

Between Cup and Lip
by Frances Mary Schoolcraft

The vesper service at Notre Dame was over. Among the last who left the cathedral were a young woman and a young man. They were not in company. The young woman came out first, and walked away with the step and air of one who is in haste to arrive at home. The young man followed her almost immediately, but not closely, and paused a moment, looking doubtfully up and down the place, until his eye fell upon the receding figure of the young woman, when their sudden lighting up told that it was she they were searching for. He started in pursuit eagerly, and yet cautiously, keeping her in sight, but never coming very near. He was not much more than twenty-one, this young man, and had a very handsome face, of almost feminine delicacy of feature and complexion, but with keen, quick, hazel eyes, and a haughty and resolute air that were no more feminine than the short brown mustache that marked the curve of his upper lip. His dress was plain to coarseness, and of anything but a fashionable cut; but either the wearer had a dress far below his station in society, or manners far above it. The young woman, though she was good-looking enough, with her jet-black hair and eyes, nut-brown skin and ivory teeth, did not seem one likely to win the doubtful and dangerous compliment of being followed in the street by an over-devoted lover. She was certainly several years his senior, and her handsome, erect figure was a trifle more square-shouldered and strongly-built than belongs to the highest order of beauty. Neither did she look at all like a coquette, having a bright, energetic, practical and somewhat sarcastic face. For all this, the young man followed her as if his life and happiness depended upon keeping her in sight. As she entered a quiet old French street, she suddenly stopped, and looked round. The young man regarding himself either as detected or invited, quickened his pace and joined her.

“Is it you, Josephine?” he said, as if he had had any doubt upon the subject. “I have been looking for you for days.” He spoke in French, but his native tongue was queen’s English.

“I am sorry that you had no better business, monsieur,” she said, sedately; “and sorry that you have found me.” She spoke in French, also; queen’s French was her native tongue.

“Why?” he asked, impetuously and impatiently.

“You know why, monsieur,” she said.

“I do not,” he answered, with the tone of one who does not choose to know.

“I do, then,” said Josephine, “and I am going to tell you. Since my aunt died, and Mademoiselle Clarice has no one to take care of her but me, it does not become me to receive the visits of a young gentleman like you, however much we may be honored by your notice.”

She made him a courtesy, as she spoke, and slightly receded, as if to end the interview. But the young man did not acquiesce.

“Young *gentleman* !” he repeated. “You do not call a poor engraver like me a gentleman, do you?”

“Exactly, a poor engraver *like you*. When a poor engraver has your air and manner, when he engraves for his own amusement, and not for trade and for money; and above all, when his name is *Charles Crespigny*, monsieur, I *do* call him a gentleman, whatsoever he may choose to call himself.”

At the name, the young man colored, and looked slightly disconcerted and annoyed; for, although that was his real name, he had chosen to call himself Lofevre. As he did not make any remark, Josephine continued:

“You did not expect to be found out. But I know all your family by sight. I have embroidered yards and yards for your cousin, Miss Fitz Este. I have seen you often when you were a boy, before you went to England. Now, as I suppose you wont deny being a gentleman, I suppose, too, that you will not follow me any further.”

“Stay a minute, Josephine,” said Charles. “Does Clarice say she will not see me? I know that she will not without your leave; but is she displeased with me because I was forced to resort to disguise to make her acquaintance?”

“I might say yes,” said Josephine; “but I tell you the plain truth. It is I that prevent your seeing her. She is very young; she knows no more of the world than her little white kitten. I am older and wiser. I know that men always look most like angels when they are acting most like devils. Clarice will not believe that of you. She is sure you are an angel through and through—the very angelest of angels! the Angel Gabriel himself! Her heart tells her so, and of course her heart knows more than my head.”

“So it does, Josephine.”

“Then you are, in fact, St. Gabriel. Well, be that as it may, I wont be talked down by any one’s heart!—and a heart in love! Clarice keeps her own opinion, but she means to take my advice. You see, Mr. Crespigny, it strikes me, that when a girl is so handsome that men fall in love with her at first sight, and fall out in consequence—when she is so unprotected that a lover stops her in the street, and she has to be rescued by the Angel Gabriel, or Mr. Charles Crespigny, or some other distinguished stranger, who immediately becomes a furious lover himself—*then* I think she ought to retire from the world a little.”

“Retire from the world? Has she gone to a convent?”

Josephine answered that when she thought fit to tell him where Clarice was, she would do it without being questioned.

Charles argued and persuaded in vain. Any attempt at bribery, he knew would be bribing an advocate against himself. He was the more unfortunate that the reputation of a certain reprobate brother of his, now dead, was strongly impressed on Josephine’s mind. The conversation would have told any listener that all the elements of a romance were concerned here. A foundling, adopted by Josephine’s aunt, and growing up into a wonderfully beautiful girl; a young man of a

rich and proud family, who rescues her from an importunate admirer, and introduces himself under a feigned name and character. The romance of the concealment was perhaps an inducement, but the rigid guard kept over Clarice by her guardians, and her own reserve, made him think it necessary to drop a rank that would have awakened suspicions of his motives. He could not be a “landscape painter” like the lord of Burleigh, for he could not paint, but, luckily, he had spoiled enough lithographic stones and copper-plates, by way of amusement, to call himself an engraver; for something artistic he found it best to be, when he discovered that Clarice colored plates for a book and print-shop, and that Josephine was to be met there often. Clarice could only be approached through Josephine. She had been deceived once by Charles, and she was the harder to be persuaded now. She had been alarmed when she found out who he was; and when her aunt died, she considered it fortunate that they had to leave that house. She hoped that absence would make Charles forget his fancy. Charles did not forget, however. The debate threatened to be endless. If Charles’s love made him more and more resolved to see Clarice, Josephine’s love for her, as great, though different, made her obstinate in refusing. At last Charles asked her if she would not let him see Clarice, if Father Silvain, their priest, brought him to the house. Josephine would “*if!*” and there she stopped, as much as to say that Father Silvain would do no such thing. Charles thought he would. He would prove to them that he was not trifling with Clarice. He would marry her to-morrow. A foundling! Well. What of it? He was glad she was a foundling. He might suppose, if he pleased, that she was a fairy changeling destined for him. What was he? He did not disparage his ancestors—they were very honorable men, some of them, he knew—but if he thought about them and his position at all, it was only to wish that he might have a much more distinguished rank that he might give it to Clarice. He was barely twenty-two, and passionately in love; and he meant all he said; that is all the excuse there is for him. Josephine believed him, but she did not quite give way yet.

“Well,” she said. “Suppose you are married to Clarice? What then?”

“What then?”

“Yes. What then? You do not mean to engrave for your living? O! I know that you are the son and heir of a rich man. But I don’t believe he is rich enough to support a daughter-in-law he does not like.”

“What a practical head you have, Josephine!”

“Experience—all experience. Naturally I am a fool. I know *that* by experience. I was married myself for love, and we trusted to luck for the rest. The luck didn’t come; the love went off to look for it; the husband ran after both. He has been twelve years looking, and I think they are all gone where King Saul’s asses did. That prejudiced me against love-matches.”

“Twelve years, Josephine?” said Charles. “You must have been married about that age.”

“I was sixteen,” said Josephine, with dignity, “and now I am thirty. That was a compliment, Monsieur Charles; I thank you for the good-will; for the compliment, not a bit. I am not ashamed to own that *le Bon Dieu* has let me live thirty years, and I shan’t be ashamed to live thirty more.

You and Clarice together can only count eight more years than I, and I think you can very well wait a little while before you get married.”

Charles represented to Josephine that precisely because the only son and heir, he was the more confident that his father would consent to any marriage that had no disgraceful elements in it. Josephine compromised by saying that if Father Silvain was satisfied she would be, and tried to dismiss him. No; he would see Clarice, and he was so imploring, so persuasive and pertinacious, that Josephine, after swearing him on his honor not to stay more than fifteen minutes, allowed him to accompany her home, where Clarice was waiting, a little uneasy at the delay of the usually prompt and punctual Josephine.

Clarice’s beauty justified both Josephine’s jealous care and Charles’s passionate love. It was a delicate and brilliant loveliness of the French type. The fair, chestnut hair was braided and wound around the graceful head in a natural coronet; the broad, open forehead was penciled with two long low arches, darker than the hair; the eyes, dark, soft, and lustrous, and faultlessly shaped; the mouth simply perfect, and rich in color as a crimson rosebud. The eyes and lips together had an expression both sweet and proud, both innocent and *spirituelle* (if there was an English word for this I should use it; but I know of none). There was something indescribably winning in the face, and in the whole figure of the girl. If you only caught a glimpse of her form in passing, its grace of carriage and motion caught and fixed your attention. Neither did she cover a wicked and artful heart with her beauty, as the beauty usually does in stories now. She was good enough to be a plain heroine, who falls in love with everybody, and breaks her heart, while she does up the beauty’s muslin dresses. A little petted she might have been; as to her brains, she had enough, but luckily for her, had had no great need to use them yet. Josephine had always spared her the trouble.

When she saw Charles with Josephine, a startled blush covered her whole face, and the light of a smile came with it, that was all the welcome the most doubtful lover could have asked. Charles was not a doubtful lover—he sprang towards her, and Josephine left them alone, perhaps because the experience of which she boasted pulled her by the sleeve. Fifteen minutes! That is a very short time for all that Charles had to say. He found fault with Josephine’s timepiece when she came in, although she had given him ten minutes grace. Josephine only asked him in return:

“Is that all your word of honor is worth?” For Charles had pledged his word of honor not to abuse the confidence Josephine reposed in him.

He redeemed it, however, fully, though reluctantly, and went away.

“Well!” said Josephine, when he was gone. It was an emphatic, and [meaning] “Well,” the quintessence of an oration. Clarice made no answer. She only looked up at Josephine. The look was another oration—a very eloquent one.

“Humph!” said Josephine, by way of commentary, “And when is he coming again?”

“He will send me word by Father Silvain,” said Clarice, in a soft, fluttering voice.

“And we are very happy, are we?” said Josephine, cynically, but caressingly, too, and taking Clarice’s face between her hands. “Bah! Father Silvain has told you over and over again how to get to heaven, and you have taken it coolly enough; but when he shall tell you how Mr. Charles Crespigny means to marry you, you will look at him as if you thought he knew something worth telling at last. O dear! dear! the fools that young girls are!” And Josephine threw her arms around Clarice, and began to cry to prove how much wiser women are at thirty than at sixteen. Q.E.D.

Clarice had another lover whom she did not at all favor, but who, like the Monk of Norman Abbey, “would not be driven away.” This was a young Frenchman named Emilion Brosseau; the very same one with whom Charles had had an encounter upon Clarice’s behalf. He beset Clarice with even more violence and obstinacy than Charles himself—for no coldness nor refusal discouraged him. He had very humbly besought pardon for his rudeness, on the occasion alluded to, and Clarice had pardoned him, on condition that she never saw him again. Josephine would not admit of the slightest excuse for Brosseau; she disliked him greatly.

“That Brosseau!” she said, with an infinity of Ss. “If I thought Clarice could love him, I would break my heart. He is a wicked, treacherous devil!”

They had heard nothing of Brosseau for some time; but he had overreached Josephine with all her care. The commodious house at a low rent, which presented itself so opportunely, when she was looking for a home, belonged, in fact, to him, and was placed in her way by his contrivance. He was frequently in the adjoining house, which was supposed to be for the time empty. Josephine and Clarice would both have been terrified if they had known that they were under his surveillance, and Clarice would have been overwhelmed with shame if she could have known that by an ingenious tube inserted in the parti-wall of the two houses, Brosseau had heard all that passed between her and Charles. Brosseau was at the window when Charles left the house. He was eight or ten years older than Charles, and handsome, if one did not mind something so fierce, treacherous and sensual in his expression as to fully correspond with Josephine’s estimate of him. His hair, his eyebrows, his mustache and the tuft that pointed his chin, were black as coal, and blacker, in contrast to the pallor of his skin. He was tall, and no one could look at him and doubt that his muscles were strong and supple as steel springs. Charles passed so close to him that he could have touched him, without noticing him in the darkness. Brosseau bent forward and shook his fist after him with a snarl and hiss of rage and threatening that was more tigerish than human. Charles did not hear it. He had not much perception just then for outward things, unless it had been Clarice. Brosseau, in his way, loved Clarice as much as Charles did, and the sight of him, and all that he had seen and heard, stung him to the quick, and he had resolved upon a scheme for gratifying love and revenge at the same time. He left the house by a back way, which led him to a narrow street. He followed it for some distance on foot, until it led him to another part of the town. There he summoned a conveyance with a shrill cry of “Cartier!” sprang into a hack that stopped at the call, gave a rapid direction, and was driven off on the road that leads round the mountain, until they reached a house of entertainment which Brosseau entered. He found the person he expected to see here. This was a tall, weather-beaten man, with a shrewd face, twinkling gray eyes, and squirrel-colored hair and beard; over fifty, but with a strong vitality manifest. He left his seat in obedience to Brosseau’s summons, and followed him from the room.

“What do you want, Emilion?” he said, with a strong New England accent. “I’ve been looking for you and waiting for you, and doing all the hard work, and you might find some other time than when I’ve settled down to a little quiet, social enjoyment.”

Brosseau assured him that he would not keep him long, and that he should not lose any time, for that he had ordered supper in a private room. This seemed to soothe his friend, and the actual appearance of the summer still more so. After seeing him fairly at the table, Brosseau said, abruptly:

“I want some money, Seth.”

“I reckoned you did,” said Seth, calmly, and eating uninterruptedly. “When you want money, you look after me, and when you have got it, I have to look after you.”

The dialogue, by the way, was carried on in a singular, lingual hash, the Canadian speaking his own dialect for the most part, and the Yankee his, but each easily and suddenly shifting to the other, the latter in particular, producing some very singular elocutional effects, in which “unexpectedness” figured largely. Their mutual understanding seemed perfect, nevertheless, both in language and tact.

“You spend a sight too much money. It hasn’t taken you long to get rid of the heft of what it took the old man many years to make. However—‘twas his own fault. I allus told him that if he kept you so short, you’d make the money fly all the more when you did get it.”

“But, after all, Seth, you must own it isn’t my personal extravagance as much as unlucky speculation, that dipped the capital. That confounded ‘Angel of Midnight’ lost ten thousand dollars at a blow.”

“That was clean agin my advice,” said Seth. “I never had much opinion of blockade-running. It’s too risky. To be sure, if you *do* get through, there’s money made; but if you slump, like the Angel did, there’s just as much lost. You had better stick to honest, legitimate old smuggling that your father made his money in. There’s more chance in it now than ever, since everything in the States is taxed so like blazes that it pays a man to come up here to buy a new pair of pants—if he don’t stay too long showin’ on ‘em off, as some of ‘em *do*.”

Emilion made no answer to this.

“By the way,” he said, “I’ve made one discovery. That young whelp that called himself Lefevre is old George Crespigny’s son—Charles Crespigny.”

“I want to know!” said Seth. “Crespigny Hall, hey? out Lachine way? Well forever! It takes them Crespignys! What of it, though? How’s it going to help on the business?”

“It is going to help on *my* business.” said Brosseau. “I have got the screws on that family, and I will give them a turn that will make them howl, and teach Mr. Charles Crespigny not to come in my way again.”

“Don’t be so revengeful, Emiliong,” said Seth. “It aint his fault if the girl you’re so possessed after don’t like you. What I say is this, if two fellows have a fight about a young woman, and one of ‘em gets licked, and she wouldn’t have anything to say to him if he hadn’t, he hadn’t ought to bear malice to either one of ‘em. Besides, ‘taint pious, Emiliong, for it must have been a special dispensation that you *did* get licked, for, humanly speaking, you’re the best man of the two—as to muscle, I would say, not morals, for there, the Lord knows, you aren’t much to brag on. Now don’t grit your teeth that way; it don’t look pretty, and sounds wuss; sets mine on edge; and I’ve heard say it spiles the inammle.”

“You want to make me angry, Seth,” said Brosseau, changing the objectionable demonstration into a laugh.

“I’d a sight rather not; it’s easy done, if I did; you started speaking about that fight.”

“I did. I tell you I mean to settle accounts there. I am going to see Crespigny, the father, to-night.”

“What are you up to now, Emiliong? There’s a devil in your eye, as big as the Mountain, and you have been lickering him up, too. You’d be a sight more useful, not to say agreeable, if you was as sober a man as I be.”

This apostle of temperance had been drinking pretty steadily for two or three hours, basing his claim to sobriety on only showing the effects in an increase of good-humor and loquacity.

“Well, I shall not drink any more,” said Emilion, rising, with the blaze of scarlet in his dark cheeks, and a glitter of his black eyes and white teeth that had excited Seth’s remark. “You let me have the money that is coming to me yet—two or three hundred dollars it must be.”

Seth slowly produced from an inner pocket, a leather pocket-book, polished with long use, and fastened with small straps and buckles. Unrolling it, he took out a handful of bank-bills, wet his thumb, and counted out a hundred dollars, starting at a fifty dollar bill, and tapering down until the last five was made up of four distinct bills. He offered this to Brosseau, who would have had the sum increased, but Seth put back his pocket-book.

“The rest is all small bills,” he said. “I carry ‘em because it makes a big show, and makes folks kinder respectful, when you take ‘em out, without being a killing thing if you happen to lose ‘em one way or ‘nother. Besides, I want to see you again, Emiliong—pretty soon, too, and if you get much money, you’ll neglect business.”

“I’ll see you again early to-morrow morning,” said Brosseau.

“Well, so do,” said Seth. “That will be soon enough, and none too soon.”

Brosseau took his leave without another word. The relations of these two men have explained themselves. Mr. Seth Hastings was the active agent on the part of the United States in certain

free-trading operations whereof Brosseau's father had been the business man and capitalist in Canada. The old Frenchman, starting at the very lowest step, had, in the course of seventy years, by various means, accumulated considerable money, while Seth had also laid by a modest capital. Emilion Brosseau, after his father's death, had spent his patrimony so imprudently that he was glad to form a new partnership with Mr. Hastings, on terms which involved much more authority for the New Englander, and much more work for the Canadian than did the old one.

Now we will visit Crespigny Hall, where there ought to be better society. Crespigny Hall was modeled, on a small scale, on an old Crespigny Hall which had gone out of the family long ago. The family had almost gone out itself, when a Crespigny arose from its ashes, in Canada, and founded the new line now represented by George Crespigny, who had had his "youthful follies," but was now living a very quiet and retired life of elegant leisure. His family griefs were supposed to have affected him. Of several children, none were living but Charles; Mrs. Crespigny had also died within a few years. Mr. Crespigny would have been quite alone, but for his niece and ward, whose home was with him. This young lady bore the high-sounding name of Ernestine Fitz Este, and was supposed to be "not altogether unconnected with a very illustrious person." That is to say, the name and presence of the late Lieutenant Colonel Ernest August Fitz Este recalled to loyal minds those of His Rowdy Royal Highness Ernest Augustus Duke of Cumberland, and subsequently King of Hanover. Miss Fitz Este was to have her fortune when she was twenty-eight, or married, and she was so much nearer the former than the latter, that she felt aggrieved; because it was a family arrangement that she was to marry one of Mr. Crespigny's sons. She had been engaged to the eldest until he died. It was proposed to substitute Charles. Ernestine was willing, but Charles was not. It was strange that Mr. Crespigny should insist upon it, for to say the truth, Ernestine was not altogether one to be desired. There was a vein of coarseness in her nature that neither education nor example could remove. It was her royal blood, perhaps, for those Hanoverians, though high-born and Protestant beyond all praise, were less pure and lofty in other things. Added to this, or it may be, identical with it, was an eccentricity—a flightiness—that might well have come from the same princely source. She had freaks of temper, freaks of patronage, freaks of piety, freaks of sentiment and flirtation. Mr. Crespigny feared and denounced three things above all others, illegitimacy, want of refinement and mental derangement. Yet he insisted on his only son marrying a wife that had a dash of all three. He had his reasons, of course; we shall see what they were, presently.

Mr. Crespigny and his niece were alone. Mr. Crespigny, a fine-looking man, older than he should have been at fifty-four, with a Norman nose and a slighted chin. Miss Fitz Este, a pretty, faded blonde, looking much like a porcelain-doll. She would have looked more so, if she had had her complexion made up that evening, and if she had had the serene expression of those statuettes. She had a wearied, worried look, natural enough, seeing that she had been wearying and worrying herself and every one connected with her, for the last fifteen years. She was wearying and worrying her uncle this evening. The secret reason was, that Charles avoided the house when she was in it. She could not reproach his father with this outright, because it was a vexation to him, as well as to her; but she could and did reproach him with a vagueness in meaning that did not prevent great eloquence and strength of expression. Mr. Crespigny was used to such humors on the part of his niece, and, customarily opposed to them, a high-bred stolidity that sometimes

checked them for a time, and at other times, as at present, exasperated her. She grew more violent and bitter. Was she to kneel down and beg Charles to marry her? she asked. How many years longer was she to be kept waiting the pleasure and convenience of his sons? Mr. Crespigny sighed gently, and raised his eyes in silent protest against the prolonged attack on his patience, and then lowering them to Ernestine's face, with a look of mild reproof, he remonstrated against the use of such singular language, as if her freedom of choice had been in any way controlled, or as if she had ever expressed preference for any one over Edward, in his lifetime, or Charles now.

"You know better!" said Ernestine, with a shrillness of tone and a violence of gesture that offended Mr. Crespigny's sense of propriety greatly, and might have jarred against the nerves of a less sensitive man.

"You know better! You may keep up the old sham if you like, I will not!"

Mr. Crespigny looked at her with ironical wonder.

"I don't understand what you mean, Ernestine, and I doubt if you do yourself." And herein he touched the truth with a needle. Ernestine bit her lips, and looked angrily at the air. Mr. Crespigny thought best to abandon the defensive. He walked up to his niece, and spoke in a low and quiet voice. "I remember interfering *only once*, and that is now nearly ten years since. You eloped then with a man so far beneath you in every respect, that it remains a wonder to me yet how you ever met him. I followed you, and brought you back, it is true; it is true, too, that I protested against your marrying him, but I did not forbid it. On the contrary, I told you that if, after calm reflection, you still wished to marry him, I would not prevent it. You assured me that you had taken that foolish step in a moment of anger at Edward; that you never wished to see the man again, nor hear his name, and that all you asked of me was to keep the secret of your attempted elopement. I have kept it. Perhaps I was wrong; perhaps I ought to have broken off your engagement with Edward. Is that the injustice of which you complain?"

Ernestine received this thrust, from a weapon so long unused that she thought it had rusted in its scabbard, with blank rage and discomfiture. Her face reddened, her eyes filled with angry tears, and there might have been a violent outbreak after the pause, if the conversation had not been interrupted. A gentleman wished to see Mr. Crespigny on very particular and pressing business. Such an announcement always disturbed Mr. Crespigny; but now he was more than disturbed when his eye fell on the visitor's card; his face changed with utter and disagreeable surprise. His jaw fairly dropped, and his eyes wandered for an instant, and then he hastily ordered the stranger to be shown to the library. It had already been done. Mr. Crespigny went out of the room. Ernestine's own emotion had not prevented her from noticing his, or feeling a degree of curiosity that made her regret that he had taken the card with him.

The visitor was no one else than Emilion Brosseau. He was standing in the library when Mr. Crespigny entered, observing its proportions and appointments with critical approval. He bowed to Mr. Crespigny with exaggerated politeness. Mr. Crespigny was cold, embarrassed and civil.

"I have not had the honor to see you for several years," said Emilion in English, fluent and correct enough but with a strong accent. "May I ask," with a furtive smile, "if Miss Fitz Este is

well?" Mr. Crespigny did not answer, and Emilion continued: "I suppose you are as decided as ever that I am not a fit husband for that young lady. I hope you are not standing on my account, Mr. Crespigny? Pray do not let me embarrass you in your own house."

Mr. Crespigny colored slightly, as he invited his visitor to take a seat, and asked him if he was to understand that he came there to propose himself as a husband for Miss Fitz Este.

"You shall hear," said Brosseau. "Miss Fitz Este, if I remember rightly, and I think I do *this* time, although I once fell into the error of thinking she received her fortune on her marriage, without conditions—Miss Fitz Este should have had her money any time that she married one of your sons, any time after twenty-five that she married *anybody*, myself or another, and any time after twenty-eight, married or single. She is very near twenty-eight; you must now be looking over your accounts and wondering how you can make up the sum by which it has decreased since Colonel Fitz Este died. I know the exact sum; my late father, Vespasien Barselou, afterwards Brosseau, having been your confidential agent and adviser. In short, Mr. Crespigny, you are in danger of being known as—" He broke off, adding, after a pause, "you know the most genteel English for it—I do not know the language so well—I may offend you."

"Do you come here to threaten me with exposure?" said Mr. Crespigny, looking pale and wild.

"The danger of exposure does not come from me. It comes from your own son. I mean to say, Mr. Charles Crespigny. He ought, properly, to marry Miss Fitz Este. Then you would, of course, *laver votre linge sale dans la famille*. But if he fails in his engagement, and marries some one else, I think the lady would resent the slight too much to let any chance of revenging it pass. I see you agree with me. *C'est une folle tete cette femme la!* Well then! I think I am acting like a friend to tell you that this son of yours is on the very eve of marrying a French girl, whose face is her fortune, and who is hired in a picture-shop in the Rue Notre Dame, to show, I suppose, how much superior nature is to art!"

"Is this true, M. Brosseau?"

"I shouldn't have troubled either myself or you by coming here to-night, if it had not been. Now, Mr. Crespigny, do you know what to do? Do not blow your brains out. That would put a smirched name on your coffin-plate, as well as in all the newspapers. Do not appeal to your son's feelings. He may be married before you can see him again, and an old father cannot appeal so strongly to a young man's feelings as a young bride, you must remember your own youth well enough to guess."

Mr. Crespigny only looked helplessly miserable, and clasped his forehead in his hands. Brosseau's eyes glittered, and he continued with the triumphant ease of a man playing out the winning cards:

"Here is a third way. Take the girl out of his way. She belongs to me, rightly, though your son's proposals naturally outshone my humbler pretensions. Once out of the way, you can explain at leisure to your son that *the honor of the family* depends on his marrying Miss Fitz Este; and in

the meantime I shall subserve *your* interests by giving Mademoiselle Thibault equally urgent reasons for marrying *me*.”

Mr. Crespigny looked at him with sudden attention.

“I have misunderstood you,” he said; “I supposed *you* were arguing a claim to Miss Fitz Este all this time.”

Emilion laughed.

“I!” he said. “But—yes! If your son marries *my* intended wife, it would be only fair that I should marry *his*, and I *will*, if he *does*. Then my duty as a husband and citizen would imperatively demand my ruining you Crespignys. Conciliate me, sir! conciliate me!”

“Certainly,” said Mr. Crespigny, with renewed dignity. “You would be a much fitter match for—I mean, though still far above her expectations for—”

“Certainly,” interrupted Emilion, laughing at the confusion into which Mr. Crespigny had fallen in his desire to conciliate him. “For no one knows who Clarice Thibault’s father and grandmother were, while all the world knows that Miss Fitz Este’s father and grandmother were—well! there again! I know what we say in Montreal, but I don’t know what they would say at the Court of St. James.”

Mr. Crespigny rather disliked Emilion’s further exposition of the social relations of Colonel Fitz Este and his mother, as understood in French Montreal, and changed the subject. As the result of their further conference will appear it need not be repeated. It is enough to say that Emilion went away triumphant.

Meantime, Ernestine had been cooling her heated face and temper in the open air. A step came up behind her, a careless arm was thrown around her waist, and a careless kiss was pressed upon her lips.

“Ah! ha!” said a voice she had once known well; “is it truly you, my princess of Cumberland?”

Ernestine turned, and recoiled with a faint shriek.

“O my God! Is it you!” she said, with unaffected dismay.

“Don’t be afraid of me,” said Brosseau. “I am not come to raise claims and make trouble—not I, unless I must; but come aside here, since I *have* met you, and let me give you a hint or two that it would be wise for you to follow. I have given Mr. Crespigny his lesson; one could not have a meeker disciple.”

“I am amazed that you escaped being turned out of the house,” said Ernestine.

“Because I am one of those men who, the more they are hated in a house, the less they are kicked out of it; a devil that does not flee when he is resisted without taking the house away with him. You, for example, my princess, you hate me, you wish me in—Hanover, why don’t you call your servants and have me expelled?”

“I know your hold over me, to my shame and sorrow,” said Ernestine; “but I am at a loss to guess what it can be over Mr. Crespigny.”

“Ah! *He* knows to his shame and sorrow; and I know both to my satisfaction and advantage. I keep secrets—don’t I? If I told Mr. Crespigny’s to you, what security would you have that I did not tell yours to him?”

“What security have I as it is?”

“It would not accord with my interests. Come this way, and I will let you see it would not. We have walked by moonlight before, Ernestine!”

Ernestine made no answer, but laid her hand on his offered arm, and they disappeared in the dense shadows of a clump of evergreens.

Early the next morning a close carriage stopped before Madame Vauvinel’s house. Josephine, looking out, to her great surprise recognized Mr. Crespigny, whom she knew by sight.

“What does this mean?” she murmured to herself, as she went to the door. Mr. Crespigny announced himself. He wished to see Mademoiselle Thibault. He entered the house.

“I know the whole story,” he said to Josephine, with condescension. “You are Josephine—Josephine Vauvinel—yes. I have heard, Madame Vauvinel, how wisely and sensibly you have acted in regard to these foolish young people. I am obliged to you, I assure you. (“Sugar-plums!” thought Madame Josephine to herself, “what *does* this mean?”) Please let Miss Thibault know I am here.”

Josephine went, murmuring this time, “Well, well! this is altogether a Crespigny affair. I will not meddle in it. Every Jack must bear his own pack.”

Clarice was greatly agitated, and knew not what to make of this visit. Nevertheless, she went into Mr. Crespigny’s presence as fearlessly as modestly. Mr. Crespigny was struck by her grace and beauty. It made him all the more anxious to remove her from Charles’s way. His heart smote him a little for his treachery, but he easily consoled himself by believing Clarice an interested young coquette and Brosseau an honorable and injured lover. It could not enter into Clarice’s mind to suspect any falsehood from the lips of so honorable a personage, and, above all, Charles’s father. Charles’s father, however, did not seem to be a novice in lying. He said that all he desired was the happiness of his son; if marrying Clarice would secure it, he should not prevent the marriage; but he did not wish to have it said that his son had made a clandestine marriage. If it was known that Clarice had been received by Charles’s family before the marriage, and if the wedding was such as befitted the bridegroom’s rank, the world would be silenced.

“He was wrong in trying to lead you into secret marriage,” said Mr. Crespigny. “I *hope* his only motive was romance and thoughtless impatience. I shall turn the tables upon him, however. You will not object to coming with me, Miss Thibault, will you? I think you must feel that such a hasty marriage as Charles proposes, is a poor compliment—as if a longer acquaintance could lessen his desire to make you his wife.”

Clarice did not know how to answer this proposition. She could only yield. Mr. Crespigny summoned Josephine.

“At what hour do you expect Mr. Charles Crespigny?” he asked, as moderately as if he was not internally trembling with impatience to be gone before his son could arrive.

He was greatly relieved to hear that they did not expect him at all that day, and in the same quiet way requested Josephine to pack up a few things for Miss Thibault; not many, for she would not require them. Josephine asked if she was not to accompany Charles.

“Not to-day,” said Mr. Crespigny, benignly. “I have brought Miss Fitz Este’s maid, and you had better remain to let Mr. Charles Crespigny know who has carried off the young lady.”

Josephine acquiesced in the rationality of this. It all seemed fair and straightforward. Here was Miss Fitz Este’s maid actually in the carriage. Josephine knew her, having, as she had said, done yards of embroidery for Miss Fitz Este. Who could imagine any snare in it? Clarice entered the carriage, and was driven away, looking forward to nothing more terrible than surprising Charles by meeting him among his own family, acknowledged and protected as a part of itself. Even Josephine, though she thought it rather a singular caprice on Mr. Crespigny’s part, was unsuspecting. Every one said that Mr. Crespigny would do anything for this his youngest and only surviving of many children, and after seeing Clarice, it was less strange he should be willing to call her his daughter-in-law. And then a father—if it had been the mother, there would have been a very different story. So Josephine reasoned until Father Silvain came. She expected now something more from the story of Charles and Clarice; but Father Silvain had brought, what she did not expect, an incident in her own personal history. He had received a letter from a priest in the United States. Antoine Vauvinel, Josephine’s husband, who had been gone twelve years, and to whom Father Silvain had written many times in vain in Josephine’s name to the last place where he had been known to be, was lying mortally ill, and had had this letter written to Father Silvain. If Josephine yet lived, and could be found, her husband implored her to come to him, for that he could not die in peace without seeing her, and obtaining her forgiveness for his desertion.

“Poor Antoine!” sobbed Josephine. “I must go to him at once!”

Father Silvain was about to tell Josephine that the letter, faultily addressed probably from some unintelligibility in Antoine’s directions, had delayed so long that all was probably over; but he stopped half-way on seeing that the reasonable and practical Josephine had kept a corner of sentiment around the memory of her husband, and that she was overcome with grief at this sudden breaking down of a hope that she had always denied entertaining him. She was going, and going at once, and Father Silvain changed his speech into an offer to accompany her part of

the way, which she accepted—and—“Poor Antoine! it was only to-day I spoke so hardly of him!”

So for the second time Charles Crespigny came to a deserted house. He went to Father Silvain. Father Silvain was gone too. Charles thought he understood it. “They have carried her away! That evil-minded Josephine has persuaded her that I am a villain! They have taken her to a convent!” With this idea in his head he was not likely to guess at the truth. All his searching inquiry proved in vain and he went home at last; but he was so restless and unquiet that Mr. Crespigny bethought himself to be taken ill in order to have an excuse to insist on his son’s remaining at home. He was really ill, but he made the most of it. He was bitterly troubled in his mind by embarrassments at which scarcely any one guessed, and bitterly afraid of being found out in his double-dealing by his son. That stratagem concerning Clarice troubled him, too, more than he had expected; his instinct proved stronger than his reason, and it would look ugly to him. He was trying to gather courage to tell Charles why he must marry Ernestine, and he could not do it, and yet the day was coming very near.

Charles avoided Ernestine as much as possible. She saw that he did, and she determined to give him a stab that he would feel. Prudence told her not to whisper the name of Clarice, but prudence had but very little influence in Ernestine’s counsels. She did not show any malice; she was kind and considerate in her tone when she told him that it pained her to see him wasting so much sorrow on an unworthy object. She forced him to show some curiosity, and then dropped the name of Clarice Thibault; pretended not to wish to say any more, but at the same time went on without much pause.

“She had *another* lover, hadn’t she? One Bordeaux—Bourdaloue—I forget—but the first name is Emilion. It is rather a peculiar one, I know it made me think of a claret-bottle. I haven’t been tampering with clairvoyance, Charles. The clairvoyant was my maid. She has friends in Montreal, and they tell her of this belle Clarice who seems quite a distinguished person. The story interested every one and they were quite anxious to know what decision she would make between the rich, high-born and devoted lover, who should make her Mrs. Crespigny, and the other as devoted, possibly as rich, but not so high-born, who could do nothing of the kind. At last she learned that Mr. Crespigny was entirely dependent upon his father, and then she relented to M. Emilion, who was independent, and made him happy.”

Charles quietly asked Ernestine’s authority for her story. She only quoted her maid, and for her maid’s authority, vaguely, “all Montreal.” Charles knew that “all Montreal” did not say so, because he had heard no such story, but he could not pass it by without further inquiry. Ernestine was disappointed in the effect of her story. He was interested in it, and he even thanked her for telling him that there was such a rumor, and then he left her. He was going to Montreal, she knew. She alarmed Mr. Crespigny. He sent for Charles and remonstrated against his leaving him, but Charles only promised to return as soon as possible. Ernestine regretted having spoken. Her displeasure, as usual, fell on every one but herself. She intercepted Charles and reproached him for leaving his father at such a time. Charles knew that his father was not seriously ill and said so. She taunted him, then, with his devotion to a girl who had duped and deserted him, and he was provoked to answer that he preferred to believe his own eyes rather than servants’ gossip.

“Believe your own eyes, then!” said Ernestine, “I ask nothing more. Go look for your bride in Emilion Brosseau’s arms!” She ended with a laugh that rose almost to a shriek, stamped on the ground, and left him. He heard her angry sobs as she rushed away, and cannot be much blamed if at the moment he took a secret vow that, come what might of his love for Clarice, he would never marry Ernestine. He had seen too much of her transports all his life.

He went to Montreal. Here he learned several things that Emilion had left to come to his ears in due time. He learned that the house Josephine had last occupied belonged to Brosseau, that Brosseau had been seen coming from it the day that Clarice left. He tried to find Brosseau, and was introduced to Mr. Seth Hastings who assured him that “Emiliong” had gone to New York. His next inquiries elicited the fact that Josephine had gone to New York also, accompanied by Father Silvain; of her business there he did not hear, and took it for granted it concerned Clarice. What should he do? He would go to New York himself. Anything was better than inaction. Behold him, then *en route* for New York, with as little to guide him, after he should have reached that city, as the eastern princess, who came to England knowing nothing of it but “Gilbert.” He had crossed the border, and was expecting nothing of interest to happen, when, the train stopping at a station, he saw Brosseau’s face flash past the window from which he was looking with a suddenness that made him start. He looked out. The train was already moving again, but he saw Brosseau spring upon the platform of the next car, just in time to avoid being left behind. This was something. He passed into the next car himself. Yes, there was Brosseau, sitting quietly unconscious of his rival’s vicinity. He had no companion. Charles went back to his place again and tried to settle definitely whether he should dismiss Brosseau’s idea from his search after Clarice or not. He could only be quite sure that it was a great relief to know that Clarice was not with him now.

He kept a watch over Brosseau, who on his part did not move. The train was now approaching a grand junction, where trunks, and branches, and switches, and other such arborescent features of railways came together. Brosseau left the cars here, and Charles, on impulse rather than reason, did the same. He might have hesitated as to his next step if he had not met a wheelbarrow. That unromantic monocyte was in some sort the car of destiny. There were two trunks on it whose direction cards stared him in the face. The one trunk was travel worn, and the ends were like Joseph’s coat with obsolete cards bearing cards of half the cities in North America. The latest and freshest was inscribed with the name of E. Brosseau, and that of a hotel in the town where they now were. The other trunk was quite new and was consigned to the same hotel, as the property of Miss C. Thibault. Charles inquired his way to the hotel, found it had a carriage waiting, and was taken there. Mr. Brosseau did not patronize the hotel carriage, and therefore reached it before those who did. He was not afflicting any concealment, for his name stood upon the register at full length, when Charles looked over that volume to see if he had any friends stopping there. Higher up was the name of Miss C. Thibault, as having been there some twenty-four hours. Charles inquired for Miss Thibault, and learned that she was not in the hotel at that time. It was a young lady in deep mourning. He inquired then for M. Brosseau. He could not find M. Brosseau, either, but he was well known at the hotel, and often stayed there for days together. Very much disturbed with the thought of the pretty young lady in deep mourning who spoke with a French accent, Charles left the hotel again and was standing on the steps, when a boy of about fourteen, who looked like a picture of a Spanish vagabond, but who was, nevertheless, Irish, came up to him and said, mysteriously:

“Mister, was you looking after the Frinchman?”

Charles owned that he had been looking for a Frenchman, and the boy volunteered the information that there had been a horse and buggy, at the livery stable where he was employed, waiting for the train to come in, and that Mr. Brosseau had come straight there and driven away, what Jerry termed, “full lickaty split.” There was a lady with him, Jerry also deposed, and he averred that he knew which way they had gone, because the Frenchman was often there. Jerry expected a pecuniary reward for this information, and he received it, together with an order to get a horse for Charles.

“I may as well drive that way too,” he said, “and if I overtake him I’ll give you five dollars.”

Jerry’s eyes sparkled.

“You’ll want a real fast one to do that,” he said; “but I bet I’ll get you one.”

Jerry turned and ran to the livery stable as if the ultimate destiny often predicted for him was at his heels. In the yard stood a light open wagon, and between the shafts a little bay mare who was coquettishly tossing her head, and then lowering it as if to admire her own slender and symmetrical forelegs, looking the while, with sidelong scorn and contempt, at a young man, with ginger-colored hair and whiskers, who was attempting some cajoleries previous to getting into wagon. Up to this young man rushes Jerry, mendaciously prompt.

“Mister, that aint *your* team,” he said. The young man asserted that he had ordered it. Jerry faced him down that the little bay mare had been ordered two hours ago by a gentleman stopping at the American House. The young man was not Jerry’s equal in force of character, and Jerry insidiously enlisted a person in authority on his side, by the simple process of getting behind the rightful claimant and telegraphing over his head, by holding up two fingers in the form of a V, and winking impressively. This mystic sign prevailed, and the man in authority swore that the horse ordered by the young man of the gingerbread hair was now harnessing in the stable, while Jerry cut short further debate by scrambling into the wagon and driving out of the yard. He met Charles with all the pride of conscious and triumphant genius, and modestly offered his services to drive. Charles did not need him for that purpose, but he did want him for a guide, and so he told him he might come along, and gave him the reins. This completed Jerry’s satisfaction, for the little bay mare was the jewel of the stable and he did not often get a chance to drive her.

“I wonder if I am not a fool,” said Charles to himself, “to be going hither and thither, like this, at the very mercy of every floating report? But anything is better than to sit still and be tormented by ignorance and suspense.”

The little bay mare trotted on as if she knew Charles’s mind. They were out in the clear country now. Jerry pointed forward at last.

“That’s him,” he said, “I know the team as far as I can see it.”

Charles had to trust to his guide yet, for the buggy in advance was not an open one and he had not the advantages of knowing "the team." They followed, therefore, gaining, but not so fast as they would on a race-course. A country road, especially a cross-road, offers disturbing elements in a race which cannot be well introduced into a trotting-park, although they would enhance the excitement by increasing the uncertainty. For example, in a very narrow part of the road, which the forward buggy had cleared, Charles met a heavily-loaded team for which he could only make room by driving upon a pile of stones and then stopping. After the team had passed, the little bay mare found her nerves so much discomposed by a long board that projected from the rear of the load and dragged on the ground, that she had to stop and practise her dancing steps for some moments before she would go on.

Now there was a long, cool, shady vista before him, through the tall stems of immense pines, whose needles had covered the ground with a thick soft matting that muffled the sound of the hoofs and wheels. They gained on the chase now. Charles was looking at the skirt that fluttered from the buggy and trying to gain a sight of the wearer through the glass at the back, when Brosseau's face looked back at him with a derisive laugh upon it, and the horse he was driving started into a speed that once more threw the little bay mare into the distance, until she realized that she could not pass that aggravating vehicle before her without doing a great deal better, and then her little black hoofs began to twinkle faster and faster, and when she caught the trample of four pairs of hoofs behind her, she went like the wind. Charles paid no attention to the pursuit that the little mare had noticed, until he heard a voice shouting behind him:

"Halloo! you, there! If you don't stop I'll shoot you!"

He glanced back; so did Brosseau; but neither checked speed for an instant.

"It's the constable!" whispered Jerry, with wide-open eyes; meaning, as afterwards appeared, the sheriff.

"He doesn't want me," said Charles, preparing to make a push by Brosseau. They were now between two embankments. At that exact instant the puffing of an engine became audible, and the glitter of the iron of a railway track appeared close before them. It was a crossing without any warning until you were close upon it. The engine was close upon it and a man with a red flag was making frantic signs, and shouting to Brosseau to stop. He only stood up and lashed the horse which sprang across the track right before the engine so close that Charles involuntarily closed his eyes. When he opened them a long train of freight cars was trundling slowly between him and his quarry, and the little bay mare was wild with terror and indignation. The wagon that had come up behind was on the scene also. It contained two men, one of whom addressed Charles with authority.

"Well, you're caught, you see, and you might as well give up peaceably."

"You have made some mistake," said Charles.

"Not a bit," said the other; "you've been spotted all the way down from Canada."

“My name is Crespigny,” said Charles.

“Chris Pinney! – Well, may be it is, but that aint the name you go by.”

Charles’s impatience at these unforeseen obstacles did not present him in the calm of unjustly suspected innocence. Without even inquiring of what he was supposed to be guilty, he accused his detainer of being in league with Brosseau. The officer, however, had the law on his side. It seemed that the authorities had been for a long time in search of certain adroit smugglers who had avoided their vigilance until their detection had become a point of honor. Lately there had been some hope of success, and on this very day a telegraphic dispatch had warned the officer that one of the gang would arrive that day from Canada, that he would have confederates waiting, and that he must be prevented from communicating with any if possible, as it was feared that he had got trace of the line of operations which was to result in the discovery of the whole machinery that had baffled them so long.

“And pray, sir,” said Charles, “am I the only person who arrived in your town by that train?”

“The only stranger,” said the officer.

“I don’t think the acuteness of the smugglers has been the only reason of their having escaped so long,” said Charles. “Do you know that gentleman who was in that buggy before me? Mr. Brosseau?”

“Know Mr. Brosseau? To be sure I do? He comes here every summer for his health. A highly respectable man and goes into the best society.”

“Ah!” said Charles, with a bitterness quite pardonable in his position. “If he finds the air of the place makes a respectable man of him I don’t wonder he comes here often. Well, Mr. Dogberry, I suppose I must go back with you if I cannot help myself.”

“My name is Oxbury,” said the authority.

“I knew it must be something like Dogberry,” said Charles. “Is it the custom in the United States for a constable, when he has a warrant in his hands, to drive out and arrest the first stranger that he meets?”

“Never mind, sir,” said the sheriff, looking at his companion, a very stolid, down-looking man, who had not yet spoken a word. “There’s evidence enough against you. What do *you* say, George?”

George removed the cigar he was smoking, nodded emphatically, and answered briefly, in a hoarse bass, “You bet.”

Having exhausted the subject he commenced smoking again. Charles looked at him, and then addressing him directly, asked him if he knew anything of him. George nodded again. Being further interrogated he maintained a dead silence, at first, but finally said, bruskiy:

“Don’t bother. I don’t mean to say a word I can help, and don’t you. I’ve got to identify you, and there’s an end of it.”

Charles said no more. He saw that for this time the happy star that usually shone for him was not in the ascendant. He gave Jerry his promised reward, saying:

“It isn’t your fault that I didn’t overtake him,” and then addressed the officer: “I have one consolation, Mr. Officer, and that is, while you are wasting your time on me, the real smuggler will have time to get out of your way.”

He happened to glance at the silent witness as he said this, and could have sworn that the gleam of an internal laugh passed over his saturnine visage; but the look was most evanescent. Charles returned to the town and submitted to an examination, during which the man called George swore positively to Charles being one Daniel Edgeworth, who was implicated in the smuggling, in which it appeared that the witness himself had some share. Jerry was called upon to prove that there had been a horse waiting for the prisoner before the train arrived. His examination was enlivened by a lively debate between himself and the magistrate, the latter addressing him as Jeremiah Costello, and Jerry protesting that his name was not Jeremiah, but Gerald; the point was left in abeyance, and Jerry confessed to his ruse, and was not believed. Charles being an utter stranger, and having nothing to prove his respectability, not even any baggage (for that had gone on to New York), had no present resource except to telegraph to his friends, which he was allowed to do. This did him no immediate good, for it appeared soon that the telegraph wires north and south had been cut in two or three places—of which, by the way, Charles got the credit. He also furnished an item that gladdened the hearts of the local reports, whose notes were in a languishing state for want of nutrition. The charge would in itself have been only a small matter of amusement to Charles, if he had not had his heart troubled about Clarice. If it was Clarice, she was evidently willingly Brosseau’s companion. She must have known him, and yet she gave no sign, she made no attempt to escape. What did it mean? Charles may be left to wonder and ponder upon that question. Evidently while he has it upon his mind he will be no very agreeable companion.

When Clarice was taken from home she was driven at once to a railway station. Here she was introduced by Mr. Crespigny to a young lady with a handsome face and a quiet and elegant dress and manner, whose name should have been, to make Mr. Crespigny a truth-teller, Miss Fitz Este. Clarice had never seen Miss Fitz Este. The young lady was very polite, but Clarice thought slightly different in manner. They were seated together in the car, and it was on the way before it occurred to Clarice that Mr. Crespigny had disappeared, but she made no comment upon it. The journey, however, seeming longer than she had anticipated, she ventured to ask her silent companion what their destination was. Miss Fitz Este roused herself from her abstracted reverie, looked at Clarice as if she had not understood the question, and then answered:

“To my house at Mouteagle. It is more *convenable* than Mr. Crespigny’s on every account.”

Clarice could not contest this, though she had never heard of “Mouteagle” before, and had no idea where it might be; and she was by no means well enough acquainted with the localities to

wonder if Miss Fitz Este habitually occupied a house at so great a distance from Montreal as the head of Lake Champlain, for it was at Rouse's Point that they left the cars. Mr. Crespigny had not accompanied them; neither had Miss Fitz Este's maid. On leaving the cars they entered a carriage and drove two or three miles, stopping at a solitary-looking house, whose appearances scarcely answered Clarice's idea of what she was to see; but then they only drove into a back court, so surrounded with walls, and offices, and tall evergreen hedges, that there was not a fair chance to judge of the whole exterior. It was evidently a house of considerable size, and of no very modern date. The interior also fell rather short of Clarice's preconceived idea of what a house of any pretension would be. Miss Fitz Este made no comment upon its appearance. She was very civil and very hospitable, but Clarice did not feel at ease. They could not talk to each other. Long pauses would intervene. The weather that had been sullen all day grew more dreary. A thick mist with a fine, driving rain closed in upon them, bringing a premature twilight. Clarice was glad to accept the first hint that she should retire. She was shown to a room that was furnished far more richly than any she had ever yet seen, and which did not harmonize with the rather scanty and old-fashioned, not to say half-wornout, appointments of the room they had left. A fire was burning brightly, and the outside dreariness was shut out. Clarice was glad to be left alone. She missed Josephine so much that it made her heart quite heavy. She tried to persuade herself that her depression of spirits was uncalled for, but did not succeed so well but that she cried herself to sleep like a child. When she awoke it was still dark. She could not sleep again, and she lay so long waiting for daylight, that at last it occurred to her that the darkness was not natural but artificial. She got up and went to the windows. It was in vain she opened the thick curtains; there were heavy wooden shutters closely fastened that only allowed a faint and doubtful light to come through. She must wait, she supposed, until the rest of the house was stirring and some one came to her. She waited; waited so long that she thought the habits of Miss Fitz Este's household must be exceedingly dilatory, or that they were showing over-consideration for her fatigue after yesterday's journey. She went to the door, opened it and listened. There was no sound. She was looking out into an almost square hall with doors opening upon it from every side, a staircase in the middle, and a skylight overhead, through which she could see a bright blue sky, and know that the sun was shining, although the rays did not yet strike the skylight. There was a deadly stillness; the stillness of an empty house.

"This is very strange," thought Clarice, and leaving the door partly open for the sake of the light, she went back with the intention of dressing and going down stairs. This was much easier thought than done, for, during her sleep, every article of clothing, even shoes and stockings, had been removed, excepting the white robe she had on, which, although flowing and ruffled, and abundant for any purpose of comfort and propriety, much more than a *full* dress would have been, was still not of the fashion in which a young lady would present herself in the parlor, above all, of a strange house. And shoes and stockings—does it ever occur to the great mass of thinkers how completely liberty and the pursuit of happiness would be hindered by the simple experiment of depriving any one of shoes? Clarice waited yet longer, until, from being only uneasy and impatient, she began to be seriously alarmed. She went to the head of the stairs and called once or twice, but there was no response.

"Have they gone away and left me here? What does it mean?" She walked along the gallery and tried all the doors. All were locked. She stole down the stairs as silently as a ghost, clinging to the banister and ready to fly back at the least appearance of any stranger. She soon dismissed that

fear. The house below as well as above was closely shut up and apparently deserted. The stairs led into a hall of the same size and shape as that above, with paneled walls of dark wood and no visible door, but with a small grating high up in one panel, which, however, was closed against any curiosity, could she have reached it, by a mask on the other side. Clarice remembered passing through this hall. She tried to move one of the panels, but they all refused to move.

Then she did what no true heroine would have done. She sat down on the lowest step of the stairs and burst into tears. She was disturbed by some one descending the stairs; she looked up and recognized Brosseau. The terror of him checked her sobs and dried her tears. She would have fled from him, but there was no way open. He stopped near the foot of the staircase.

“Don’t be frightened, Clarice,” he said. “It is only I.”

Clarice answered to his admonition by shrinking into the further corner behind the staircase.

“This is my house,” continued Brosseau, “and henceforward yours.”

Clarice interrupted him with a startled cry. “O! Then it was not Mr. Crespigny—” She stopped.

“O yes! himself and none other,” said Brosseau. “Josephine knows him, as indeed she does every one and everything. I should not have tried to deceive that *bien eviellée* young woman. It was Mr. Crespigny himself. Did it not occur to you that Mr. Crespigny would do *anything* to prevent his son’s making a low marriage?”

“But Miss Fitz Este!”

Brosseau laughed. “I think Miss Fitz Este would have played her part with right good-will, but it would have been dangerous to trust her. She might have scratched your eyes out. We contented ourselves with her name and maid. The young lady who accompanied you was *not* Miss Fitz Este.”

Clarice wrung her little hands. “O, let me go home!” she said.

“Ask me prettily and perhaps I will,” said Brosseau.

Clarice looked up at him, and misinterpreted the gentleness of his expression. Certainly he had no unkind feeling towards Charles, however far he might be from letting her go home.

“You will let me go,” she said, “I *know* you will. It cannot give you any pleasure to detain me.”

“Indeed it does not. I hate to see you so. I want you to laugh and be happy.”

“Then send me home.”

“You would not be happy *there*. You call it home, but you have no home but with me. Listen to reason, Clarice. You have seen Mr. Crespigny and know to what lengths he will go to prevent

your being his son's wife. Imagine even that you were so. He is poor and so are you. You know something of what poverty is, but he does not. Do you think that he would bear it? Do you think *he* could give you a home? He would be disowned by his family and friends and left to his own resources; and what are the resources of an idle, delicate, luxurious boy? And you—why Clarice, the house you quitted in Montreal belonged to me as much as this one does. I tell you there is no home for you but with me—no refuge except *here*." He caught her suddenly in his arms, and holding her, in spite of her struggles, continued. "Another word, Clarice. You *are* here, in my hose; known to be mine. No one but myself was in the house with you last night. I did not wish to alarm you; it was enough for me to know you were here. But when Charles Crespigny knows it—as he will—do you think he will make you his wife then? Do you think any one will believe that you are not here of your own free-will? Do you think that I *can* let you go, now that I have you? No, no! there *is* no home for you but *here*. Any path that leads you away from me leads you to shame and suffering. Here you have pleasures, freedom, honor, the world to roam through at your will, if only I may be your companion. Choose between them."

Clarice only answered with a shriek for help, made clear and piercing by terror and helpless anger.

"Hush!" said Brosseau, not roughly, but caressingly. "No one can hear you. You cannot escape me. I swore I would take you from Crespigny, and I would rather kill you with my own hand than give you up to him. I would, and yet I love you better than he does; better far. He will give you up because—because I have held you in my arms, and kissed your lips, and, greater fool and coward yet, because the world will *say* it is so—but I, much as I hate him, cannot let such a thought trouble me. You would like to go yet? If I should let you go, do you know what I would do next? I would ruin the Crespignys. I can do it. You shall have clear proof that I can. If I have you, I can be generous—otherwise I neither can nor will. Come! you have had reason enough to satisfy the most unreasonable woman in the world; and after all there is only *one* that I depend on—and that is—*this!*"

He clasped her closer and kissed her again and again, laughing softly at her useless resistance. At this moment a panel slid open and Mr. Seth Hastings appeared in the aperture.

"Emiliong! what in thunder are ye doin' on? You're a pretty man to put confidence into! Let the gal alone, can't ye? I sh'd think ye'd be ashamed to carry on like that at your age! Don't be scared" this to Clarice in Canadian—"he shan't do you no sort of harm—I'll give him a switching myself if he offers to."

"What do you want here?" said Emilion, savagely.

"*You!*" answered Mr. Hastings. Then fixing his eyes severely on him, he continued with austerity, "haven't you lost enough by such goings on? Are you going to throw the helve after the hatchet? because if you are you can jest throw a helve you've whittled out yourself and not one of mine. You'd ought to've been off to New York State twelve hours ago—darn you!"

"Well, well! get out of here and I'll come and talk to you."

“Get out yourself, first,” said Seth. “I’ll go straight off and turn informer if you don’t.”

Emilion accompanied him. “A pretty figure you’d cut turning informer,” he said.

“As pretty a one as you do teasing that poor little Clarice the way you do,” said Seth. “I wont have none of that. It’s ag’inst my principles.”

“Your principles!”

“Yes sir; I know I’m in advance of the times in my principles about free trade and a good many othe things that the world aint quite educated up to, but I’ve got good principles; we’re all born with ‘em where I come from, and I was ‘specially privileged, for my father was a deacon in the First Orthodox meeting-house in Doncaster to the day he died. But I don’t blame you so much, Emiliong, because you’re a Frenchman, born under British monarchical institutions, which is enough to ruin the principles of any man, and you’re the son of your father and mother to boot, and *that* sp’ilt your last chance. So you’d best take the advice of a man who *does* know how to behave, and send Clarice back to her folks.”

“She hasn’t any,” said Brosseau. “I don’t mean to do her any harm. I only want her to marry me.”

A pretty sharp conflict of opinions followed between Mr. Hastings and Monsieur Brosseau, the former insisting upon Emilion starting at once to attend to some necessary business—to find out why a recent draft on New York had not been honored, and to take some precautions against certain important perquisitions on the part of the U.S. Revenue of which he had been warned. Emilion yielded at last to the urgency of the case, and Mr. Hastings undertook to detain Clarice until his return in consideration of his leaving at once, without seeing her again.

Clarice had returned to the room in which she had passed the night. There was no way in which she could secure the door—no chance of escape in any direction. She felt all the helplessness and hopelessness of her situation. She had not been long alone when a step outside alarmed her. There was a knock at the door and a voice addressed her. She recognized it as that of the man who had interfered on her behalf. Its Yankee, translated into bad Canadian without changing the accent or scarcely the idiom, was unmistakable.

“See here Marmsel Tee bow,” said the voice—I translate back again as *habitans* do not preponderate among my readers—“I’d like to speak to you a minute. Just come down stairs, and I’ll talk to you through the grill.”

Clarice hoped that he might carry his intervention yet further, and consented to come down to the grill.

“You see, Clarice,” said Mr. Hastings, as soon as she appeared, “you mustn’t fret. Emiliong wouldn’t stroke a pussy-cat’s fur the wrong way unless he was put out or had been taking something; but he has set his mind on marrying you, and I expect you’ll have to marry him to get rid of him. You think you wont? Well, come, let’s figure out that now. I want you should know

just how it all is. You might distrust Emilion because he's young and in love, and young men in love *will* tell lies, I must admit; but I'm an old fellow, and I aint in love, and I only look at the matter as it's going to affect business, and so I mean to tell you the rights of it. You don't want to marry Emilion because you'd rather have young Mr. Charles Crespigny. But you can't marry Charles without doing him a sight more harm than good. He's engaged to marry Miss Fitz Esty, and he's go to do it. Hold on! I'll figure it all out for you. Old Mr. Crespigny is a mighty high fellow, but when he was a young man he got into a good many pretty nasty scrapes that folks never knew of. He isn't any way forcible, and he was fond of gambling and I don't know what all that takes a man's money off mighty quick. He used to borrow money of Vespasien Barselow—you've heard of him, I dare say—he was a very smart business man, none too particular, and held on to every cent he got till it squealed. He took the name of Brosseau after he married Diloma Brosseau. She was a real handsome, genteel, high-feeling sort of woman, and brushed the old man up considerable; Emilion takes after her. But as I was sayin', old Barselow knew a good many of George Crespigny's tricks, and charged interest for holding his tongue over and above what he did for his money. Crespigny wasn't ashamed of *doing* all sorts of things, but he would have been awfully ashamed of being found out; he did not stand right up to Vespasien and tell him he didn't care a pin what he said; he let him black mail him like thunder, and at last he got so in debt that he didn't know what to do. 'Why,' says Barselow, 'there's all that Fitz Esty property,' for it had been going on so long now that Crespigny was getting along to be a middle-aged man. 'There's all that property,' says Barselow. 'I can't touch it,' says the gardeen. 'What's to hinder?' says Barselow. 'There's a lawyer in it,' says Crespigny; 'he'll find it out.' 'O, snap for the lawyer!' says Barselow. 'I'll fix *him*,' and so he did somehow, and between them they nibbled the inside out of the property and just left the rind. So far as *I* know, all Crespigny has got to show for the young woman's property is a tract of land that *may* be in the world somewhere, just to hold it together, and a lot of stocks and bonds that I should say Barselow had made himself if I didn't think he could buy 'em cheaper than he could make em. Since then all that Crespigny can do is to keep up a show, and that he couldn't have done, if somebody hadn't left Miss Crespigny some money just before she died. Settling with Miss Fitz Esty will fetch on the smash; and he's got to do that in about six weeks. She is in love with Charles the worst way, and if he marries her it will be all right. But if he goes back on her she will be mad enough to eat the whole of 'em. Mr. Crespigny wont have a dollar of money nor a rag of character left, and it will be a horrible exposy all round. It will make Charles feel awful bad, I should think."

Clarice understood the meaning of all this well enough. "What can I do?" she said.

"Marry Emilion," said Seth. "It's the best thing you can do, anyhow. Young Crespigny wouldn't like to have it said of his wife that she stopped in Emilion's house—"

Clarice interrupted him with a little sharp cry of physical pain.

"Let me go away from here!" she said, imploringly. "Have you a daughter of your own? Think, if she were in my place, how she would feel."

Seth stroked his beard, with a look of amusement mixed with a compassionate admiration. "Well, I have a daughter," he said, "but I don't know as she'd take on much if Emilion was set

on marrying her. I promised to keep you here until he came back. We're partners, and as long as he don't go against my interests I can't go against his. Only—see here—Clarice—if you'll write a note to Charles telling him you've thought better about marrying him, I might think about letting you go; it *does* seem kind of unfair to shut a girl up when you're courting her. That's all I can do. You think about it, will you?"

Clarice said she would, and Seth left her. When she went up stairs again she found that some one had been in the room, and opened the windows of that and the one adjoining; in the latter a table was set. Clarice went to the windows. The place was wild and solitary; view there was none. Trees closed the house in on every side. She caught the gleam of water through them. Within the trees there was a garden and orchard—walled in. The windows were high from the ground. There was no hope of escape. She turned back to the interior. The second room, like the other, was richly furnished—far more so than anything that Clarice had ever seen—but it may easily be imagined that this gave her no pleasure, and neither did she feel inclined to eat. She noticed writing materials on another table, placed, probably, for her to write, if she chose, to Charles Crespigny. The sight made her think if it would be at all possible to secure her escape by writing as Seth proposed. She rejected the idea. It would only be a new deceit practised upon her.

"If I must never see him again," she thought, "at least I will do nothing myself to separate us. Not while I have any hope left. If I ever get out of this horrible place, and Charles tells me it is true that he must marry Miss Fitz Este, we can bid each other good-by forever; but I cannot say I will not marry him or that I do not love him—yet," she added, glancing forward to some wretched possibility when that lie would be the last and only sign of tenderness she could ever show for Charles's happiness. She found more consolation in putting the pen and ink to another use. She wrote on several slips of paper and addressed the notes to Josephine, to Father Silvain and to Charles Crespigny. She hesitated at the last from a very natural fear of the consequence of a meeting between Charles and Brosseau. There was no harm, however, in writing the name while she had the materials—there was very little chance of her being able to send the note out of her hands, she was afraid.

The time went slowly on. Brosseau's continued absence was the only comfort she had. She slept only by snatches that night, without lying down, and starting awake every time she lost consciousness. When days, however, passed without any hope, although without further alarm, she began to find herself more courageous, though not more resigned. She saw no one now but a woman, who came in every day, but who never spoke a word, and whom she did not try to address. At last, one night she heard a movement in the house and around it. She went to the window, which was left unguarded now, and looked out. It was dark, but she saw the light as of a lantern moving about, and heard the sound of voices. It ceased, and all was once more dark and silent. Next she heard a renewed motion in the house, and fancied she recognized Brosseau's voice. Was there *no* way to escape? An idea that had often occurred to her, returned. She took the sheets from the bed, tore them in lengths and knotted them together as firmly as she could. One end she fastened to the iron staples of the shutters, and tried to resolve to trust herself to this support. She hesitated, however, until a step in the passage, and, as she thought, pausing at her door, startled her into resolution. Better be dashed to pieces than to meet Brosseau again. If she might not live for Charles she had no fear of death. She grasped the sheet in her hands, and let herself drop. There was a dizzy, breathless moment, and then one of the knots slipped, and she

fell, a few feet, with no hurt but the shock, and fingers a little scorched with the rapidity with which the improvised rope had slipped through them. She arose with a feeling of triumph, which did not last long. She continued to fancy that Brosseau was pursuing her; that he was looking from the window, and, crouching down, ran with all her speed. She was stopped by a wall. Following it, she found that there was no egress from the enclosure. She returned to the point from which she started, beneath the window, keeping close to the wall of the house. Her foot slipped, and she fell into the window of a cellar. She did not mind the bruises when it occurred to her that this might be a hiding-place, at least, for a time. Her fall had forced out the small sash, and she crept through the aperture upon a tier of barrels, behind which she hid herself. She had barely done so when a dim reddish light gradually grew brighter, and she heard the steps of men, and the voice of Seth Hastings. They appeared to be carrying something. Clarice could not see the forms of the men, and only cowered closer. They were gone, but she did not dare to move off for a long time. When she felt sure that they would not return, she left her corner and groped her way along the cellar, in hopes of finding some outlet. She advanced so far in the darkness that she began to think herself lost in some endless underground maze. She stopped; her heart was beating hard; her ears were ringing; there seemed to be a strong light streaming around her, and yet she could distinguish no object. After some moments the seizure passed away, and she was able to perceive that there was really a faint glimmer of light before, at no very great distance. She went on with renewed courage. The ground was wet and slippery under her unprotected feet, but she cared little for that. She reached the opening. Its lower end was flooded with water; and outside only a broad sheet of water glimmering in the hazy starlight lay before her. There was no escape this way. Yes, there was a boat drawn up into the passage, she saw, as her eye wandered around. The doubtful light was clear before her eyes after the blackness she had just left. It was fastened securely, but not locked to its chain, and she could easily loose it. Should she venture it? Yes. Better danger, better death, than what she left behind. She stepped into the boat, cast it loose, and with one of the oars shoved it with all her strength from the ground. It glided with a lazy, rocking motion out of the low entrance of the passage and out upon the clear water. She laid the heavy oar down again in the bottom of the boat, and with a long, deep sigh, folded her hands, and waited for her fate. She felt no fear. She felt only an exultation in her freedom, that replaced both hope and fear.

Charles Crespigny had not suffered a very long detention. The very next morning brought him deliverance. The revenue detective who had sent the warning, arrived himself with the information that this was not the man they should have arrested, and that it was Emilion Brosseau; the identity of the man had not been known to him at the time he gave the warning to look out for him. It never rains but it pours. A lady and gentleman had arrived last night from New York, who knew Charles, it was reported to him. Charles went to the hotel, wondering who it might be. When he entered the hotel parlor, there was no one there but an invalid traveller, reclining on a chair by the window. It was a stranger to Charles, who set him down, from his looks, for a successful merchant of some kind, who had lost his health in proportion as he gained money, and was a broken-down man at forty. Charles went to another window himself, and when he looked again a lady, in a handsome travelling-dress, had just gone up to the invalid, and was speaking to him. Something in the manner of this lady was so familiar to Charles, that he wondered he did not recall who it was, when she turned her face towards him, and showed him that it was only the altered fashion of dress that had puzzled him. They hastened towards each other.

“Josephine!”

“Are you not surprised?” said Josephine, laughing with tears in her eyes. “It is ridiculous and touching, my history. My poor Antoine whom you see there, is a rich man. Ah! if he were only a well one!”

Charles congratulated her. She accepted his congratulations, but slighted them a little to ask:

“Well—where is Clarice? O, *Mon Dieu!*” catching the look on Charles’s face; “what is it?”

“Where is she?” asked Charles. “Do you not know?”

“Do *you* not know?” said Josephine; and she told him how Clarice had left her, forming the rapid conjecture that it had been the device of Mr. Crespigny’s to separate his son and Clarice.

“If that was all!” said Charles. “But I have a worse fear!—that she may be with Brosseau.”

He told her upon what his fear was founded.

“It was Miss Fitz Este’s maid that was with Mr. Crespigny,” said Josephine; “but impossible! A woman—a *lady* would never assist in such a scheme.”

“I am sorry to know that Ernestine will sometimes—when I trust she does not know what she does—do much that no true woman—no lady—would do.”

“I have heard so,” said Josephine. “But again impossible! this cannot be Clarice that was with him! She would not go willingly with him one step.”

“Willingly—no,” said Charles; “but perhaps silently. But this I know—if it is so—if she goes with him and shuns me, it is because—because—” he stopped and added, between set teeth—“for the same cause that I shall hunt him round the world, and shoot him like a dog wherever I find him.”

“You will do well,” said Josephine, quietly. Here Antoine called querulously to his wife; she went to him, and Charles, who at that moment was not in a frame to go through the forms of ordinary civility, quitted the room. A group of men were standing in front of the hotel. Charles caught the purport of their discourse. He stopped and touched the last speaker on the arm.

“Did you say you have trace of Brosseau?” he asked.

The revenue officer looked at his pale and excited face.

“I said I meant to catch him dead or alive,” he said, guardedly in matter, but not in manner.

“Take me with you,” said Charles. “I want to meet that man.”

“Well, he did play a rather mean trick on you,” said the revenue officer, who attributed Charles’s evident resentment against Brosseau to the adroit manner in which the Canadian had used him for his own escape. “You can go if you like. An extra hand or two wont come amiss; but you must *stay* with us. I shan’t let you part company again until after it’s all over.”

“I want to see the end.”

“We may have a fight.”

“All the better,” said Charles.

The revenue officer looked at Charles again, and was struck by the fiery impatience that made his face and form quiver like those of a thoroughbred horse, eager to start.

“You do look like clear grit,” he said; “I’d like to have you along. We’re going off in the express. That will be up as soon as the 9.40 comes down.”

The 9.40 brought Mr. Crespigny, to whom Charles hastily explained that there was no need of any interference on his part. Mr. Crespigny had been uneasy, he said. It was quite true; he was uneasy every moment now that his son was out of his sight. The next instant Charles asked the question that Mr. Crespigny expected to hear.

“Where is Clarice Thibault?”

“I—I—do you ask me?” said Mr. Crespigny. His story was prepared, but it would not come at once. It was quite as well, however, he thought; a little surprise that Charles should not know was quite consistent.

Josephine entered.

“Mr. Crespigny, where is Clarice?” she asked.

The wandering look came into Mr. Crespigny’s face, that any one who had had an opportunity to observe him would have known betokened a lie struggling into definite shape. In another moment he looked at her serenely.

“Did she not return home? No! Are you quite sure?” Charles was sure of that. Mr. Crespigny continued: “She left the house with that intention. I placed her under the care of a lady whom you know, Charles, but whom I will not draw into this business by naming, intending, if she answered the promise of her appearance and manner, to give you a pleasant surprise. She took offence at something she heard concerning your engagement to Ernestine, and left, with the expressed intention of returning home.”

There was a dead silence. Then Josephine brought her hand down on the table, and cried out:

“Monsieur Crespigny, that is a lie!”

“Woman!” said Mr. Crespigny, angrily.

“It is a lie!” repeated Josephine. “I see it in your face. You sold her to Emilion Brosseau, for fear that she would be your son’s wife. Look at me and say it is not so!”

The sudden charge disconcerted him. He thought Josephine had some proof. His manner was not at all that of a man violently accused of a baseness of which he is innocent. Charles saw that it was so. Before another word could be spoken, the door was opened, and a hurried voice called:

“Mr. Crespigny, if you are going with us, it is time to start.”

“I am coming,” said Charles.

“Where are you going, Charles?”

“To find—” he stopped when he would have said Clarice, and changed it to “Brosseau.”

His tone said so much that his father caught his arm.

“You shall not!” he said, hoarsely. “You shall not risk your life for that wretched girl.”

“My life!” repeated Charles, bitterly. “I think I may thank *you* that my life is scarcely worth having now. If it is so—you will never see me again.”

“You speak the truth here,” said Mr. Crespigny, solemnly. “If you go now, my blood will be on your head.”

“And what on yours?” said Charles, pausing.

“O go!” said Mr. Crespigny. “What is your father’s claim against hers? Do not stay; but remember this, I will not live dishonored. You shall know all. I have taken Ernestine’s money. I am a cheat—a swindler—a forger—a perjurer; and you are going to proclaim it to the world. This man, Brosseau, knows it. If you take Clarice from him, and refuse to marry Ernestine, both will turn upon me, and I shall be ruined and disgraced.”

“Look sharp!” called the impatient voice at the door. “The train is starting.”

“Go!” said Josephine to Charles. “*I* can help you *here*, but no one but you can help Clarice! Go!”

Charles snatched his arm from his father’s convulsive hold.

“You have left me no choice,” he said, and was gone. Mr. Crespigny could only as usual sink nervously down before the consequences of his own misdeeds—hide his face and groan. Josephine went up to him, and laid her hand on his shoulder.

“Look up!” she said. “Be a man, for God’s sake! though you have not acted like one. I am going to help you, because you are the father of a brave and true a man as ever lived. I am a rich woman now. I mean I am a rich man’s wife, and I can speak for my husband. You shall have money to replace Miss Fitz Este’s; Antoine can command any sum. I do this for Charles; perhaps he may have enough to suffer without having his father—O Mr. Crespigny! if you wanted to put the poor child out of the way, why did you not kill her?”

Mr. Crespigny cursed himself bitterly in reply. It cost him very little to do that; but that clause about the “rich woman” had calmed his despair. He had too much good taste to allude to it; and besides, he really was suffering intense mental misery at the time; but that speech had soothed him. Josephine reverted it to herself, and, quite forgetting her insulting language, Mr. Crespigny became confidential, and, in a well-bred way, deferential to the late embroiderer, now the *wealthy Madame Vauvinel*, who maintained an unsparing supremacy that would have been set down as pure pride, perhaps, by any one who did not know that Josephine in her humblest days was equally if not more imperious.

Upon the shores of Lake Champlain, a little party of men were ambushed in a wood on a point that formed one side of a small bay. Near them, but apart, there lay one man, scarcely drawing his breath and listening eagerly to their occasional muttered words.

“There’s the place now, by —!” said one, in an excited whisper. “There! where that boat is coming out.”

The hidden man, Brosseau himself, raised his head, and distinguished a boat detaching itself from the black shadows under the shore on the opposite side of the little bay. It glided noiselessly, without an oar put out, as if the occupant desired to avoid being heard.

“Some cursed spy or informer,” thought Brosseau. “He shall never carry them his news.” He sprang up, and, before the ambushed party knew what it was that rushed by them, he had plunged into the water, and was swimming with vigorous strokes towards the boat. He soon reached it, although encumbered by the weight of his clothes. As he approached, he saw it contained only a white-robed female form. He uttered an exulting laugh, as he seized the edge of the boat.

“Just in time, Clarice!” he said.

Clarice could not even scream at seeing her enemy rise from the water at the very moment she fancied herself free from him, and was hoping for rescue. She was overcome with disappointment.

“I shall upset you, I am afraid,” continued Brosseau. “No—there—all safe—and now, ma belle, over the border—over the border!”

He seized the oars, and began to row towards the head of the lake.

“The fates are against you, Clarice,” he said. “Don’t you see that? I was just wishing for a boat—and you were wishing to escape from me—and you bring me what I want. You might as well give up now.”

The boat shot through the water. Brosseau, as he emerged from the bay into the open lake, gave a loud, shrill call, or rather yell, evidently intended for an alarm. It was answered by a distant whistle. Clarice understood that her last hope of escape was gone. She started up with the desperate intention of throwing herself into the water.

“What folly!” said Brosseau, preventing her. “As if I should not save you. Don’t compel me tie you hand and foot. It would be uncivil, I know, but I swear to you I *will not* let you escape me. Will you be quiet? or must I tie you?” He said this in the tone in which one would threaten a fractious child to whom he did not wish to be cross.

Clarice saw that he could easily enough do as he said, and to be bound would not increase her chance of safety. She sat down again, postponing further resistance. The party on shore had seen what happened, but only supposed that some woman of the smuggling rendezvous had attempted to open a communication with them, and had failed. Charles formed a different conjecture.

“Cannot we get a boat?” he said.

“They will be coming along presently,” said the leader, not quite understanding Charles’s ardor in the pursuit. “They will know by that infernal yell that fellow gave, that something is going on. Don’t be afraid. He can’t get away now.”

“He’ll be over the line before long,” observed one of the party.

“The line!” said the other, with profane contempt. “I’ll catch him wherever I can, line or no line, and if Queen Victoria don’t like it, she can do t’other thing.”

I do not think that Charles was loyal enough to resent this acknowledged disregard for the rights of nations, and the private opinion of his beloved liege lady and queen thereupon. The discharge of a pistol hastened up the reserve that was in a boat a little distance, and while some of the party were landed near a point whose exact locality was unwittingly revealed by Clarice in her attempt to escape, one or two others, including Charles, pursued Brosseau. Charles had pulled stroke oar in a University boat, but he never had rowed as he did then. They were approaching him; but another large boat filled with men was approaching from the opposite direction, and a voice hailed them, warning them to keep back, for that the d—d Yanke revenue laws left off there, as they would find out soon. Every one not having Charles’s motive, there was a little slackening of exertion.

“*Another* slip between cup and lip, Master Charles Crespigny!” shouted Brosseau, with a derisive laugh.

“Charles, Charles!” called Clarice, stretching out her arms toward him. Charles started to his feet, and pointed a pistol at Brosseau, who answered his threat to fire with another jeering laugh, and stopped rowing as the other boat came abreast of him, and put his own arm around Clarice.

“Fire then!” he said.

“Yes!” said Clarice. “I would rather die by your hand, than live in the power of this man.”

“Would you so, my little beauty!” said Brosseau.

The boats had met, and there was an interchange of shouts and curses, mingled with similar sounds from on shore. The revenue officers had no time to attend to the capture of Brosseau, who sat looking on for a minute, giving some orders to his allies, and then took up the oars again. As he did so, Charles fired, and he dropped the oars again, with savage curse, that told Charles that the shot had taken serious effect. Brosseau felt that he was wounded severely. He started up, and clasping Clarice in his arms, sprang into the water.

“*Je ne mourrai pas seul!*”

There was mortal agony, despair and exulting hate in the piercing cry that rose over all the indescribable mixed sounds of a furious hand-to-hand encounter among those fiercest of animals called men. It came back to Charles often in after days, as he heard it then and saw its meaning. He was at Brosseau’s side in the water in the next instant, trying to wrest Clarice from him; but the desperate man had lost all care for his own life. He sunk with Clarice in his grasp; but as they rose again, he lost his hold, and she was seized by Charles. Almost exhausted as Brosseau was, his purpose did not fail, and he tried to grapple Charles and drag him down. It required no great strength to elude him, however, and Charles felt then as if he had the force of ten men. They were not so far from the shore but that he gained it, and, worn out and dripping as he was, he would not have exchanged for any glory in the world the first moment in which he stood on the firm land, with Clarice safe, fairly won as a prize of battle, and his own henceforward and forever.

I do not know what you would have had Charles do, when the remembrance of his father’s confession returned to his mind. He himself decided that his duty to his father demanded every support and aid, but not to the extent of giving up Clarice and marrying Ernestine. He cut the Gordian knot by marrying Clarice as soon as they were within the limits of law and order again, and, returning with her to Montreal, as rapidly as possible afterwards. Here they first met Josephine, who welcomed Charles with an enthusiasm that startled him a little, but which both Clarice and M. Vauvinel must have pardoned, seeing that it was only on behalf of Charles’s wife that Josephine usurped for an instant her privileged mode of greeting. She reassured Charles as to his father’s affairs. All he needed was ready money, she said, and Antoine had ready money enough, and wanted to spend it all in good works, and there was no better work than this. The truth was that Antoine’s conscience was very guilty as to his treatment of his wife, and he was

now so helplessly dependent on her care and company that he let her dispose of his money as she would.

As to Miss Fitz Este, Josephine hinted at some curious suspicions, which were more than confirmed when an examination of Emilion Brosseau's papers revealed the fact that he had actually married Ernestine ten years before, believing that his marriage would easily put him in immediate possession of her money, and easily relinquishing her when he discovered his mistake. Of the lady's conduct, nothing need be said—unless it were to refer it to the taste for left-handed marriages, not to say bigamy, in that same royal family. She went to Europe after this transpired, and the last news of her was that she had married a handsome peasant whom she had taught to read and write.

Clarice never turned out to be anybody's daughter, but as she is supposed to be the adopted daughter of the Vauvins, who have money, Charles is pardoned his misalliance on the supposition that he married for the sake of the pecuniary advantage gained by Clarice's husband.

Brosseau's body was never recovered, and some persons assert that he is not dead. There seems to be no reasonable chance of that, however, and he has never reappeared, even to Seth Hastings, who probably regretted him more than any one else did. He gave up the free trade business for several reasons.

"The old set is broke up," he said. "Poor Emilion has gone where we must all go—at least, I hope he has gone where we'll all go—" emended Seth, with a faint remembrance of his early orthodoxy confusing him a little, "and there aint any one just up to what *he* was; and I'm getting on in years;" and other reasons, all of which determined Seth to turn his experience towards strengthening the hands of the government, by preventing any one else from practicing the art which he had abandoned. When the taxes were low Seth said he didn't think it made so much difference; but now he didn't think it was patriotic to be instrumental in keeping so much money out of Uncle Sam's pocket, "besides, the officers had got to be so much smarter since smuggling had got to be more important, that he wasn't ashamed of keeping company with 'em." All of which resulted in the revelation of sorts of devices by means of Seth, who is cursed all along the border. He also has brought to the support of the law his daughter, the "Miss Fitz Este" and "Clarice Thibault" in Brosseau's scheme, who can detect lace in a chignon or panier at sixty paces.

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