

Lady Guilfort

The following story is derived from the authentic work of M. Peuchet, *Les Archives de la Police de Paris*. The period to which the narrative refers is that of the reign of Louis XIV.

Monsieur de la Regnie had filled for several years, to the general satisfaction, the functions of Lieutenant-General of Police, when, on a sudden, terror spread itself through Paris in consequence of the extraordinary disappearance of several persons. In the course of four months, twenty-six young men, the youngest seventeen, and the oldest twenty-five years of age, had been spirited away from their inconsolable families. The most extravagant and contradictory rumors were in circulation upon the subject, particularly in the Faubourg St. Antoine, which had to deplore the loss of four or five young men, the sons of rich and respectable upholsterers residing in that quarter of the city. Among other gossiping stories whispered about upon the subject, it was pretended that a princess who was suffering from a dangerous liver complaint, had been advised by some foreign charlatan or quack doctor, to make use from time to time, as a means of cure, of a bath of human blood, and that the unfortunate missing persons had been immolated for the purpose. Another equally horrible surmise was, that they had been made away with by the Jews, who, out of hatred and derision of the crucified Messiah, were accustomed to put Christians to death upon the Cross. Fortunately for the poor Jews, this latter opinion took no hold of the public mind.

Whatever the secret cause of these disappearances might have been, terror and desolation reigned in Paris. The Duke de Gevres having mentioned the facts to the King, his Majesty sent for the Lieutenant-General of Police, and reproached him with suffering the existence of such a system of kidnapping, which, in all likelihood, he added, must have been followed by violent deaths, as none of those missing had ever been heard of afterwards. Monsieur de la Regnie, in despair at the displeasure of his Majesty, returned in very bad humor to Paris, and sent immediately for one of his most experienced agents, named Lecoq, a man whose services on many difficult occasions he had good reason to value. To him he made known the embarrassment in which he found himself, told him of the king's answer, and held out to him the prospect of so great a reward that Lecoq, carried away by his cupidity, exclaimed, "Ah, [monseigneur]! I see that, in order to take you out of trouble, I must renew the sacrifice of Abraham. I ask you to allow me eight days, in which time I hope to give you a good account of the affair." Lecoq said no more; and Monsieur de la Regnie, who looked upon him as his best agent, dismissed him with a sign which gave him to understand that he had at his disposal all the resources of the police. At that time it was the custom in the police department to make use of mute signs on extraordinary occasions of this kind, the meaning of which was known only to the principal and most confidential agents.

Lecoq, who was not married, had a natural son, to whom he was greatly attached, and over whose conduct and education he carefully watched. This lad, called by his companions L'Eveille, from his precociousness and sprightliness of his disposition, was gifted with no common intelligence. Though little more than sixteen years of age, nature had not only given him reason beyond his years, but had also been prodigal to him of external gifts. Young Lecoq, beside possessing a handsome face, was tall, and so well and strongly formed, that he looked more like a man of five-and-twenty than a youth of sixteen. L'Eveille, whose real name was Exupere, obtained from his father all that could flatter the vanity of a young man; from his

handsome person was always set off by costly and modish clothes. He, however, quitted the house but seldom, for the elder Lecoq knew but too well the danger to which handsome young men like his son were exposed in the streets of Paris; and on the rare occasions when Exupere was allowed to go abroad, he was always accompanied by one of the other od the police spies whom his father had at his back.

Lecoq, on returning from his interview with Monsieur de la Regnie, shut himself up with his son, and had a long conversation with him. In the afternoon of that day, Exupere was seen quitting the house alone, and splendidly dressed. Around his hat and suspended from his neck were gold chains; he wore two watches; and, from the chinking of his purse as he walked, it was evident that it was filled with good broad pieces of gold coin. But what still more surprised the neighbors (for the profession of the elder Lecoq was unknown to them,) was to see the handsome and finely-dressed L'Eveille go and return home several times during four consecutive days, without being accompanied, as had always been the case before, by his uncle (in reality his father,) or some friend. It has been already stated that L'Eveille, besides the remarkable comeliness of his face and person, was endowed with a lively intellect, courage, prudence, and *savoir faire*. The confidential conversation he had with his father had awakened his ambition; and he easily understood that he might acquire both honor and profit should he succeed in discovering, for the Lieutenant-General of Police, the cause of the extraordinary disappearance of so many young persons. Accordingly, in the rich dress befitting a young man of family, he walked about the streets, on the quays, in the gardens of the Tuileries and Luxembourg, and in the Salle des Pas Perdus at the Palaise de Justice, and in the galleries of that vast edifice, then a favorite haunt of the gay and idle among the Parisians.

Lecoq the elder had conjectured that the young men who had disappeared had been ensnared to their ruin by the seductive charms of some frail beauty; and he foresaw that, by putting his son in the way to meet such a creature, he exposed him likewise to a similar fate, but, reckoning upon his being forewarned, he hoped he might escape the snare that had been fatal to so many others. The fifth day, towards three o'clock in the afternoon, young Lecoq, in all the *eclat* of his fine clothes, was sauntering on the terrace of the garden of the Tuileries next the river, when a remarkably beautiful young woman passed close by him. She was walking alone, but was followed at some distance by a kind of humble friend, or *gouvernante*. She appeared to be about 25 years of age, was elegantly dressed, and had not only much beauty in her face and shape, but a certain foreign grace or piquancy in her air and manner. L'Eveille gazed, or pretended to gaze, with great interest upon the fine form and striking features of the unknown fair one. His glances were not thrown away, but were answered by timid and half-downcast looks. He drew himself up, arranged the frill of his shirt, disposed in better order his lace ruffles – in a word, gave himself the airs of a man who had the presentiment of an adventure, hoping all the time that it was that for which he had his instructions already. To make sure of this, he had passed and repassed several times before the lady, and at length took a seat upon one of the benches of the labyrinth which then existed in front of the Champs Elysees. He had not been there many minutes when he saw the friend, or *suivante*, of his beauty approach the spot where he was, and, after a few turns, seat herself on the same bench. He took off his hat, as was the custom, and soon after entered into conversation; and, thinking the game already in his hands, he asked the *suivante* who the young lady was in whose service she appeared to be. “Oh, sir,” replied she, “the history of my mistress is almost a romance.” “A romance!” exclaimed L'Eveille, “you

interest me deeply; probably your mistress is—.” “Yes,” replied the *suivante*, in a confidential tone “you have guessed right; she is that interesting young person, of whom all Paris is still talking; and, since you have so readily chanced upon her name, I will no longer conceal from you her history. You must know, my dear sir, that the father of my mistress was a rich Polish prince, who came to Paris *incognito*, and whilst there formed a connection with the daughter of a tradesman in the Rue St. Denis; a child (my mistress) was the result of this intercourse. The prince quitted Paris, and never returned. It was said that he had been set upon by brigands and murdered. The King of Poland, however, having been made acquainted with the unworthy conduct of the prince, wished to repair, as far as in him lay, the evil he had done; and, for that purpose sent a confidential agent to Paris. But, alas! before his arrival the mother of my mistress had died of a broken heart, and he found her infant orphan alone on the world. The King of Poland, on being informed of the circumstances, caused the child to be declared heiress of the vast wealth of the Prince. Happy the man who shall call her his own!” Happy, indeed!” exclaimed L’Eveille, “the man who could entertain even a hope of pleasing her,” at the same time heaving a deep sigh. “Ah, young man, to please, you must sometimes dare—” “To do what?” asked L’Eveille. “How should I know?—to be amiable.” “and how is that to be done?” “Oh, you question me too closely; and, for an intelligent youth, as you appear to be, you ask singular questions. Adieu, monsieur.”

“One word more,” cried L’Eveille; “one word more, I conjure you.” The *suivante*, who had risen, sat down again. It was now L’Eveille’s turn to speak; and he told the old woman, with as much apparent ingenuousness as he could muster up, that he was the son of a wealthy physician of Mans, and that he had been sent to Paris to attend the course of lectures at the university; and added, “Here I have been for the last ten days, and as you see not ill provided; for my father is generous, having no child but me; and, besides watches, chains, and rings, I have two hundred pistoles in my purse, and leisure and disposition to devote myself to the task of pleasing so charming a person as your mistress.”

The old sorceress chuckled and smiled, with a mingled expression of pleasure and contemptuous pity. She then took L’Eveille by the hand, and said, “You have entirely won my heart, and I feel a kind of motherly affection for you, of which I will give you proof. Listen to me. You have not escaped my mistress’ notice. She was struck with your person and manners, and desired me to find out who you were. I am charmed that her choice should have fallen on one so worthy of her. Station yourself, this evening, a little before nightfall, in front of the principal door of the church of St. Germain l’Auxerrois. I will meet you there, and bring you, I have no doubt, good tidings. Take care to come well dressed, and with all your finery; for it might spoil all were you to appear before my mistress in the guise of a thread bare-coated, pennyless student.” This point being settled they separated.

L’Eveille, in his joy, scarcely touched the ground along which he hurried home, as he felt convinced that he had discovered the decoy that had lured so many young men to their ruin. On acquainting his father with what had taken place, Lecoq shared in his suspicions and hopes of his son; but, as the hour of trial drew nigh, paternal tenderness filled his heart with fear, and he trembled at the danger the young man was about to encounter. However, in order to diminish that danger as much as possible, he summoned a number of his most trusty police agents, to whom he briefly explained the nature of the service, and recommended them to keep close to his son,

without, however, compromising, by their too near approach, the success of the *coup de main* he was about to attempt. He himself was to walk a short distance before them, resolved that, as far as in him lay, the expedition should not fail. A little before nightfall L'Eveille, still more richly dressed than in the morning, proceeded to the place appointed. The church doors were about being closed when an old woman meanly clad, and with her face nearly concealed under a hood, emerged from the church, and after throwing a furtive glance around her, recognized L'Eveille, and made a sign to approach her. "I should never have known you," cried L'Eveille. "What a strange figure you have made of yourself?" "Oh, it is a necessary precaution, my son, in order to escape the eyes of the numerous adorers of my mistress, who, hoping to gain me to their interest, beset me whenever they see me in the streets. Good gracious! These puppies are as numerous around our house as bees are about a hive. Let us hurry on; but first put this bandage on your eyes. This is a delicate attention shown by our Parisian gallants to their mistresses, and with which I know Mademoiselle Jeborouski (for so my mistress is called) will be not a little pleased, and will reward you for it." "No, by my faith," replied L'Eveille, "I shall not bandage my eyes. My father expressly forbid me ever to do so." — "Well, then, let us proceed," said the woman, "without it, since your papa has forbidden you. I shall explain that to mademoiselle."

They walked forward, the old woman a few paces in advance of L'Eveille, and the police agents following at a cautious distance. They traversed the Rue de l'Arbesec, de la Monnaie, and after various windings, those of Betezy, Lavandieres, Mauvaises Paroles, Deux Boules, Jean Lambert, and at length stopped in the Rue des Ortevres, not the least hideous street of that infected and black mud-covered quarter of Paris. There near the chapel of St. Elio, and opposite a tolerably good looking house, the old woman halted, and said "my dear sir, my mistress does not reside in this poor place, but the house belongs to her, and it was her wish to receive you here first. I shall go up and let her know you are here."

The old demoness entered the house, leaving L'Eveille at the door. His father to encourage him—though he trembled himself—crossed the street and squeezed his hand. He had scarcely moved away when the old woman reappeared, and after again endeavoring, but in vain, to persuade L'Eveille to let his eyes be bandaged, conducted him into the fatal house. L'Eveille, though armed, felt no little misgivings and fears of being attacked as he followed his faithless guide in utter darkness through a long passage and up some flights of stairs. However, he met no obstacles of the kind, and was, after some time, ushered into a room lighted with wax tapers and richly furnished. At one end of the room, upon a crimson-colored sofa, fringed with gold lace, reclined, in a most seductive dishabille, the daughter of the Polish prince, Mademoiselle Jaborouski. At the sight of the stranger, her hand sparkled with brilliants, (no doubt from the Polish mines,) readjusted over her half disclosed bosom the two open folds of her robe, and after saluting her visitor with an encouraging smile, she made a signal to her duenna to retire.

The young man forgetful or the moment of the object of his mission, felt as if under the spell of enchantment, and fascinated by the beautiful person before him, he had scarcely power to speak or move. She, seeing his embarrassment, arose from the sofa and held out her hand which he eagerly seized and kissed. This but served to put more completely to flight his presence of mind; and, though conscious of the infamous and dangerous nature of the place where he was, he could not resist taking a seat on the sofa near so charming an object. So that it might have been said of

him that he had completely fallen into the power of her whom he had come to surprise, and deliver into the hand of justice.

The elder Lecoq, who with the police agents were impatiently waiting in the street, not hearing the signal agreed upon with his son, put a whistle to his mouth, and blew it loudly. The shrill sound reached the ears of young Lecoq, and put his illusions instantly to flight. He started from the sofa, and the siren under whose fascinations he had been, under pretence of giving directions to her old *suivante* went into an adjoining chamber. L'Eveille, profiting by her absence, made an inspection of the room, in one corner of which stood what appeared to be a kind of Indian screen. Wishing to see what was behind this, he endeavored to close up its folds, but finding them immoveable, he shook them with some violence, when he heard a click, like that of a spring giving way, and one of the folds descended into the floor, and left unmasked a deep and ample recess or cupboard, upon the shelves of which were ranged twenty-six silver dishes, and in each a human head, the flesh of which had been preserved by some embalming process. A stifled cry of horror burst from the youth's lips, which, but a moment before had been breathing the accents of admiration and passion. But his agony of terror was still farther increased, when looking toward one of the windows of the room, he thought he saw several other cadaverous faces fixing upon him through the panes their glazed but fiery glances. He grasped at the back of a chair, to keep from falling, his hair stood on end, drops of cool perspiration covered his forehead, his cheeks became paler and more livid than the faces of the dead that confronted him, and his nerves at length giving way, he sank upon his knees, and clasped his hands in a delirium of terror and despair.

At this moment the window was burst in, and his father, followed by the police agents, jumped into the apartment, for the elder Lecoq, alarmed by the silence of his son, and dreading that he might be assassinated, had bravely mounted to the assault of the house, which he was enabled to do by means of ladders, which the agents procured from a neighboring house-builder's yard. This fortunate and daring act of Lecoq's did in fact save his son's life for immediately after the noise made by Lecoq and his police agents breaking into the apartment, [Mademoiselle] Jabrouski, followed by four armed ruffians, rushed from the adjoining chamber; but the police agents being superior in number, and equally well armed, resistance was in vain, and the fair murderess and her four accomplices were secured, and, after being manacled, were carried off to prison. A close examination of the house led to no other discover worth noticing.

Thus far in the words of Peuchet, whose explanation of this strange history is as follows:—A number of the most desperate malefactors, whose crimes had often merited the gibbet and the galleys, had formed an association under the command of an experienced and daring chief. This arch villain had in the course of his wanderings fallen in with a rich but most profligate Englishwoman—a modern Messalina. She lent herself to serve as a decoy, by means of which young men who had the appearance of wealth were lured to the den where young Lecoq had had so miraculous an escape. They were murdered, and their heads separated from their bodies. The latter were disposed of to the surgical students for anatomical purposes; and the heads, after being dried and embalmed, were kept until a safe opportunity offered of sending them to Germany, where a high price was given for them by the secret amateurs of a science then in its infancy, but which has since made a noise in the world under the name of [phrenology], or the system of Gall and Spurzheim.

The government dreading the effect on the minds of the people likely to be produced by a public exposure of these numerous and atrocious murders, took measures for the prompt but secret punishment of the culprits. The four robbers were hung, and their female accomplice was also sentenced to death; but destiny ordained otherwise, as the sequel will prove.

The conclusion of this strange eventful history is thus narrated by Peuchet. The chevalier de Lorraine, the Marquis de Louvois, and the Chancellor of France happened to be present in the Marchioness de Montespan's apartment, whilst Louis XIV, was relating to her and the Duke of Orleans, his brother, the adventure of young Lecoq, who had been rewarded with a considerable sum of money and a lucrative place. The marchioness expressed great horror at the profligacy and cruelty of lady Guilfort, (which title, like that of Jabrouski, was one of the many names assumed by the Englishwoman, her real name having never been discovered,) and asked the King if the execution of so base and fiendish a creature should take place. Louis XIV, replied that the law would take its course, and then changed the conversation. Soon after the Duke of Orleans and the Chevalier de Lorraine took their leave. After quitting the apartment, the Chevalier said to his royal highness, "This Englishwoman must be a rare piece of womanhood; suppose we have her to sup with us?" The prince cried out, "shame shame!" but the extravagance of the proposal pleased him; and on the favorite renewing his entreaties he consented. The Englishwoman being confined in the Bastile, a blank *latter de cachet* was procured and filled up with an order to the governor to deliver to the care of the bearer, Lady Guilfort, for the purpose of her *being transferred to the prison at Pignerol*. The governor of the Bastille delivered up his prisoner; but shortly after having done so, he came to the knowledge of the trick that had been played upon him, and in the first moment of alarm and anger he talked of complaining to the king; but on the name of the Duke of Orleans being mentioned, he resolved to hush up the matter, which was done by means of a *process verbal* certifying the sudden death and burial, within the precincts of the Bastile, of the female prisoner in question.

Lady Guilfort, who supposed that her removal from the Bastile was only for the purpose of being taken to the Conciergerie, preparatory to her execution, soon perceived, however, that the carriage took the direction of one of the barriers of Paris; after quitting which, and at the end of two hour's drive, it stopped. A kind of equerry came and opened the door, offered her his hand to descend, and after passing through a long corridor, and up some flights of stairs, ushered her into a brilliant and well-lighted apartment. After the interval; of a few minutes, three gentlemen entered the room. Though plainly dressed, it was [evident], from their air and manner, that they were persons of high rank. One of them immediately on entering, put an opera glass to his eye, and examined with haughty curiosity Lady Guilfort; the two others threw themselves into arm-chairs. Lady Guilfort, after the first surprise was over, had no difficulty in recognizing in the persons before her the king's brother the Duke of Orleans, the Marquis d'Effiat, and the Chevalier de Lorraine. She quickly conceived the motives which led to her being brought into their presence; and though, under other circumstances, she would have willingly joined in the wildest orgies with the persons in whose company she then found herself, yet the recollection of her dungeon in the Bastile, and the terrible death impending over her, left no thought but that of making her escape. She affected not to be aware of the rank of the personages before her; but, seeming to enter into the spirit of the adventure, she exerted all her powers of fascination, and soon made captive to her seductive influence the Chevalier de Lorraine and the Marquis d'Effiat.

But the Duke of Orleans, never a great admirer of the fair sex, and who could not vanquish his horror of the Englishwoman, tired before long of the scene; and bethinking himself that the gratification of his curiosity might be too dearly purchased by the risk of the King's displeasure, should the circumstance reach his Majesty's ears, and having refused to stay for supper, was conducted by the Chevalier de Lorraine and the Marquis d'Effiat to his apartment, for this scene took place in the palace of Versailles, and in the lodging of the Marquis de Lafare, the use of which he had given to the Chevalier de Lorraine for twenty-four hours.

The two gentlemen, after returning to the room where lady Guilfort was, sat down with her to a *petit souper*. The most exuberant gaiety, and not the most refined gallantry, was the order of the night. At the close of a supper which had been prolonged into the small hours of the morning, Lady Guilfort on a sudden rose up, and taking up a taper, made her lowest courtesy, and wished the gentlemen good night. She then quitted the room. Soon after the two gentlemen moved off to their respective chambers, when Lady Guilfort silently locked the doors of their apartments, and hurried back to the supper-room, where, tying together the table-cloths and napkins, she fastened one end of this *impromptu* rope to the balcony, and, by means of it, let herself down into the park, where she lay concealed until the gates were opened in the morning. She then slipped out, and hurrying into the town of Versailles, took the first vehicle that offered, and arrived in Paris before her two imprisoned admirers were released from duress, as they dared not, during the night, make a noise in a palace by calling or ringing for the servants, to have the doors of the rooms in which they were locked up forced open, lest it might lead to the discovery of their participation in the criminal trick played off upon the Governor of the Bastile, and the escape of lady Guilfort.

On arriving at Paris, lady Guilfort hastened to the Rue Plat d'Etain, where in an obscure and miserable looking house, but admirably contrived inside for the purpose of concealment, lived one of the chief agents of the band of malefactors with whom she was connected. There, after explaining to her accomplice the means by which she had recovered her liberty, she found a secure asylum. In a little time, aided by this villain, Lady Guilfort organized a new troop of bandits, upon whom she could reckon, offensively and defensively. She, as chief of the association, planned the expeditions, partitioned the booty, and, at times, took a personal part in the expedition. The individual in whose house she had taken refuge, was lieutenant of the troop.

As it was no longer possible to allure victims to the den by means of Lady Guilfort's personal attractions, the efforts of the band were principally confined to house robberies; but murders were avoided, unless where they became necessary to the safety of the robbers.

Besides the feeling of hatred arising from the loss of four of the troop, including the captain, and the diminution of their gains effected by young Lecoq's interference, Lady Guilfort nourished a deep desire of personal vengeance against him for having been duped by him, and resorted to the following stratagem to gratify that feeling. Young Lecoq, enriched by the bounty of the king, and possessed of a lucrative place, led a regular life, undisturbed by any fears of Lady Guilfort's vengeance, he supposing her to be dead, when, one day, a grace-looking and respectably-dressed man called upon him, and, after requiring a promise of secrecy with regard to what he should tell him, asked if he should like to be put in the way of detecting a set of smugglers, who carried on an extensive and thriving trade between Belgium and Paris, in Brussels lace and other prohibited

goods. Lecoq, whose ruling passion was avarice, eagerly accepted the offer, and agreed to the terms proposed. His informant was to point out Lecoq as a sure agent, to whose house the smugglers might consign their bales and cases of contraband merchandize. Ten to twelve days after the conclusion of this bargain, a cart stopped at Lecoq's door, and from it were taken two large wooden cases, which, according to Lecoq's orders, were placed in a store-room on the ground floor of his house. The carter, after in vain searching his pockets for the keys, said that he must have left them at the stage where he had stopped the night before, but that he would return hither, and bring then to Lecoq the next morning. From some over-acting on this man's part, and from observing that these cases were perforated in seven or eight places with small holes Lecoq had his suspicions awakened. He communicated his doubts to a friend of his, a courageous and resolute young fellow; and in the evening, when everything was very quiet in the house, they both, armed with pistols, descended with noiseless steps the stairs, and took their posts near the door of the store-room, which had been left purposely unclosed.

They had been for a considerable time on the watch; and Lecoq's friend, getting impatient, was about abandoning his post, when an indistinct noise from that part of the store-room where the cases were placed, struck their ears. They redoubled their attention—the noise increased; and they were soon afterwards able to ascertain that it came from the cases. Lecoq squeezed the hand of his friend—the signal was understood—they both cocked their pistols. “John,” said a voice in the lowest possible whisper, “are you there? We appear to be alone in the house. Let us breathe a little air, for I am stifled in this cursed box. We can lie down again when the people of the house come back.” “Do you think they have any suspicion?” “Not the least; with all his cunning, Lecoq is blinded by his avarice; the English woman judged him rightly, and tonight, at twelve, she may satisfy her vengeance in the heart's blood of the infamous *mouchard* (police spy.)” “fire!” cried Lecoq, at the same time discharging his pistol in the direction of the cases; his friend did the same; and the explosion was followed by a double cry of agony—the balls had taken effect. Lecoq ran into an adjoining room, where he had placed a lighted lamp in a cupboard, and bringing it with him into the store-room, he and his friend saw the robbers stretched at the bottom of the cases, one dead, and the other having his thigh broken. The noise of the fire-arms bro't several of the neighbors to the house and soon after the patrol arrived. The circumstance greatly annoyed Lecoq; as the public rumor of the discovery of the two robbers would, if it reached the ears of the rest of the band, prevent them from keeping their engagement for midnight, and thus frustrate, his intention of securing them all. He however, endeavored to repair as much as possible the evil, by enjoining silence on those who entered the house. He also informed the lieutenant general of police, who sent him a company of soldiers, disguised, and whom came to the house only one by one, where they were conveniently posted for the reception of the robbers.

It had scarcely struck midnight when the noise of several feet was heard approaching, and soon after they stopped opposite the door of the house, whilst, at the same time, five knocks were given upon one of the windows of the store-room; the door after a moment's delay, was cautiously half opened, and four men successively entered, followed by another figure in female attire. The door was then slammed to violently, a whistle was blown, and instantly numerous torches and tapers were brought from the adjoining rooms, which lighted up the hall, and exhibited to the stupefied banditti the muskets of thirty soldiers leveled at them. In despair they dropped their arms, and were seized, bound, and carried off to prison. Before their departure,

Lecoq went up to the female figure, and putting a lamp to her face, beheld features totally unknown to him. The woman was not Lady Guilfort. Lecoq's disappointment and astonishment were extreme. The next day, however, he received a note, which in some measure cleared up the [mystery]. This note, which exists in the archives of the police, was brought to him by a porter, who said it had been given to him by a lady in a thick veil. The contents were as follows:

“Tremble!—One of us must perish! Yesterday I was near your house, when the impatience of my two agents rendered abortive my plan; but wishing to revenge myself on the new captain of our troop, and the unworthy rival he has preferred to me, I did not warn him of the fate of our advanced guard, but allowed him to proceed on the expedition, knowing that he would thereby become your and the police's prey. I have succeeded, and they, will now expiate the scorn they treated me with. You may judge from this if my vengeance knows how to reach those that incur it. It is your turn next, young fanfaron, who imagine that you are secure from my blows, by having made yourself *mouchard*, when at best you are good for nothing else than to be...”

Peuchet adds, in a note, “after this letter, the conclusion of which is expressed in too energetic terms to be repeated to ears polite, the report breaks off abruptly, several pages having been torn out of the register. We are, therefore, ignorant of the *denouement* of Lady Guilfort's history; but from what we have seen of it, it is abundantly clear that this was not the last of her adventures.”

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