriage.

SARAH. (*aside.*) Gracious powers!

CLERK. Do you think now, Mademoiselle, that there would be any very great indiscretion in disturbing Colonel Dumont?

SARAH. (*aside.*) I must gain time. This news, sir, overwhelms me with joy; but, alas, you are doubtless ignorant that at this moment my guardian believes himself to be ruined.

CLERK. The greater reason then for—

SARAH. Oh, no—his health is so shattered, that this sudden news might kill him. Delay this intelligence for a day or two—and when he may, without danger, receive the joyful news, I will instantly apprise you.

CLERK. As you please, mademoiselle—I will wait your summons.

Bows and exits c. to L.

SARAH. Doctor Robert has executed but half my will; I have not recoiled from a crime to secure my vengeance, and shall I thus be foiled? Julien will now wed her! To conceal this news for any length of time will be impossible. What is to be done?

Enter DE CERNEY, laughing, c. from L.

DE C. Ha, ha, ha! It's charming! delicious! a farce! Only imagine, my dear Mademoiselle Sarah, my creditors have determined upon distraining upon all my goods and chattels. Ha, ha, ha! the law will then make me a free man—but the richest part of the jest is, that when the costs are paid, do you know how much each rascal will receive? about ninety francs individually.

SARAH. But what do you intend doing?

DE C. Commence getting into debt again, to be sure.

SARAH. That may not be so easy.

DE C. Not an atom of difficulty; I shall style myself Count de Cerney; with a title, some talent, and considerable ingenuity, there is good hope that I may become a millionaire.

SARAH. (*aside.*) It would be a master stroke.

(she remains buried in thought.)

DE C. Why so thoughtful?

SARAH. Why, Monsieur de Cerney, you must be mad! with your name and expectations you should—

DE C. Get a wife, I suppose!

SARAH. Undoubtedly!

DE C. You are just like the rest, “get married and settled.”

The very notion entertained by the villain who served me with the capias—*He* proposed to me the daughter of a tallow chandler, with a portion of sixty thousand francs, the respectable father binding himself to pay me five per cent. for the use of the principal, which would produce the enormous sum of one thousand francs—barely sufficient to pay for gloves and cigars.

SARAH. Monsieur de Cerney, could you for one moment be serious, I could tell you of a lady, young, rich, and beautiful, who—

DE C. (*rises.*) Eh? what? young, rich, and beautiful! and who may this paragon be?

SARAH. Alice Dumont, your cousin.

DE C. Alice! why, she is going to be married to Julien.

SARAH. The marriage is broken off.

DE C. That's possible—but she loves him.

SARAH. She loves him not—she never loved him. In consenting to marry him, she was simply obeying the wishes of her father. I know it.

DE C. But what broke off the marriage?

SARAH. The colonel has received intelligence that his brother Fabrice was dead, and that his fortune was lost.

DE C. And Julien?

SARAH. And Julien, upon the weak pretext of his father's resistance to the match—

DE C. Quietly gave up the lady. (*aside.*) I can quite understand that.

SARAH. Say, is not such conduct detestable?

DE C. It's very natural—that is, I mean that it is very detestable.

SARAH. If you will swear to be secret, I will entrust you with a most important fact.

DE C. I'll swear anything—with pleasure. What is it?

SARAH. Know, then, that our dear Alice loves her cousin, De Cerney.

DE C. Loves me? that's an excellent jest—I mean, it's a confounded bad jest—it would not have been so bad, though, if my charming cousin had yet hopes of receiving her fortune.

SARAH. And if the hopes have become realities—

DE C. I don't understand you—you said that the wealth of Fabrice had disappeared.

SARAH. Just so; but five hundred thousand francs had been first deposited with a notary here in Paris, payable to Alice on the day of her marriage.

DE C. Five hundred thousand francs! Upon my credit, the jest is becoming excellent, but I don't see exactly how—

SARAH. The family are still ignorant of this. My friendship for Alice will not suffer me to see her sacrificed, for be sure, upon ascertaining this news, Julien will return, and—

DE C. (*aside.*) Of course he will.

SARAH. Now, were I De Cerney, I would seem to be ignorant of this new position of Alice—I would seek her father, and say to him “Colonel Dumont, I confess I have been thoughtless—a gamester—a libertine—

DE C. Do you think it positively essential for me to tell him all that?

SARAH. But I would add—“I desire to reform—I am aware that the marriage of your daughter with Julien has been interrupted by peculiar circumstances—I love Alice, and I am here to ask her hand in marriage.”

DE C. That's all very well, but Colonel Dumont will laugh in my face.

SARAH. He will consent, when dear Alice entreats him in her soft tones.

DE C. And you believe she will?—But when the colonel learns that she is rich?

SARAH. The stronger reason for his satisfaction. Rich he cannot refuse her hand to the man who proposed for his daughter in his adversity.

DE C. All this is very ingeniously put—but poor Alice really never did me any harm.

SARAH. She will be happy—you will be happy, and I shall be doubly so, when I see my sister blessed with the husband of her choice. Alice is in her room—the colonel is in the library. Secure her father's consent, and I will answer for the daughter. (*aside.*) She loves her father so deeply, she will willingly sacrifice herself for him.

DE C. (*after hesitating.*) Well, I don't see that I run any very violent risk. I will risk myself. (*he makes a step towards the door L., and knocks.*)

COLONEL. (*outside.*) Come in!

DE C. Faint heart—hem! here goes; the first plunge is everything.

Exit, L. D.

SARAH. Heart, be firm! Through good and through ill—through darkness and despair—though misery hangs upon my breath and death attends my footsteps—I will on towards my revenge. Yes, I swear it!—father thou shalt be avenged.

(Six months elapse between the Acts.)

A C T I I.

SCENE I.—A Handsome Chamber. Window at back—practicable doors, R. and L.

ALICE discovered.

ALICE. Everything is in order, and Sarah may come as soon as she pleases. How delightful again to see her, after six months separation! for to her I am indebted for my marriage with dear George. She is a darling, good sister! I have committed a small fib to bring her here—I have told her that my husband is ill tempered and exacting—Poor George! and he so good and so loving—whose affection has never waned a single hour for these six months—for it is six months this day that we were married! How time flies! I must not forget that I intend him a surprise—what can I give him? (*she remains in thought.*)

Enter DE CERNEY, L.—approaches and kisses her.

(surprised.) Ah!

DE C. Good morning, my dear little wife.

ALICE. (R.) It's very wrong, sir, to surprise people in such a way.

DE C. (L.) Shall I repeat the offence?

ALICE. Why—yes!

DE C. (*embraces her.*) What were you thinking of?

ALICE. That's my secret.

DE C. (*sitting.*) Very well, madame. (*aside.*) Now if I could cunningly discover which of the two she would prefer!

ALICE. And you, sir, what are you thinking of?

DE C. I have a great mind to return you the same answer.

ALICE. Oh, very well, then—I shall not tell you of the little surprise I had prepared for you.

DE C. Oh, that was what you were thinking of, eh?

ALICE. Yes, sir.

DE C. That was precisely my case.

ALICE. No!

DE C. Yes, I was oscillating between the diamond bracelet which pleased you so much, and the Indian shawl, which did not displease you at all. Which would you prefer, dear Alice?

ALICE. Whichever you like best, dear George.

DE C. Well, then, you shall have the Indian shawl.

ALICE. Oh, that will be delightful ! Didn't you think Madame Beaulien looked charmingly in that diamond bracelet she wore at the Préfets ball, dear ?

DE C. Well, then, you shall have the bracelet, and the Indian shawl.

ALICE. Oh, you are a kind, indulgent darling George.

(throws herself into his arms.)

Enter SARAH at door, L. 2 E.

SARAH. (L., *at door.*) What can this mean ?—the conclusion of a quarrel, doubtless. (*aloud.*) May I come in ?

ALICE. Sarah !

DE C. (L.) You here, Sarah ? by what lucky accident—

SARAH. My arrival then was unexpected ?

ALICE. (R., *to DE CERNEY.*) This was another surprise that I prepared for you.

DE C. There's no disputing the fact, that I'm the happiest man alive.

SARAH. Really, so I perceive ! And you, sister Alice ?

ALICE. Oh, I am happy as the day is long. Love came on the wings of friendship, and never ceasing kindness has done the rest.

SARAH. What did your letter mean, then ?

ALICE. (*aside.*) I will explain all that. But, my dear father ?

SARAH (c.) Has passed his days calmly and tranquilly in his small villa at Fecamp, and had not a slight attack of gout prevented him, he would have accompanied me—I regret that he is not present to witness your happiness.

DE C. (*aside to SARAH.*) And I shall never forget that I owe mine to you.

SARAH. (*aside.*) Am I awake ? Well, we have a great deal to say, Alice, after six months' separation—We will begin when the gentleman has gone out.

DE C. You surely are not going to send me away ?

SARAH. Certainly not ; but I presume you do not pass the entire day here ?

DE C. Indeed I do.

SARAH. And your club ?

ALICE. Oh, George has given it up.

DE C. The club was all very well when I was a wild bachelor, but now I am a steady married man. Bless you, I've given up billiards, and cashiered cigars ; in fact, I've not a single fault, I'm a perfect model husband.

SARAH. It's marvellous, and I'm enchanted ! I have some trifling orders to give—will you allow me ? (*rings bell.*)

DE C. I will leave you for the present.

ALICE. Where are you going, George ?

DE C. To the jeweller's, darling ! I shall soon return.

Embraces ALICE, shakes hands with SARAH, and exits, l. door.

Enter JEROME, r. 1 e.

SARAH. (r. c.) How have you been, Jerome ?

JEROME. (r.) Pretty well, mademoiselle, I thank you.

SARAH. Jerome, you remember the strange gentleman, who paid us a visit six months ago ?

JEROME. Oh, yes, ma'amselle, one don't easily forget such sort of visitors. It was he who came to tell us of the death of—

SARAH. (c.) Just so. Should he present himself here, I am never at home to him.

JEROME. I'll take care, ma'amselle, depend upon it. *Exit, r.*

ALICE. (l.) Wherefore this caution, Sarah ?

SARAH. (r.) My dear girl, it's quite a romance. Only imagine, this same Monsieur Henri Vaudris has not left me an instant ; my own shadow has not been more faithful in following me. At first I was amused, but this absurd perseverance now annoys me, and I am determined to put an end to it.

ALICE. But, now that you are here, you will be rid of him.

SARAH. Oh, you don't know him. I am positive that, before the day passes, he—

JEROME. (*without, r.*) Ma'amselle Sarah cannot be seen, sir.

VAUDRIS. (*without, r.*) Say, my good fellow, that Monsieur Henri Vaudris requests—

JEROME. (*without.*) It's quite impossible, sir.

(*noise of discussion recedes by degrees.*)

SARAH. (*laughing.*) Did I not say so ?

ALICE. He must be an original. But here are we gossiping, and you must require rest. We shall meet again in the evening, for, unfortunately, being ignorant of the day when you might arrive, we had accepted an invitation to dine with Madame D'Arville.

SARAH. What, our old schoolfellow ? Take care, Alice, she is very lovely, and may prove dangerous.

ALICE. Oh, I'm not jealous ; besides, my husband adores me.

SARAH. (r.) By the bye, you said that you would explain—

ALICE. (l.—*laughing.*) The reason of my writing to you that I was unhappy ? Why it was the only means of getting you to visit us, my kind, good Sarah ! (*crosses to r.*) I will see you again directly.

Exit, quickly, r.

SARAH. So, it was a trick! and this reckless gamester, who was to have reduced her to wretchedness and misery, I find a loving, attentive, economical husband, and *I* am the cause and the instrument of this perfect happiness! But, patience!—to be no longer a demon, Monsieur de Cerney is not to become an angel. All is not yet lost! for, after six month's absence, Julien has returned.

Enter MARIE, L.

MARIE. The gentleman you sent for is waiting in the library.

SARAH. Show him in, Marie,

Exit MARIE, L.

Enter JULIEN, L.

'Tis he!

JULIEN. Can it be that you, mademoiselle, requested my presence?

SARAH. (R.) Yes; hearing that you had returned to France, I wished to see and speak with you.

JULIEN. (L.) The kind thought was, then, yours alone?

SARAH. It was.

JULIEN. Pardon, I had hoped—

SARAH. What?

JULIEN. Nothing—I was mad! I should have remembered that Madame de Cerney was happy; and that where all is smiles, we think not of those who suffer.

SARAH. You are, indeed, pale and changed.

JULIAN. For six months I have passed sleepless nights, and days of weariness.

SARAH. But, like all men, you have at last listened to reason, and ceased to think of one who has ceased to think of you.

JULIEN. (*abstractly.*) True!

SARAH. Ah! I am happy, very happy, that the past is obliterated. It is ever thus. It is the eternal history of life—hoping, despairing—and again hoping on, and for ever!

JULIEN. (*sadly.*) Hoping what?

SARAH. A heart worthy of your own—a heart that understands you. There are other women than Alice—Julien; ay, many more loving. With such a one, the memory of past sorrows will quickly vanish; the dark clouds of unrequited passion and unappreciated love will pass away, leaving your future bright and cheerful.

JULIEN. Alas! where are such?

SARAH. I know one, Julien; one who loves you—not with a love pale and feeble—not with a love such as Alice thought she

felt for you—but one who loves you deeply, strongly, passionately! And this woman—

JULIEN. This woman?

SARAH. (*pause.*) Do you not know her?

JULIEN. No—nor would I know her.

SARAH. Wherefore?

JULIEN. Wherefore? Because I have lied to you! Because I still love Alice—she will ever be my only love on earth! 'Tis a crime I know, but in vain have I sought oblivion—vain has been the effort to banish her sweet image from my soul. No, it is ever with me, and my return to Paris was impelled by the single desire, the one hope, to see her—to see her once again, if but for an hour—a minute! And when your servant announced to me that you wished to see me, an insane hope that Madame de Cerney— But, in recognising my error, I feel my heart frozen! I feel—oh, 'tis too powerful for my reason.

SARAH. 'Tis well. I wished to be certain of your sentiments for Madame de Cerney, and, as you still love her, oh, leave here—delay not for a week, wait not for to-morrow, but this very day, this night! You will—will you not?

JULIEN. I will depart.

SARAH. (*taking his hand.*) 'Tis well, my dear friend—it is well! and, as a reward for this truly noble conduct, I will use all my efforts that, before your departure, you shall bid Alice a last farewell.

JULIEN. Thanks, thanks for the generous thought—I will forget it but with life! Again, a thousand thanks! *Exit, L.*

SARAH. He loves her still! and this insane passion may yet work my purpose.

Enter ALICE, R.—excited.

ALICE. I was at my window, just now, when a young man passed the shrubbery; he raised his eyes towards me, stopped a moment—and, do you know, I thought it was Monsieur Julien.

SARAH. Well, what does it signify, since you no longer love him?

ALICE. Of course not; yet on seeing him so unexpectedly and so suddenly, I felt my heart bound—and if you knew how pale he was—

SARAH. You don't regret that?—you who have so affectionate, so generous a husband! To be sure it is no very great merit in possessing these qualities, with a beautiful little angel, who brought him a fortune of five hundred thousand francs.

ALICE. Oh, my fortune could have no effect on his determination. You know very well that when he proposed, he believed me to be penniless.

SARAH. Very true, he *was* quite ignorant of your sudden wealth ! (*smiling.*)

ALICE. Of course he was ; but why that smile of incredulity ?

SARAH. Oh, nothing !

ALICE. Besides, how *could* he have known ?

SARAH. True—no one could know of the fortune, except, of course, the notary— Ah ! now I think, this notary was also the notary of your husband, to whom he was indebted, so it was said, in a very considerable sum of money.

ALICE. Indeed !

SARAH. Now pray don't annoy yourself, for I do not doubt that under any circumstances, his conduct would have been the same.

ALICE. Who can tell ?

SARAH. True—who can tell ? for Julien proved that money was a very material ingredient in matrimony.

ALICE. Oh, he was not to blame—he was forced to obey his family.

SARAH. (*aside.*) She defends him ! You were not deceived ; it *was* Julien you saw. On learning my arrival, he hastened hither in a sort of reckless despair. He entreated, with tears, for a moment's interview ere he leaves France. He asks no more.

ALICE. Oh, speak not thus, Sarah—and I am expected at Madame Darville's.

SARAH. Cannot this dinner be dispensed with ?

ALICE. But my husband ?

SARAH. He can go alone—you can say that you are not well.

ALICE. But should he ever learn—

SARAH. Impossible ! you can see Julien here, in my presence ; I will not quit you.

ALICE. You promise me ?

SARAH. (*sits r. of table.*) I will write to him to be here at seven.

ALICE. I hear my husband !—no, Sarah, I will not see him—I will not see him. *Exit, r.*

Enter DE CERNEY, l. door.

SARAH. (*calling.*) Marie !

Enter MARIE, r.

Take this note instantly to its address.

Exit MARIE, l. d.

DE C. For whom is that letter ?

SARAH. You are mighty curious. If I *was* your wife you would have the right to be jealous—but I've not that honour.

You are quite a model husband, a species of gentle shepherd, grafted on Don Giovanni. Ha, ha! now if you are very good, I will present you, on your birthday, with a golden crook and a pet lamb.

DE C. Laugh your fill. Would you have me sigh and groan? If the world thinks proper to look coldly upon me, I conjure up a sun of my own. My motto is "Laugh! no matter on which side of the mouth." Why the immortal Jove himself laughed at lover's perjuries. I detest a whale, because it has a tendency to blubber. Hang me, if I wouldn't get soaked through any day rather than take shelter under a weeping willow. I laugh at the laughers, and content myself with being happy.

SARAH. If the death of Fabrice had been known a month later, and Alice's fortune had arrived a month sooner, Julien would have been the happy husband that you are now. By the bye, that poor fellow, Julien, has returned, and I am told, is as much in love with Alice as ever.

DE C. Ah!

SARAH. I'm sure he has no great reason to admire *you* very ardently. But I perceive you are not jealous, you are the pearl of husbands.

DE C. Of what should I be jealous? Of the caprice of a young girl? of the dream of a young man? Besides, you told me yourself that Alice never loved Monsieur Julien.

SARAH. Never is not exactly the word. She did love him a little; before she loved you—a great deal. Therefore be upon your guard.

DE C. Pshaw! The vague aspirations of a heart of seventeen! Julien was the *romance* of her girlhood, I—I am the *history* of her life—I prefer the latter. You see, Sarah, that we experienced old fellows, who have passed years in duping others, are not so easily duped. The system's as old as the world.

SARAH. None so easily robbed as thieves. It is ever thus—the same means, the same results. The same dice make the gamesters, the same gold the miser, the same dishes the glutton. What has been, will be again.

DE C. (*laughing.*) Do you know what conclusion I draw from your philosophy, Sarah? If I were a bachelor, I would take deuced good care that I wouldn't marry *you*.

SARAH. We have talked enough nonsense. Here comes Saint Alice, so let us try to be serious.

Enter ALICE, R.

DE C. Why, my dear girl, not yet ready?

ALICE. My dear George, I can't account for it, but I feel

unwell, and I've come to ask you to make my excuses to Madame Darville.

DE C. (*crosses to ALICE.*) How annoying! Well, I'll remain at home with you.

ALICE. (R.) No, no, that would appear so very rude; you will go and dine without me, will you not?

DE C. (*aside, looks at SARAH, who smiles maliciously.*) It's very odd?

SARAH. (*aside to DE CERNEY.*) The coincidence is droll, isn't it? You are not going to become jealous?

DE C. I? I shall do as you wish, Alice, and shall take care to return early.

SARAH. You need not hurry yourself, for I shall be with Alice.

DE C. I hardly like to leave you—and you, dear Alice, not well! but depend upon it, I will not stay late. (*kisses her hand.*) I am absurd!

Exit, L.

SARAH. (*aside.*) He will return?

ALICE. How much has this falsehood cost me!

SARAH. A very innocent fib, at most.

ALICE. And yet my heart beats as though it were guilty of a crime. I've a great mind to call him back!

SARAH. How can you be so silly? You would only raise suspicions which he would never think of.

ALICE. No matter, I'm sure I'm right. (*a carriage heard to depart, she goes to window.*) He is gone, but I will not see Julien.

SARAH. Oh, how ridiculous!

ALICE. I feel that I was wrong to give way to my first impulse.

Enter MARIE, L.

MARIE. (*to SARAH.*) Monsieur Julien, madame.

ALICE. (R.) Already!

SARAH. (C.) Show him in.

Exit MARIE, L.

ALICE. No, Sarah, I will not see him. You will explain to him—you will tell him—

JULIEN appears at L., ALICE curtseys, and exits R.

JULIEN. What is this?

SARAH. Monsieur Julien, I much regret this; but, after having promised to see you, Alice has suddenly retracted.

JULIEN. I had hoped that Madame de Cerney would have permitted me to take leave of her. I believed that she would not have doubted the man whom she had once thought worthy to become her husband.

SARAH. (*in a suppressed voice, but in a manner to be heard.*)

Nay, you deceive yourself, Monsieur Julien ! If Madame de Cerney has greater cause to distrust her *own* feelings than yours—

A movement of ALICE, who has reappeared at door.

JULIEN. Can it be ?

SARAH. If she fears that your presence might re-open a wound, scarcely yet healed—if indeed—

ALICE. (*advancing proudly.*) You are deceived, sister ; you insult both that gentleman's honour and mine. Madame de Cerney may appear without *fear* before Monsieur Duplessis, and to prove that I doubt neither him nor myself, I beg you will leave us alone.

SARAH. But—

ALICE. I desire it, and when Monsieur Julien leaves this house he will bear with him the esteem which I claim, and to which I possess the right. Leave us !

SARAH. (*aside.*) Poor fool ! you have not understood my motive, Alice ; but the best proof of my full confidence in you will be by my absence. (*aside.*) She is lost. *Exit L.*

ALICE. And now, sir, speak—I will listen.

JULIEN. Thanks, madame ; you have judged me truly. I came not here to reproach you. I know that you love your husband, and I am too content that you at least will be happy, to desire to trouble your repose ; I will not say that my love for you is extinguished—but why should this sentiment bereave me of your esteem and friendship ? This love I swear to vanquish, and when again I appear in your presence it shall be as a friend—yes, madame, your friend—your brother—this is what I desire to become, and the desire shall be accomplished.

ALICE. It is well, Julien ; I accept with joy your friendship ; but the world would be sceptical, and to my husband is due my reputation equally with my honour. It suffices not to be honest, we must appear so—and to close the lips of censure, you must marry.

JULIEN. I ?

ALICE. Believe me, it will be best. Seek one you can esteem—you will find many. Love will soon follow, and then, Julien, our friendship will be beyond suspicion—I will be the first to offer my hand ! you are angry with this counsel ?

JULIEN. No, your words are of kindness and wisdom ; but I am yet unequal to so lofty a resolution—I will go, and I promise you to at least weigh your counsel, and if possible, to follow it.

ALICE. (*offering her hand.*) Go, then, my friend—my brother.

JULIEN. Believe me that the dearest wish—

DE CERNEY. (*outside, l.*) I will bolt the doors myself, Jerome.

ALICE. Gracious Heavens! my husband! Oh, fly, sir, fly!

JULIEN. Fly! wherefore? I will at once frankly avow—

ALICE. No, no; I uttered a falsehood to procure his absence, and if you are seen here, at this hour, he will believe me guilty—fly!

JULIEN. Fly?—how?

The window at back opens, and VAUDRIS appears.

VAUDRIS. When the door is barred I enter at the window!

ALICE. Monsieur Vaudris!

VAUDRIS. Here is a rope ladder at your service, sir.

JULIEN. A million thanks! my eternal gratitude—

VAUDRIS. Fewer words and greater speed.

DE C. (*outside.*) If I am deceived, why prevent me?

SARAH. (*without.*) But, De Cerney—

(JULIEN disappears by the balcony—VAUDRIS detaches ladder and throws it in the distance.

DE C. (*without.*) I will go in, I say.

ALICE. I shall die!

VAUDRIS. There is really no occasion for any alarm—be cool, be cool, my dear lady.

(he examines the room with his glass, his back turned to the entrance.

Enter DE CERNEY and SARAH, l. d.

SARAH. Will you listen? this is madness!

DE C. Madness! see, Sarah!

(points to VAUDRIS, whose back is still turned—he rushes towards him, and seizes his arm.

VAUDRIS. (coolly.) Good day, sir.

SARAH. (*aside.*) Monsieur Vaudris!

DE C. You, sir!

VAUDRIS. I believe so, sir.

DE C. But there was some one here!

VAUDRIS. Yes—Madame de Cerney.

DE C. No—a man.

VAUDRIS. Yes—myself.

DE C. Another?

VAUDRIS. Yes!

DE C. Ah!

VAUDRIS. (c.) Yourself!

DE C. (l. c.) But what do you here?

VAUDRIS. I came to see Mademoiselle Sarah!

DE C. 'Tis impossible—the agitation of Alice—

SARAH. (*crosses to ALICE.*) Has he escaped?

ALICE. (R.) Yes, by the window.

Re-enter DE CERNEY, R.

DE C. Not a soul!

SARAH. How can you be so silly, you jealous man? there, go and ask pardon of your poor little wife—she is nearly agitated to death at your violence, and it is no wonder, after such a shameful scandal.

ALICE. I can hardly support myself.

DE C. (*aside.*) Heaven be praised, I was deceived.

Exeunt DE CERNEY and ALICE, R. D.—VAUDRIS seated, L.

SARAH. (*coming down, L.*) Which way did you enter, sir?

VAUDRIS. (*rising.*) By the window! You closed the door against me, and as I wished to see you, I sent my servant to procure a rope ladder. While waiting, I saw Monsieur Julien, the old friend of Mademoiselle Alice, admitted "Oh," said I, "Monsieur Julien paying a visit to Madame de Cerney—that's odd," said I, and then I saw Monsieur de Cerney himself, sliding stealthily beneath the wall. "Well," said I to myself, that's very odd; the chamber of Miss Sarah, perhaps, is on the first floor, so as the garden wall is not high, I'll scale it." I ascended with the aid of my ladder, and I assisted Monsieur Julien to escape. It's uncommon odd, isn't it?

SARAH. But wherefore do you thus madly pursue me?

VAUDRIS. I'll tell you; I am a physiognomist, phrenologist, and psychologist. Now, your physiognomy is peculiar, and your bumps are extraordinary—I may say, superb. "Well," I said "if that girl's soul is festered with all the bad passions and perfidious feelings which those bumps announce, her fate must be a very strange one, so I vowed to follow you everywhere; in fact, to never leave you, for the purpose of ascertaining whether your soul is in direct connexion with the scull. These are the reasons, my dear young lady."

SARAH. You cannot suppose I can tamely submit to such unmanly persecution. You will instantly leave this house, sir, and save my servants the necessity of thrusting you from its doors.

VAUDRIS. Excellent! delicious! I have seen you, and will now respectfully take my leave. (*crosses L.*) Good day! I assure you that your bumps are quite wonderful—destructiveness enormous. (*bowing.*) Superb bumps, magnificent cranial developments! I have the honour—

Exit, bowing, L. D.

SARAH. The man is insane—were he not so, his words would terrify me. Fate is still adverse, but I will wait. (*at this moment the report of a gun is heard.*) What is that?

Enter DE CERNEY, R.

DE C. Sarah, did you hear?

SARAH. Distinctly—the report of a gun in the garden.
(aside.) If it should be—

DE C. (*opening the window.*) Jerome! Jerome!

Enter ALICE, pale and trembling, R.

ALICE. Gracious Heaven! what can this be?

Enter JEROME with gun, L.

DE C. Who fired that gun?

JEROME. Me, sir; upon a man—a thief no doubt, who had scaled the garden wall.

DE C. And you have killed him?

JEROME. I missed him, sir.

ALICE. (*aside.*) I breathe again.

DE C. (*to JEROME.*) 'Twas then, true. You can go, Jerome.

JEROME. It was not my fault, sir, that I—

DE C. Very well—very well!

JEROME. I took good aim, too.

DE C. Leave the room.

JEROME. The fact is, sir, the gun isn't worth shot and powder.

Exit L.

DE C. (*to ALICE.*) Madame, will you tell me the name of the man whom Jerome fired at?

ALICE. (*with dignity.*) Julien Duplessis.

DE C. You confess?

ALICE. My only error was concealing it from you. Yes, during your absence, Monsieur Julien has been here, but I swear his visit was as a friend—a brother.

DE C. Indeed! friends and brothers, madame, do not usually effect their egress through windows.

ALICE. Like myself, he feared unjust suspicions—the violence of a sudden impulse—but I attest before—

DE C. Enough, madame, do not attempt longer to persist in this absurd tale. Be frank to the end. Is not the truth sufficiently clear? You feign sudden indisposition that you may remain alone—I return unexpectedly, and a man flies my presence like a thief—a coward.

ALICE. (*supplicating.*) In the name of Heaven—

DE C. Madame, henceforth we are strangers.

ALICE. (*sinking into a chair.*) Heavenly powers! he believes me guilty.

(SARAH, with a look of gratified hatred, contemplates them both—tableau, and

A C T I I I.

SCENE I.—A Handsome Drawing Room. A window to open on the lawn, c. Doors, R. and L.—a bureau, R., table with embroidery frame, a fireplace with chimney glass.

ALICE discovered seated—after a pause, she lets fall the embroidery, and remains thoughtful.

Enter JEROME, L.. with letter on salver.

JEROME. A letter, madame.

ALICE. (rises.) From my dear father! *Exit JEROME, L.* (she opens the letter and reads) "My dear child, your conduct towards Julien was at best imprudent. As regards your suspicions of Sarah, I think her incapable of giving you perfidious advice—but even admitting that she deserves blame, we owe her all indulgence. Twenty years have passed since I commanded in the Antilles, a handful of men. Surrounded by the enemy, discipline alone could save us. Captain Blangi, the father of Sarah, quarrelled with, and grossly insulted his superior officer—summoned before a Court Martial, presided over by your father, Blangi was condemned to die, and was shot in four-and-twenty hours. Your heart, my dear child, will now prompt you to all kindness, to all consideration, to all love, for Sarah." Father, I swear to continue the work you have commenced. Poor Sarah! (she weeps.)

Enter SARAH, L., pauses, observing ALICE for a moment, approaches her.

SARAH. What's the matter?

ALICE. (quickly concealing the letter.) Sarah!

SARAH. Your eyes are red with weeping, Alice!

ALICE. (gathering up the embroidery.) No, Sarah, you are deceived.

SARAH. Why seek to conceal your tears from me?

ALICE. Let us leave this. How beautiful you look.

SARAH. Do you think so?

ALICE. Indeed I do—and I have remarked for some time that your former negligence of your appearance, has changed to the utmost care and elegance. Have you determined on conquest?

SARAH. Why, that Alice, would be difficult here, where

there is no one to conquer. I don't speak of Monsieur de Cerney, for a married man counts for nothing. By the bye, does he still pout and sulk?

ALICE. He still believes me guilty. The only person who might convince him, Monsieur Julien, is away, and no one knows what has become of him.

SARAH. You can at least console yourself with the thought, that your misfortune might have been still greater.

ALICE. How?

SARAH. Why, at least he loves no other woman.

ALICE. (*weeping.*) Oh, forbear, Sarah, forbear!

SARAH. What! are you then jealous? can you believe that your husband—

ALICE. Yes, Sarah, yes—for some days past, George has been thoughtful, restless, excited—

SARAH. Only for some days past? you have no suspicion then?

ALICE. No! (*noise outside.*)

DE CERNEY. (*without.*) Very well, Jerome.

ALICE. (R.) 'Tis he! He must not see that I have been weeping. *Exit, R.*

SARAH. Now—now you can feel what *I* have suffered. De Cerney comes—now for the trial. (*she sits at the table, and writes.*)

Enter DE CERNEY at L. D.

DE C. (*without seeing SARAH.*) What a life is this! What a life is this! (*perceiving her.*) Ah, you here, Sarah! (*she feigns not to hear him, and writes.*) Sarah!

SARAH. Monsieur de Cerney!

(*she rapidly conceals the letter behind her, and feigns great confusion.*)

DE C. What is that?

SARAH. (*in great confusion.*) Nothing—nothing!

DE C. Wherefore, then, this hurry to, to conceal that letter?

SARAH. Sir?

DE C. It, then, contains something of which I should remain ignorant?

SARAH. May I not have my secrets?

DE C. Sarah, you are the friend of my wife; something tells me that you are her accomplice. Dare you swear that letter is not for Julien?

SARAH. Yes, I swear that letter is *not* for Julien.

DE C. Then for whom?

SARAH. This is tyranny!

DE C. A frightful suspicion has seized on my heart. Sarah, if you knew how agonising is this doubt, you would pity me.

SARAH. If you are determined, know, then, that this letter is for my aunt, to whom I have announced my return.

DE C. And you intend to leave us? wherefore?

SARAH. Wherefore? suppose my presence here is an obstacle to Alice's happiness!

DE C. I do not understand you.

SARAH. If Alice attributes your indifference to her to your love for another.

DE C. Another? what other?

SARAH. (*hesitating.*) To myself!

DE C. My wife jealous—jealous of you, Sarah?

SARAH. Oh, do not think I am blind to my own feeble merit—but a neglected wife may assume that her husband has sought forgetfulness or vengeance in the company of another woman, howsoever charmless she may be.

DE C. You misunderstand me, Sarah, for none can be more adapted to inspire love in man, or jealousy in woman.

SARAH. Oh, be careful, Monsieur de Cerney, you are becoming gallant, and if Alice were here—

DE C. In forgetting her duty, she has abdicated her rights.

SARAH. (*ironically.*) You forget that you are married, sir, and that you could only offer a love poor and secret. Ah! in my land, love is proud, mad, fearless, radiant with passion. Love walks in the glare of the noon-day sun, and exhibits to the world the being it has enshrined and worshipped. You see, Alice has little cause to be jealous of Sarah Blangi.

DE C. Why, then, need you leave?

SARAH. Oh! do not question me.

DE C. All this is strange and inexplicable. You write to your aunt, you say, to announce your return. At the sight of me you become pale and trembling. You then pretend that your departure is caused by an imaginary jealousy. Impossible! I repeat, Sarah, that letter is for Julien, and if I possess not the right to demand it of *you*, I will force Madame de Cerney to—(*crosses R.*)

SARAH. Alice! oh, do not longer accuse *her*; but as it is the sole means to convince you—this letter—take it—but forget not that you constrained me to unveil the secret.

Exit R.

DE C. (*reads.*) "My dear aunt,—I return to you—I must fly this spot—I love Monsieur de Cerney—I have ever loved him, and my affection for Alice renders it imperative that I separate myself from her for ever." Can it be? This disdainful girl, whose heart has never before beaten for man, loves

me? (SARAH appears a moment at the door, R., and observes him.) I bless the vengeance and the happiness she brings. Yes, Sarah, if it be not true happiness, it will be at least oblivion! She wishes to leave this house. Be it so—we will depart together; not to-morrow, but this instant. Alice! Alice! you shall feel the misery you have inflicted upon me.

Exit L.

Enter SARAH, R.

SARAH. Ah! I know too well that you would make me the tool of your vengeance; you think, vain fool! that I love you. Ha, ha, ha! Alice!

Enter ALICE, R. D.

ALICE. Sarah! you turn from me—you do not reply to me—Sarah!

SARAH. Oh, do not question me—ask nothing.

ALICE. You will not answer me! Am I stricken with some new and frightful misfortune? Sarah, in the name of our friendship, I conjure you.

SARAH. No, Alice, I cannot.

ALICE. Do you wish to destroy me? In the name of all that is sacred—

SARAH. You desire to know—be it so—you shall know all. You have rightly guessed—not only does your husband not love you, but he loves another.

ALICE. Great heaven! (placing her hand upon her heart.)

SARAH. And that other—that is the most harrowing—that other—

ALICE. Is—

SARAH. Sarah Blangi!

ALICE. You? oh, no, no! it is a black falsehood—I—oh—
(sinks into a chair.)

SARAH. Alice!

ALICE. (*weeping.*) Go on—let me know the worst. I have courage to hear—to hear all.

SARAH. But calm yourself, Alice! I leave this house to-night.

ALICE. (*rising.*) Leave here! but he will not love you the less—he will believe that your flight is caused by your fear of him. You must remain.

SARAH. Remain here, Alice! no, it is impossible!

ALICE. But wherefore?

SARAH. Ah! you know not how deeply he loves me—you know not all he has said to me—ah!

ALICE. You love him?

SARAH. No! but can I answer for the future? Think, Alice, that I have always been a poor deserted girl, contemned by all,

and eating the bread of dependence. Think, Alice, of our childhood, when all care, affection, praises, flattery were yours alone. Think, Alice, that for the first time in my life—

ALICE. No more, Sarah, no more!

SARAH. (*with assumed kindness.*) But if I recount these things to you, dear Alice, you will feel that it is to convince you of the necessity of my leaving this house.

ALICE. This frankness tears my heartstrings. Yes ; go—go, or I feel that I shall curse you ! No, no ; regard me not—I am mad. But leave me alone—leave me to pray to Heaven ! that will give me courage to suffer, and will aid and counsel me in my desolation. Leave me, dear sister, leave me.

SARAH. In an hour, dear Alice, I will come to bid you farewell.

Exit L.

ALICE. (*sits at table.*) Oh, what have I done to suffer thus ? But two months past, and this dwelling was the home of joy, love, and happiness, and in one little day, all has vanished —peace, esteem, love ! doubted by my husband—despised—hated ! Yet there was a sister left for consolation—she leaves me, and I am alone ! alone ! nothing remaining—but to die. (*pause.*) Yes, die ! the grave is my only refuge. (*she takes the letter from her bosom, and reads.*) “ I have contracted a debt to her, of which we must each pay our part ; when you hear how it was contracted, you will understand the duties, the self-denial, the sacrifices which that debt imposes.” Yes, father, I understand. My husband is for ever lost to me—Sarah loves him, though she hesitates to confess it—I am the single obstacle to their happiness ; the obstacle shall vanish. In an hour I shall cease to live. (*she makes a step towards her room.*) But I must think of the peace of those who remain. (*she approaches the table, R., and opens the letter.*) Ah, this page remains. (*tears the letter in halves.*) On one side the debt, on the other the release. (*she writes on the blank page.*) “ Accuse no one of my death—I die voluntarily, and crave forgiveness of all whom I have offended.” (*she rises and leaves the writing on the table.*) My husband is away—Sarah is preparing for her departure —when they discover this writing I shall be no longer of this world. (*kneels.*) It must be ! Sarah will be happy—she will forget me—and George will be freed from a wife he hates.

(advances towards door, R.)

JULIEN appears, L. 3 E.

JULIEN. (*speaking off.*) Tell Monsieur de Cerney that I must speak with him immediately.

ALICE. That voice ! Julien ! Ah, sir, you are too late—too late !

JULIEN. Pardon me, madame, I was in London, ignorant of your sorrows, when yesterday, Monsieur Vaudris visited me: " You must," said he " restore to Madame de Cerney her peace and honour." He then related to me all that had passed since my departure. Ah, I should have followed my first impulse, I should have remained and told De Cerney—

Enter DE CERNEY at this moment, L.

DE C. (L.) Well, sir, and what would you have told him?

ALICE. (R.) My husband!

JULIEN. I would have told you, sir, that by obstinate intercession, and from a feeling of pity, Madame de Cerney consented to allow me to take a personal farewell. That I loved her you know, but you do not know the dignity, the nobleness of her conduct to one maddened with passion and despair. Believe me, her simple words of true wisdom have done more than could a life of travel. She told me of her undying love for you—of the kindness with which you had encompassed her, and when I quitted her, know you the oath I made to her? It was that I would also marry—yes, sir, my only hope of appearing again in her presence was that my love for her might be extinguished. I have kept my oath—redeemed my vow, for I am here to announce to you my approaching marriage with Mademoiselle de Mermont.

ALICE. Married! Thanks, bounteous Heaven, thanks! (DE CERNEY, who has listened with pleasure, approaches ALICE.) You pardon me?

DE C. 'Tis for me to implore forgiveness—you, you dearest Alice, are absolved—I alone am guilty.

ALICE. My dear husband!

DE C. Oh, Julien, you know not from what deep agony you have delivered me.

JULIEN. I have only one duty—madame—(*bowing.*)

DE C. You will not leave us so soon?

JULIEN. I am wanted at Monsieur de Mermont's, to sign the contract.

DE CERNEY grasps his hand and goes with ALICE to R. D.,

JULIEN bows to DE CERNEY, and exits, L.—DE CERNEY and ALICE exēunt, R.

SARAH advances from c.

SARAH. Surely some demon counteracts all my purposes. Shall not my father be avenged? What to do, counsel me, father—inspire me! Give to hate some new weapon, and I swear—What is this? (*sees the writing left by ALICE—reads.*) "Accuse no one of my death—I die voluntarily." (*pauses.*) Is

it so? she would have died, and Julien has saved her! Julien! This paper is undated—and signed with her name. Oh, my father—I tremble to think! Oh, no, no, father! it is not this you desire—no, no, I dare not—I will not!

Enter ALICE, R.

ALICE. Ah, Sarah! I am again happy—happy for ever. George loves me—he has never loved any other but his Alice! You were mistaken, dear sister; in his anger, in his grief at believing me unfaithful, he wished *me* also to suffer—that was all! but Julien has convinced him of his error—that good, excellent Julien. Oh, I forgot to tell you, Julien is going to be married.

SARAH. Ah!

ALICE. Yes. Sarah, how pale you are! and your lips tremble. Ah, I guess, you found on the table! oh, gracious heaven, the paper—the witness of the crime I would have committed—it is gone!

SARAH. I—I burned it.

ALICE. You alone have seen it—oh, tell me?

SARAH. I alone.

ALICE. And you will swear eternal secrecy?

SARAH. I swear.

Enter JEROME, L. D.

JEROME. Madame, the post chaise has just come.

ALICE. You will not leave us?

SARAH. Alice, I must.

ALICE. True, I comprehend; but you will soon return, will you not?

SARAH. You desire it?

ALICE. Of course, dear Sarah.

SARAH. Yes, I *will* return.

ALICE. But soon?

SARAH. Soon.

Exit, SARAH, L. 2 E.—ALICE, R.

JEROME. A speedy journey with all my heart—I don't know how it is, but I'm delighted she's gone at last.

Enter VAUDRIS, C. D.

VAUDRIS. I wish to see Mademoiselle Sarah.

JEROME. (*aside.*) Oh, that's her admirer. You wish to see Mademoiselle Sarah, sir?

VAUDRIS. Without delay; I have something of great importance to say to her.

JEROME. She's gone, sir.

VAUDRIS. Gone! Where?

JEROME. I'm sure, sir, I don't know.

VAUDRIS. (*taking a piece of gold from his purse.*) Try and discover, and I shall be very much obliged.

JEROME. I don't require payment, sir, to serve a gentleman. (*aside.*) What an odd thing this love is. *Exit, L.*

VAUDRIS. (*seated.*) She's gone; I see! Monsieur de Cerney is again friends with his wife, and she is checkmated. Good, very good! Sarah will hatch up some other diabolical scheme—but *I* am here! and if she succeeds, I'll freely forgive her all. Yes, I will watch her closely, very closely.

Enter JEROME, L. 2 E.

JEROME. Sir, I heard ma'mselle give orders to the postillion to drive to the Belgian Embassy.

VAUDRIS. Oh, she's going to Belgium! (*rising.*) Good day, my man.

JEROME. Are you going, sir?

VAUDRIS. Yes, I am going to Belgium!

Exit, L. 2 E.

END OF ACT III.

A C T I V.

SCENE.—*A Garden. Pavilion with steps, L., at back, a terrace which is reached by steps—the sea in the distance.*

JEROME discovered, R., cautiously looks around.

Enter VAUDRIS, L. U. E.

JEROME. (R.) Oh, sir, is it you? Bless me! how you frightened me—I am very glad to see you, sir, I can tell you.

VAUDRIS. (L.) Glad to see me! And for what reason, Jerome?

JEROME. You are a friend of the Colonel, are you not, sir?

VAUDRIS. I believe so.

JEROME. Oh, I'm sure you are—for he never names you without satisfaction; it's Monsieur Vaudris here, Monsieur Vaudris there, and Monsieur Vaudris everywhere.

VAUDRIS. And how is the excellent colonel?

JEROME. Nothing to brag of, sir—his gout makes him crusty—it's melancholy to think of, but since he heard of the death of poor Monsieur Fabrice, his head is a little cranky.

VAUDRIS. (R., *with emotion.*) Indeed !

JEROME. (L.) But that may easily be accounted for. But, now I think of it, are you still in love with Mademoiselle Sarah ?

VAUDRIS. Me ? Well—not exactly.

JEROME. Oh, all that's over, is it ?

VAUDRIS. Pretty well, I should say.

JEROME. Truly ?

VAUDRIS. Truly.

JEROME. If that's the case, I will hesitate no longer—

VAUDRIS. Hesitate—about what ?

JEROME. You must know, sir, that it is now nearly a month that Monsieur de Cerney left home to arrange some law business at Bordeaux ; so madame thought she would come and pass the time with her father, here, at Fecamp, and that's what brought us here. After a few days, she wrote to Mademoiselle Sarah to join her. Well, mademoiselle came, and the day after, madame fell ill. What do you say to this, sir ?

VAUDRIS. (L.) I say nothing.

JEROME. (R.) Wait a little, sir—madame falls ill, good ! perhaps you think that a doctor was sent for—not a bit of it—no, Mademoiselle Sarah has her brought to this pavilion, at the end of the garden, with particular orders that not a soul is to enter it ; I want to know if that's natural ? I don't think it is ! but that's not all. Well, yesterday, a strange doctor comes from Paris—that's queer, isn't it ? and he has forbidden anybody to see madame ; all this, I say, is uncommonly strange, *I think*—and beside, I never could abide Mademoiselle Sarah.

VAUDRIS. How long has this illness continued ?

JEROME. Nearly eight days.

VAUDRIS. Do you know the name of this doctor ?

JEROME. A letter came from him this morning, on the outside of which was written “ Doctor Robert.”

VAUDRIS. (*quickly.*) What name ?

JEROME. Doctor Robert—do you happen to know him ?

VAUDRIS. No, no ; but why do you make these discoveries to me, Monsieur Jerome ?

JEROME. Why, because I'm awfully uncomfortable, and things don't look exactly as I think they ought to look. And I disclose these things to you, because an old friend of Monsieur Fabrice is the most likely to be a prudent and a worthy man.

VAUDRIS. Well, Monsieur Jerome, we shall soon know the truth, if you will aid me.

JEROME. I'll do anything you command.

VAUDRIS. You must, in the mean time, keep your suspicions to yourself, Jerome, and be sure to let no one know that I'm here ; then—

JEROME. Hush, I hear footsteps. (*he goes up.*) It's Mademoiselle Sarah ! quick—go into the conservatory—none but myself ever goes there. *Exit VAUDRIS into conservatory, R.*

(*JEROME grubs up weeds at the foot of a tree.*)

Enter SARAH, L. 3 E., from pavilion.

SARAH. Jerome ! Jerome !

JEROME. Yes, ma'mselle ! (*aside.*) She looks as black as old—

Enter DOCTOR ROBERT, L. 3 E.

(*aside.*) Talk of the devil—hem !

SARAH. Leave us.

JEROME. Yes, ma'mselle. (*aside.*) Well, he's awfully ugly !

Exit, R. 1 E.

VAUDRIS appears, listening at the door R.

SARAH. (c.) You have seen her this morning ?

ROBERT. (L.) This moment.

SARAH. And you think—

ROBERT. I think that in eight days, about this hour—

SARAH. Eight days ! Do you not feel that this slow and measured agony will drive me mad, for I am not an executioner sent to torture, but an enemy, who would avenge and kill.

ROBERT. Thinking I had eight clear days before me, I took the longest route ; I have employed the talisman which formerly rid you of Fabrice Dumont.

VAUDRIS. (*aside.*) Ah !

SARAH. Could you not have recourse to other means ?

ROBERT. Doubtless ; but this is an old friend, of which I am more certain, and which I prefer for its discretion. It leaves no more trace of its presence than a butterfly on a rose.

VAUDRIS. (*aside.*) Hem ! a poet !

SARAH. It matters not—it must be this very day.

ROBERT. I fear to compromise myself ; I this very morning received a letter from Paris, on the subject of another affair, which has caused me great uneasiness, and you will easily understand that the moment is ill chosen for—

SARAH. I perceive that your scruples must be removed—I will double the promised sum. Say—

ROBERT. Truly, you can do what you will with me. (*bows.*)

VAUDRIS. (*aside.*) A charming couple !

SARAH. Then now, Doctor—

ROBERT. *To-morrow!* there will be no further need of my presence.

SARAH. 'Tis well; you will let me see you soon, and my promise shall be kept, when you have kept yours.

ROBERT. By the bye, nothing should be neglected when the conscience is not too clear; this Vaudris, who follows you everywhere?

SARAH. He lost all trace of me at Courtray, and I have not seen the lunatic since.

VAUDRIS. (*takes off his hat and bows, aside.*) You will see him again.

SARAH. I leave you now, doctor, but will not be long absent.

Exit, R. 1 E.

ROBERT. I have pushed affairs too far to retract—the end must be accomplished. To-morrow I will start for Brussels—yes, that will be the wisest plan.

VAUDRIS *who has come forward noiselessly, confronts him.*

VAUDRIS. (R.) Good morning, Doctor Robert!

ROBERT. (C.) Gracious Heaven!

VAUDRIS. I hope you are quite well?

ROBERT. You here, sir? you who were a year since in the Brazils?

VAUDRIS. Oh, you recognize me—that's well. It appears that you are the family doctor?—and a charming doctor you are. But pray take a seat, and let us talk seriously. Oh, I beg of you to be seated—I command you! (*they are seated face to face before a small garden table, L.*) So, it seems Madame de Cerney is to be poisoned—do not deny it, for I know it. But speak frankly to me, as to a friend. (*in saying this, he draws a pistol from his pocket.*)

ROBERT. (L. of table, trembles.) I swear that I am innocent.

VAUDRIS. (R. of table.) Yes, yes, of course—that's understood—but tell me *all* that you know.

ROBERT. You will not betray me?

VAUDRIS. I *will* betray you, if I think proper.

ROBERT. But—

VAUDRIS. (*raising the pistol.*) I am waiting.

ROBERT. Think that—

VAUDRIS. Would you prefer to be examined before a magistrate?

ROBERT. I am ready.

VAUDRIS. That's fortunate.

ROBERT. Well, two months since, Mademoiselle Sarah sought ~~me~~ at Brussels.

VAUDRIS. Proceed!

ROBERT. She told me that she might require my services, and that I was to hold myself in readiness.

VAUDRIS. And she summoned you hither?

ROBERT. Three days since.

VAUDRIS. And you came accordingly to Fecamp?

ROBERT. The day before yesterday. But I swear that I was then unacquainted—

VAUDRIS. Silence!

ROBERT. This sudden indisposition of Madame de Cerney was the pretext of my visit.

VAUDRIS. What is her complaint?

ROBERT. A slight nervous attack. I informed Mademoiselle Sarah that there was nothing serious. "You are mistaken," she said, "Madame de Cerney is ill—dangerously ill;" and she gave me such excellent reasons—

VAUDRIS. In gold or silver?

ROBERT. A family feud—a personal injury to avenge.

VAUDRIS. I know. Well?

ROBERT. Well—I know not if I ought—

VAUDRIS. Come, come, between friends. (*he cocks the pistol.*)

ROBERT. I prescribed for Madame de Cerney?

VAUDRIS. And you commenced operations?

ROBERT. Two days ago.

VAUDRIS. The patient runs no immediate risk, eh?

ROBERT. None, if hostilities are suspended.

VAUDRIS. Your choice of expressions is positively charming.

Go on.

ROBERT. All was progressing as agreeably as one could desire, when Mademoiselle Sarah, very praiseworthy, I admit, manifested a sudden desire that matters should be brought to a crisis.

VAUDRIS. Very amiable on her part.

ROBERT. I promised to advance the hour hand.

VAUDRIS. Poet and watchmaker! You are a very clever fellow. Well?

ROBERT. At the moment I had the honour of meeting you, I was fighting a severe battle with my conscience.

VAUDRIS. And was nearly vanquished, eh? You are so weak. Come! what sum has she promised to ensure your complaisance? You perceive that I am, like yourself, delicate in my phraseology.

ROBERT. A thousand crowns.

VAUDRIS. Here are a thousand crowns and twenty francs; you are now at my disposal. (*gives notes.*)

ROBERT. Sir!

VAUDRIS. I pay a higher price.

ROBERT. (*rises, pocketing the money.*) What do you require?

VAUDRIS. (*rising.*) Some one approaches, and as it is not necessary that our business should be known, let us take a quiet stroll. Give me your arm—thank you, you are a charming companion.

Exeunt through the bowery, L. 3 E.

Enter SARAH and JEROME, r.

SARAH. (L.) You will prepare the chamber on the first floor for the doctor.

JEROME. (R.) Yes, ma'amselle.

SARAH. Your poor mistress is very ill this morning, and I wish the doctor to pass the night here.

JEROME. Ah, ma'amselle! is such the case?

SARAH. Monsieur Vaudris has not presented himself here?

JEROME. Who, ma'amselle?

SARAH. You know—the strange gentleman.

JEROME. Oh, yes; the gentleman who is always running after ma'amselle; no, ma'nselle, no, I've not seen him.

SARAH. Should he call, remember, I will not see him under any pretext.

JEROME. Very well, ma'amselle. (*aside.*) Too late, my pigeon.

Exit, r.

Enter ROBERT, precipitately, through bower, L. 3 E.

ROBERT. Mademoiselle Sarah!

SARAH. What is it?

ROBERT. I am suspected—pursued—the police are now on my track! I must instantly fly!

SARAH. (R.) Who informed you of this?

ROBERT. A friend of mine, an *associate*, who assisted me in the affair of Fabrice, and who is here to apprise me of the danger.

SARAH. How has this happened?

ROBERT. (L. C.) I know not. Some traitor or spy—there are so many scoundrels in the world.

SARAH. Are you quite sure that you are not deceived?

ROBERT. I possess the *proof*. Besides, the person who has just arrived is my most faithful—my best pupil; only he has become more skilful than his master, for he is the only one of our association who is not, in some way or other, compromised.

SARAH. And what is this man?

ROBERT. A doctor of *my class*, and it struck me at once that he would be the very person to replace me here.

SARAH. What! are you mad? to entrust a stranger with our secret, when I—

ROBERT. It would be imprudent if he were not already acquainted with all that has taken place.

SARAH. How?

ROBERT. Oh, amongst partners there are certain accounts to settle.

SARAH. Wretch!

ROBERT. But, fear nothing, he is a sort of second self.

SARAH. And where is this man?

ROBERT. He is here. (*going up.*) Monsieur Vaudris!

SARAH. (*terrified—taking stage, r.*) Treachery! I am lost!

Enter VAUDRIS, through bower, l. 3 e.

ROBERT. (c.) Treachery? Ah, I see you don't know him.

SARAH. Not know him! It is he who has destroyed all my plans. This man has been my most mortal enemy!

VAUDRIS. (*crosses to c.*) You have judged me falsely! I can prove to you, Mademoiselle Sarah, clear as the sun, that you never possessed a truer friend.

SARAH. Friend! Did you not assist Julien to escape by the window?

VAUDRIS. I did. You are ungrateful, Mademoiselle Sarah. Do you not see that, if the husband had discovered the young man, explanation would naturally have taken place, and Julien and Madame de Cerney would easily have proved their innocence, but his escape was a tacit avowal of guilt.

SARAH. But of this escape Monsieur de Cerney would have been ignorant, if Jerome, by chance—

VAUDRIS. There was no chance. It was I that suborned Jerome in the garden.

SARAH. You!

VAUDRIS. Oh, that is not all! Had any explanation taken place, not only would the young people have become white as snow, but you would have become exceedingly black. It would have been discovered that you arranged the meeting, and you would have been politely requested to leave the house, and then, farewell to your vengeance.

SARAH. You then know—

VAUDRIS. Everything! I know that Colonel Dumont caused your father, Captain Blangi, to be shot—that I and my honourable friend assisted in the unexpected disappearance—

SARAH. Hush! speak lower!

VAUDRIS. I am acquainted with other curious matters. I know that, for more than a year, you have wreaked upon your sister, as you call her, the indifference that Julien entertains for you. But your net has broken on all sides, and finding that these *moral* means had failed, you have now had recourse to

chemistry. You perceive, Mademoiselle Sarah, that I know you, and that wearing a mask is useless with me.

SARAH. This man is a demon.

VAUDRIS. Wherefore? Have I been tattling? Have I troubled the police with any information of these interesting domestic doings? Have I said to Monsieur Dumont, "She whom you have cared for, educated, and tended from childhood—she whom you call 'your daughter' is your most cruel enemy?" Have I said to Monsieur de Cerney, "Drive that woman from your house, she is a snake in the grass."

SARAH. Sir!

VAUDRIS. I have never breathed a word of this—you know I have not. You see, then, that I am really a good fellow—who deserves kindness, confidence, and consideration.

SARAH. But to what end have you thus madly followed me everywhere?

VAUDRIS. It was quite a matter of business, the hope of making money—besides, it's so agreeable to work with you, you manage things so well—and when a job's completed, you don't demand any share of the proceeds—that's not only a great consideration, but a very great rarity.

SARAH. (*aside.*) I may trust him—he is but a wretched mendicant. It is well, sir; I see that I can have unlimited confidence in you.

VAUDRIS. Yes; as I know all, and you are in my power.

SARAH. True.

ROBERT. (*L.—to SARAH.*) You see that I have not flattered him. You, then, accept the service of my friend—I am certain you will be perfectly satisfied. (*going.*)

VAUDRIS. (*shaking hands with him.*) I am delighted with you—positively delighted—and now you may go and get hanged elsewhere!

ROBERT. Mademoiselle Sarah, I wish you all success. Good day, Doctor Vaudris!

VAUDRIS. Good day! a pleasant journey.

ROBERT. (*aside.*) A regular lawyer! Exit L. 1 E.

VAUDRIS. An accomplished scoundrel! Well, Mademoiselle, do you still believe me to be your enemy?

SARAH. After what you have told me, I am obliged to do you justice.

VAUDRIS. Justice! that's an ugly word! Between folks like us, ma'mselle, that word should never be named—it's unlucky.

SARAH. (*aside.*) Before I trust him fully, I will submit him to a last test.

*way. His wife—she's almost as mad as SARAH
she—just—here (she is very excited)—oh well*

SARAH. Is it still necessary, ma'mselle, to get the room ready for the doctor?

SARAH. Yes—this gentleman will replace him.
in JEROME. That gentleman! what? (VAUDRIS makes a sign to him.) I beg pardon, but I didn't know that he was a doctor.

SARAH. Jerome, conduct Madame de Cerney here—the fresh air will do her good—if the doctor consents. (VAUDRIS bows.)

She gives the key to JEROME, who exits into pavilion, L. 2 E.

SARAH. (aside.) I will watch closely the effect of her appearance upon him.

Enter ALICE, pale and changed, L. 2 E., supported by JEROME

JEROME. Come, my good mistress.

VAUDRIS. Ah! how changed. (he sees SARAH steadfastly regarding him.) I must not forget my part.

(JEROME places ALICE in a chair, R. C.)

ALICE. Ah! the fresh air makes me feel better.

SARAH. (R.) How do you feel to-day, my dear child?

ALICE. I still suffer greatly.

SARAH. Here is a famous doctor I have sent for—a friend of your father, Monsieur Vaudris.

ALICE. Thanks, Sarah—thanks.

VAUDRIS. (takes chair and sits, L. C.—aside.) I must not give way. How do you find yourself, madame?

ALICE. Ill, doctor.

VAUDRIS. How did you pass the night?

ALICE. Oh, very badly! it is principally during the night I suffer.

VAUDRIS. Oh, during the night? poor lady! it's desolating! and how long have you suffered thus?

ALICE. For the last two days!

VAUDRIS. Um! its desolating! and what do you feel?

ALICE. Extreme fatigue, and pains in the head, which prevent my seeing or hearing—and—great heat on the chest—

VAUDRIS. Great heat—poor lady!—it's desolating! it's really desolating! Poor lady—it's—this garden is very handsome, with the pavilion concealed among the trees—it's charming! charming! Um! violent burning on the chest. What's your age, madame?

ALICE. Nineteen, sir!

VAUDRIS. Nineteen! it's quite desolating! and your husband has been travelling—

ALICE. More than a month!

VAUDRIS. More than a month—it's—poor lady. Will you allow me—(*takes out watch—feels her pulse.*) Full—fast—it's desolating—desolating!

JEROME. (*up L. C., aside.*) I can't make it out.

SARAH. Well, doctor what do you think?

VAUDRIS. A mere nothing—a matter of a few days or so, at the farthest, and I promise you there will be an *end of her suffering.*

SARAH. (*aside.*) I understand!

VAUDRIS. The great thing to be looked to, is perfect quiet; she must not see any one—and strictly keep her room, for in these cases fresh air is most dangerous.

ALICE. Yet it seems to do me good.

SARAH. (*aside.*) I was wrong to doubt him.

VAUDRIS. Have confidence in me; and Mademoiselle Sarah will nurse you like an angel, which she is; and I repeat, in eight days from this there will be an end to your sufferings. You must not, my dear lady, remain here any longer. (*rises.*) You must return to your room, for the night's coming on.

ALICE. I obey you, doctor! good night, doctor—good night.

(SARAH conducts her into pavilion, L.

VAUDRIS. (*aside—crossing to R.*) I thought I should have sank beneath this painful scene. Fortunately I did not betray myself—the hour is not yet come.

SARAH. (*returns.*) I see, Monsieur Vaudris, that I may depend on you. Jerome, you will shew this gentleman to his room. (*crosses R.—aside to VAUDRIS.*) In an hour!

VAUDRIS. Good! Good night, mademoiselle, good night.

SARAH. Good night, doctor.

Exit R. 1 E.

JEROME. Ah! now, sir, perhaps you will explain how—?

VAUDRIS. Another time, Jerome.

JEROME. And that rascally doctor—

VAUDRIS. He'll not return to ask for his fee in a hurry, I promise you.

JEROME. But you, sir, what do you intend to do?

VAUDRIS. (*on the top of terrace.*) Well, I—I shall go to bed.

Exeunt, L.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE.—A Room—An easy chair, R. C.—A table at the back, C.—Doors, R. and L., window at back.

JEROME discovered looking out of window.

JEROME. There's no one in sight yet. Monsieur Julien must have got my letter by this time; but if Ma'mselle Sarah, or Monsieur Vaudris have intercepted the answer—for I'd bet anything there's not a pin's point between the two—I'd give the devil one, to take the other!—when I ask him how things are getting on, he says " You'll know by and bye." And as for poor madame, she gets from bad to worse. I would let the colonel know at once, but dear, good man, his head gets weaker and weaker every day. (*returns to window.*) If Monsieur Julien were but here!

Enter SARAH, L.

SARAH. Jerome, what are you doing here?

JEROME. Me, ma'mselle? I—(*aside.*) How dreadful pale she looks.

SARAH. Well!

JEROME. I was waiting here in case madam should ring the bell.

SARAH. Is not the doctor with her?

JEROME. Yes, ma'mselle; but I thought something might—

SARAH. You may go.

JEROME. You see, ma'mselle, I'd better tell you the truth. I was waiting in the hope of seeing my poor mistress. Oh, pray allow me to see her—I must see her! I am so anxious and uneasy, and besides, (as they have forbid me to go into the room for these three days,) when the colonel asks me after madame, I don't know what to tell him. The poor old gentleman is so nervous and alarmed, and so suspicious.

SARAH. The doctor desired that no one should enter Madame de Cerney's room—and no person has been admitted. Besides, am I not here? (*crosses L.*)

JEROME. Yes, ma'mselle, and that's the reason we're all so uneasy!—no, I don't mean that—but well, I'll go. (*aside.*) I'm sure all's not right—things shan't remain in this way, I'm determined.

Exit, R.

SARAH. (*calling.*) Doctor!

Enter VAUDRIS R. 3 E.

VAUDRIS. What's your pleasure, mademoiselle?

SARAH. Your patient?—

VAUDRIS. In the same state as yesterday. We must be patient and wait.

SARAH. You know that Monsieur de Cerney returns to-morrow, perhaps to-day.

VAUDRIS. Very likely; but I have no inclination to be hanged, or sent to the galleys.

SARAH. Have I not told you that I possess that which will clear us both in case of any accusation?

VAUDRIS. Prove that to me, and I will employ sure and sudden means.

SARAH. Be it so. (*shows him the writing of ALICE.*) Read, Doctor.

VAUDRIS. "Accuse no one of my death." (*aside.*) What can this mean?

SARAH. Think you that, with this document, we have anything to fear from the hands of justice?

VAUDRIS. I see that you have the bump of caution largely developed. It is quite delightful to work with you.

SARAH. You are ready?

VAUDRIS. Of course. (*shows a case.*) This is the most potent means yet discovered. It is thus administered. (*executes as he says it.*) You take an empty glass, and a decanter of water; you pour out the water—then the drops—you add a small lump of sugar to disguise the taste—then mix it with a small spoon—the sick person takes it—and in ten minutes after, she will not be a tenant of this wicked world.

SARAH. You swear that?

VAUDRIS. If you doubt me, try my drops.

SARAH. Hush! Alice comes.

VAUDRIS. I will leave you. (*he places the glass on table.*)

SARAH. Return in an hour, and we will settle our accounts.

VAUDRIS. Just so. We will settle our accounts, Mademoiselle Sarah.

Exit, R.

ALICE *very pale and feeble, appears at door, R.*

ALICE. Sarah, are you alone?

SARAH. Yes.

ALICE. Then I may come in?

SARAH. How radiant you look!

ALICE. I have had such a beautiful dream—I was on an enchanted island where the air was purer and softer, the flowers

more beautiful, more dazzling than ours, and thousands of birds sang their joys in the shadow of perfumed forests. I felt restored to health, and thanked Heaven for having had pity on my youth.

SARAH. This dream was not false—for you are no longer in danger.

ALICE. Oh, I have suffered greatly. Thanks to you, dear Sarah, and to our friend Monsieur Vaudris, I feel better; and were it not for this violent thirst, which unceasingly torments me, nothing would remind me of my past illness.

SARAH. And do you still feel this thirst?

ALICE. Yes, give me that glass. (SARAH presents it, with hesitation.) Why do you tremble thus?

SARAH. Tremble, Alice? I—I do not tremble. (ALICE lifts the glass to her lips, SARAH advancing a step.) Alice!

ALICE. What is it?

SARAH. Nothing! I thought the glass was slipping from your hand.

ALICE. No. (she drinks, and SARAH replaces the glass.) I feel much better now. Tell me, Sarah, do you know when my husband will return?

SARAH. Soon—perhaps to-day.

ALICE. To-day? what happiness! my beloved George! it is so long since I have seen him. If he should no longer love me?—oh, no—that is impossible. I will try to sleep, and that will render me less pale. Ah! if the beautiful dream would return! (sleeps.)

SARAH. (passing behind the chair.) She dies with joy in her heart, and a smile upon her lip. I have done well! She was ever happier than the scorned Sarah Blangi.

Places on the table c., the note written by ALICE, and exits slowly, L.—she is heard to lock the door. A pause.

ALICE. (appears to suffer pain—she wakes.) Sarah! She is not here—I feel strangely—Oh, what dreadful pain, and since I drank the glass of water, my brain is on fire, my throat is dry and burning. Oh Heaven! what can it be? It is dreadful! Sarah! (staggers to door, R.) Locked! why is the door locked? it was never so before? Sarah! Jerome! Oh, this silence terrifies me. It's strange—and the pain increases every moment! Ah, this bell! (pulls it.) Dumb! Gracious Heavens! what can this mean? Jerome! Shall I die thus, without mortal aid? Horrible! (sinks across the table.) I have not strength to call. I—(sees the paper.) Ah! "I die voluntarily—accuse no one of my death." 'Tis my writing! I remember! Why is it here? Why am I locked in? Why did Sarah tremble when she gave me the water? Ah! I now see it all!

all! (*runs to door.*) Help! help! but the paper, it must be destroyed—it must! I! ah! I die! (*falls on the chair—pause.*)

The L. door is heard to unlock, and SARAH enters.

SARAH. I hear nothing! all is silent as the tomb! Is it over? Alice! Alice! (*noise outside.*)

DUMONT appears at L. D., followed by JEROME and Two SERVANTS.

The colonel! (*she places herself before ALICE.*)

COLONEL. Sarah!

SARAH. Is it you, sir? Why have you come here?

COLONEL. Sarah—Jerome tells me that poor Alice is ill, very ill—and I would see her—see her this instant.

SARAH. You cannot, in your present state—do you not fear that—

COLONEL. If my child is not in danger the sight of her will give me strength. If my child is dying, I would bless her—I will see her. (*about to cross to R.*)

SARAH. (*stopping him.*) It is useless, sir!

COLONEL. What mean you?

SARAH. It is too late.

COLONEL. What, my child! (*SARAH steps aside, and ALICE is seen extended on the chair.*) My child! my child! oh Heavens! thy decrees are terrible! (*pause.*) You do not speak, Sarah? I comprehend. Our tears should flow in silence—but my deep grief does not render me unjust, for I feel that in my misfortune, I should thank Heaven, for it has spared me an angel to console, and close my eyes.

(*SARAH, by gestures, orders the SERVANTS to carry the chair off, R.*)

SARAH. (L.) Indeed! Whom?

COLONEL. You, my darling, good Sarah.

SARAH. You deceive yourself, Colonel Dumont?

COLONEL. What say you?

SARAH. I say, that my father is avenged!

COLONEL. Your father!

SARAH. Have you forgotten, Colonel Dumont, the day Captain Blangi fell beneath the bullets of your myrmidons? I remember it, for it is written in letters of fire on my withered heart! You shot my father—I have destroyed your child! The debt is paid!

COLONEL. You have killed Alice? You? No, it is impossible! Heaven would not suffer such a crime. It is false! I say it is false!

SARAH. It is the truth.

COLONEL. No, I do not, dare not believe you, for were it true, you would not tell it to *me* who, with a word, could crush you to eternal despair!

SARAH. All my measures are taken, and you deceive yourself; you would accuse me in vain, for Alice herself has absolved me. See! this note written by herself—it is now three months, in a moment of grief and despair. Listen! “Accuse no one of my death—I die voluntarily.” Signed—“Alice de Cerney.” There is no date—nothing to prove that these words were not written this very hour. Do you think now, that it would be so easy to crush me? Do you now begin to credit my words?

COLONEL. Gracious Heaven!

SARAH. And now that my task is accomplished—farewell.

(she is going up the stage.)

COLONEL. Wretched girl! wretched girl! you know not—

JEROME. *(outside.)* This way, sir—this way, sir—

Enter JULIEN and JEROME, L.

SARAH. *(L.)* Julien!

JULIEN. Madame, you cannot leave this house—Jerome has told me his suspicions, and I accuse you of having murdered Madame de Cerney.

COLONEL. *(aside, R.)* She is lost!

JULIEN. Jerome, you will answer for this woman.

JEROME. Oh, you needn’t fear.

COLONEL. Stay! stay! you are deceived. Sarah Blangi is not guilty—she is not guilty—here is the proof. *(after a moment’s hesitation, he shows the paper given him by SARAH.)*

JULIEN. *(crosses to DUMONT, R., reading.)* Gracious Heaven! can Alice have committed self-destruction?

Enter VAUDRIS, L.

VAUDRIS. *(C.)* Who says that?

JULIEN. Read, Monsieur Vaudris!

VAUDRIS. That paper again!

JULIEN. Do you, then, already know it?

VAUDRIS. Perfectly! and I pronounce it to be false!

SARAH. *(L.)* Wretch! you will ruin me.

VAUDRIS. Yes!

SARAH. But you will be ruined with me.

VAUDRIS. No!

JULIEN. *(R. C.)* Speak, sir—you say that this note—

VAUDRIS. Was written and signed by Madame de Cerney—but it was three months since. At that time, Madame de Cerney, in a moment of despair—caused by Sarah Blangi—

meditated self-destruction—but she changed her mind, Sarah Blangi found the paper, and as it was without date, thought it might at some future period become useful, she kept it, and now expects it to serve her purpose.

JULIEN. And you are certain of this?

VAUDRIS. See if the lady will deny it.

COLONEL. You would not at one stroke, deprive a father of his two children.

ALL. What does he say?

COLONEL. On your knees, murderer!—on your knees! and may the words I now utter be your eternal punishment. Twenty-eight years have passed, while in garrison at Pointé-à-Pitre, a maiden loved me. Her name was Sarah Dideär.

(*during this speech he has forced SARAH to kneel.*

SARAH. (on her knees, L.) My mother!

DUMONT. We were on the eve of marriage—for I had to render back the honour of which I had despoiled her. An order from the minister forced me to leave suddenly for war had burst forth in the colonies—my letters failed to reach her, and when I returned, Sarah Dideär was the wife of another. Her parents had forced her to marry Captain Blangi. At the expiration of eight months of this unhappy union, she gave birth to a daughter, who was named Sarah.

SARAH. My sister! I have killed my sister! Heaven in grace and pity make me mad, that I may lose the thought which rends and kills me; but no, it will not leave me! It will cling to me for ever! It is too horrible! I merit the death of an assassin—but I will not die alone, for I have an accomplice, and that accomplice stands there.

ALL. Monsieur Vaudris!

SARAH. Yes, Monsieur Vaudris, a villain—a poisoner! ay, a thousand fold more guilty, for I accomplished a solemn vow; but he! he murdered for money! for a thousand crowns he poisoned Madame de Cerney; for a million francs he poisoned Fabrice Dumont.

VAUDRIS. (*quietly.*) I? I poisoned Fabrice Dumont?

SARAH. Yes!

VAUDRIS. I killed Madame de Cerney?

SARAH. Yes, and I will prove it.

VAUDRIS. (*takes out his watch.*) Two hours! it is time! (*goes to R. door.*) I pity you.

Goes off R. door and returns instantly, leading ALICE to C.

COLONEL. My daughter!

SARAH. (*starting back terrified.*) Alice! Alice! living! (*falls on her knees.*) Heaven be thanked!

Enter DE CERNEY, L.

DE C. Alice, dear Alice!

ALICE. My husband!

DE C. Imagine my horror, when on reaching the village I learnt that you had been dangerousiy ill, and that did I not hasten to Fecamp with all speed, that I should never see you alive. But you are saved, dear Alice—never—never will I again leave you.

COLONEL. (*to VAUDRIS.*) But who are you?

VAUDRIS. Who am I? I am Fabrice Dumont!

COLONEL. My brother!

FABRICE. Yes; Fabrice Dumont, escaped by a miracle from the fangs of a poisoner—Fabrice Dumont, who, to foil the designs of that woman, has for a year suppressed the beatings of his heart, and who is not sorry at last to embrace his old brother, and his little Alice.

COLONEL. My dear Fabrice—but wherefore did you not reveal yourself sooner?

FABRICE. I knew all, brother; but to dare tell you that your daughter was a murderer, it was necessary to give you proofs. (*crosses L., to SARAH.*) You, madame, will instantly quit France, and for ever. Go! this is the price of our silence.

SARAH. I obey! Death were a blessing I am unworthy of.

COLONEL. Years of true penitence can alone wash away the memory of your deep crimes. Poor shortsighted mortals! In pride of heart and oblivion of duty, ye feel not the unerring power of Providence. Learn that virtue alone can illumine our path in this life, and guide us with assured hope to the future.

JEROME. DE CERNEY. ALICE. COLONEL. FABRICE. JULIEN. SARAH.

R.

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