

Representative Plays by American Dramatists: 1856-1911: Paul Kauvar; or, Anarchy eBook

Representative Plays by American Dramatists: 1856-1911: Paul Kauvar; or, Anarchy by Steele MacKaye

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PAUL KAUVAR; OR, ANARCHY

[Illustration: *Steele Mackaye*]

STEELE MACKAYE

(1844-1894)

When one realizes the sociological purpose behind Steele Mackaye's "Paul Kauvar; or, Anarchy," it is interesting to note how inefficient the old form of drama was to carry anything more than the formal romantic fervour. Compared with John Galsworthy's treatment in "Strife" and "Justice," it makes one glad that realism came and washed away all the obscuring claptrap of that period. Daly, Boucicault, and their generation were held firmly in its grip; they could not get away from it, and they were justified in their loyalty to it by the insistent claim "The Two Orphans" and "The Lady of Lyons" had upon the public. All the more credit, therefore, that Bronson Howard, David Belasco, and James A. Herne escaped it; had the latter completely freed himself of melodrama, his plays would be better known to-day, better capable of revival, because of the true greatness of their simple realistic patches.

But where Mackaye vitalized the old style was in the vigour of his treatment. He loved the large scene, the mob movement; and he worked with a big brush. As Nym Crinkle, the popular New York *World* dramatic critic of the day, wrote: "Whatever else he may be, [he] is not a 'lipping hawthorne bud'! He doesn't embroider such napkins as the 'Abbe Constantin', and he can't arrange such waxworks as 'Elaine'. He can't stereoscope an emotion, but he can incarnate it if you give him people enough."

Mackaye's mind was large, resourceful, daring—both in the opinions it upheld, and the practical theatrical innovations it introduced into the theatre, like the double stage for the little Madison Square playhouse, in New York, which was the precursor of such modern paraphernalia as came later with the foreign revolving stages. He always stood on the threshold of modernism, advocating those principles which were to fructify in the decades to follow him. Such pioneer spirit was evident in his ardent advocacy of Delsarte methods of acting; his own work as an actor was coloured and influenced by the master whose pupil he became in the early years of his career. When one recalls the methods of Wallack, and his shy approach toward anything which was “natural,” it seems very advanced to hear Mackaye echoing the Delsarte philosophy. This advocacy was nowhere better demonstrated than when, at a breakfast given him at the New York Lotos Club, he talked on the rationale of art for two hours, and held spell-bound the attention of Longfellow, Bryant, Louis Agassiz, James J. Fields, E.P. Whipple, Edwin Booth and others. He once said:

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A man to be a true actor must not only possess the power to portray vividly the emotions which in any given situation would be natural to himself, but he must study the character of the man whom he impersonates, and then act as that man would act in a like situation.

Mackaye's devotion to Delsarte was manifest in the many practical ways he aided his teacher; he was rewarded by being left most of his master's manuscripts. This passionate interest in the technique of acting not only enriched his own work, but, in 1872, prompted him to open a Delsarte house (the St. James Theatre), and later interested him in a school of acting. Mackaye studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts and the Conservatoire, in Paris, having as an instructor at the latter institution M. Regnier. On his way back to America, Tom Taylor persuaded him to attempt *Hamlet* in London, at the Crystal Palace. This essayal met with success. It also opened the way for collaboration with Tom Taylor in the writing of "Arkwright's Wife" and "Clancarty," and with Charles Reade of "Jealousy." At this time also he commenced a dramatization of George Eliot's "Silas Marner."

There were no half-way measures about Mackaye; things of the theatre and principles of the theatre caught and held his interest. At the very last of his life, while he was at work on his "Spectatorus," which foreran the American idea of a Hippodrome, and which might have, in years to come, happily housed his son Percy's "Caliban," he was at the same time attempting to combine with it an educational aspect which would lift it above the mere spectacular. The symbolical notes which he handed his son—who was then a mere boy—for the writing of a Chorus, show the profound approach he took to all his work. Such seriousness is one of the consuming traits of Percy, whose sense of humour is probably better developed than that of his father, and whose sway of literary expression is fuller.

For none of Steele Mackaye's dramas were written with any idea of being read. They were all constructed by one fully alive to the theatre and its demands. In view of this, it is surprising how well "Paul Kauvar" flows in type. The minor editorial changes made for this edition by Mr. Percy Mackaye are based on several manuscripts, and the result is the first authentic text of the play. Steele Mackaye was always gripped in fascination by mob psychology, always eager to write of the Reign of Terror. The version here used is the mature one, given its premiere at Buffalo, New York, May 30, 1887. But Mr. Percy Mackaye is authority for the statement that while his father was studying with Delsarte, in Paris, he became enamoured of the Revolution, and there are two manuscripts extant, "The Denouncer" and "The Terror," which indicate that he was chipping away at his theme very early in life. He recast these sketches in the summer of 1875, while at Brattleborough, Vt., where he had a cottage on the Bliss Farm, familiar now to Rudyard Kipling lovers because of the fact that here, too, Kipling wrote, at a later day.

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The years 1875 and 1887 are the mileposts between which stretched a long period of successful play-writing by Steele Mackaye. By '75, he had already written "Marriage" (1872), "Arkwright's Wife" (1873) and "Clancarty" (1874). There followed quickly "Rose Michel" (1875, in collaboration), "Queen and Woman" (1876, an adaptation from Hugo), "Won at Last" (1877), "Through the Dark" (1878), "An Iron Will" (1879, later to be called "Hazel Kirke," 1880), "A Fool's Errand" (1881, an adaptation), "Dakolar" (1884), "In Spite of All" (1885), and "Rienzi" (1886). Then came the present play, followed by "A Noble Rogue" (1888) and "Money Mad," modelled after Hugo.

In correspondence with Mr. Percy Mackaye, it is significant to hear him insisting on his father's change in sociological bearing having taken place while writing "Paul Kauvar." Timeliness was given to its initial presentment through the fact that at the moment some Chicago anarchists had been on trial, and were condemned to death. Writing of the incident, William Dean Howells recalls that:

At the house of Judge Pryor, in 1887, several of us came together in sympathy with your father, who was trying—or had vainly tried—to get the United States Supreme Court to grant the Chicago anarchists a new trial. With your father I believed that the men had been convicted on an unjust ruling, and condemned for their opinions, not for a proven crime. I remember your father's wrathful fervour, and the instances he alledged of police brutality. [Letter to Mr. Percy Mackaye.]

In a published interview, Mackaye expressed his concern for the case; but he likewise was reticent about making theatre capital out of it. He is reported to have said:

The play was first called "Paul Kauvar; or, Anarchy." Then I thought "Anarchy" would be the best title, and under that I produced it in Buffalo. After its production, the Chicago anarchists were hanged, and, to avoid a possible charge of trading on that event, I went back to my first title. Later, however, the subtitle, "Anarchy," was gradually reduced to smaller lettering and finally dropped.

The success of the play on its first night was a double triumph, for twelve hundred leading citizens had signed an invitation to have it given in Mackaye's native city, and the evening was a kind of public testimony to his position. This was one of the rare instances of an American dramatist receiving such recognition. Mackaye assumed the title-role, and, supporting him were Frederick de Belleville, Eben Plympton, Sidney Drew, Julian Mitchell, May Irwin, and Genevieve Lytton. Commenting on the occasion, the *Buffalo Courier* said:

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It was not as a playwright alone that his friends honour Mr. Mackaye. It may be said of him with strict justice that he is one of the few men of our day who have brought to the much-abused theatre the intelligence, the skill, the learning and the genius that it so much needs in an era of speculators and buffoons. He has always been able and willing to take the pen or the rostrum, whether at Harvard or at Steinway Hall, to expound the principles upon which he has so assiduously worked for the past fifteen years.

Mackaye had chosen his theme in the same spirit that Judge Conrad had selected "Jack Cade." He wished to measure the danger of liberty, but he did so indirectly, for the play does not abound in long philosophical flights of definition and warning. He himself confessed that the subject was defined only once, in these words, spoken by the hero to the woman he loves, when she is pleading with him to flee from France. He silences her by saying:

"I must stay to war with beasts who bring disgrace upon our noble cause. The torch of liberty, which should light mankind to progress, when left in madmen's hands, kindles that blaze of anarchy whose only end is ashes."

This indicates very distinctly that Mackaye's stand for the Chicago anarchists was not due to sympathy with their political monomania, but rather championed justice which, only when rightly used, will stem the tide of overwrought minds. With the execution of these men, he believed the cause of anarchy would be strengthened by the general impression gained of their martyrdom. His attitude was widely discussed, and "Paul Kauvar" became a visible demonstration of anarchy gone mad.

Of the component elements in his play, Mackaye left a full record. It is worth preserving as indication of his motive. In an interview he said:

For many years I have devoted myself to the mechanical, as well as the artistic side of the theatre, in the hope that by improving stage mechanism I might help to develop the artistic ensemble essential to high art results in the theatre. To this end I have made numerous inventions, and designed and built several theatres. [The Madison Square and the Lyceum Theatres.] In this work I have been almost daily in contact with labourers and mechanics of every kind, and this contact stirred in me a very deep and sincere sympathy with these classes of men. I was led to realize the greatness of obligation under which the whole world is placed by the industry, ability and devotion to duty which characterizes by far the larger portion of the working classes. At the same time, through relations intimate and confidential, I became conscious that certain foreign ideas—the natural outgrowth of excessive poverty and despotism in the Old World—were insinuating themselves into the hearts and minds of American labourers to an extent perilous to their own prosperity

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and to the very life of the republic. In this country political corruption and the grasping spirit of corporations are constantly affording the demagogue or the dreamer opportunity to preach the destruction of civil order with great plausibility, giving scope to reckless theorists who have so often, in the world's history, baffled the endeavours of the rational and patient liberalists of their day. This excited in me an ardent desire to do what little I could as a dramatist to counteract what seemed to me the poisonous influences of these hidden forces: to write a play which might throw some light on the goal of destruction to which these influences inevitably lead, whenever the agitation between capital and labour accepts the leadership of anarchism. The time chosen by me was that of the Terror in France, 1793-94, during which the noble fruits of the French Revolution came near to annihilation, thanks to the supremacy, for a time, of a small band of anarchical men who, in the name of liberty, invoked the tyranny of terror. The hero of my play, *Paul Kauvar*, has for his prototype Camille Desmoulins, one of the most conspicuous and sincere sons of liberty of his day, who—in spite of his magnificent devotion to freedom—when he dared oppose the Jacobins, was beheaded at the guillotine—a martyr to national, as distinct from personal, liberty. The typical anarchist in my play is portrayed in *Carrac*, whose prototype was Thomas Carrier, sent into La Vendee as a representative of the Jacobin convention. It was this man who, without process of law, guillotined or destroyed most horribly over one hundred thousand innocent men, women, and children—in the name of liberty. He it was who invented the “republican marriage”—the drowned bodies of whose naked victims dammed the river Loire, and rendered its water pestilential.

The *Duc de Beaumont* portrays a type of the true noblesse of France—proud, fearless, often unjust, never ignoble.

Gouroc depicts the intriguing type of noblesse whose egotism and cruelty engendered the tyranny of the monarchy, and justified its destruction.

The prototype of General Delaroche was the brave and generous *Henri de la Rochejacquelin*, young leader of the royalists in La Vendee.

By the interplay of these types, I have sought to emphasize what is truly heroic in the struggle which must ensue in all times between men and classes possessed of differing ideas. Especially it is the purpose of my play to remind the American masses, by the history of the past, not to assist foreign influences to repeat that history on this continent in the future.

A sound attitude, and one supported now (1920) daily in the conservative press, whenever I.W.W. and Bolshevist demonstrations shake the country! But “Paul Kauvar” is, to-day, not the kind of drama to drive home the lesson; fashions have changed.

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On December 24, 1887, "Paul Kauvar" opened at the New York Standard Theatre, with Joseph Haworth and Annie Robe, and thereafter started on a stage career whose history is long and varied. It reached London, May 12, 1890, under the management of Augustus Harris, at the Drury Lane, with William Terriss and Jessie Millward heading the cast.

Nym Crinkle liked "Paul Kauvar" because of its vigorous masculinity. To him there was in it the "scintillant iron," "the strong arm, ruddy at times with the tongues of promethean fire." It is a big canvas, avowedly romantic. "It is," he wrote, after the play had been running in New York some months, "a work of great propulsive power, of genuine creative ingenuity, of massive dramatic effectiveness." On that account it is well worth the preserving and the reading.

NEW NATIONAL THEATRE.

Washington, D.C.

W.H. Rapley. Manager.

* * * * *

Saturday evening,... May 5th, 1888,

Grand Production for the Benefit of

The Statue of Washington,
to be presented by

The United States to the Republic of France,
of the latest and greatest New York success.

Paul Kauvar,
by
Steele Mackaye.

* * * * *

THIS PERFORMANCE IS GIVEN UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

=The President and Mrs. Cleveland=,

The following distinguished committee of ladies:



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Miss Florence Bayard, Mrs. Senator Palmer,
Mrs. Secretary Fairchild, Mrs. Secretary Endicott,
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Page 7

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and col. Thomas P. Ochiltree.*

THIS PROCUTION IS A TRIBUTE TO THE CAUSE FREELY OFFERED BY

=Mr. Henry G. Miner=,

=Steele Mackaye=,

And the Following Volunteer Cast.

Gentlemen:

Paul Kauvar Steele Mackaye

Honore Albert Maxime, Duc de Beaumont Frederic de Belleville

*Marquis de Vaux, alias Gouroc, one of the public accusers of the Revolutionary
Tribunal Wilton Lackaye*

general Delaroche, Commander of the Royalist Forces in La Vendee Nestor Lennon

general KLETERRE, Commander of the Republican Forces in La Vendee M.B. Snyder

col. La Hogue, on the staff of General Delaroche Leslie Allen

*Dodolphe Potin, an usher of the Revolutionary Tribunal; afterwards sergeant in the
Battalion of the Bonnets Rouges Sidney Drew*

*Carrac, a typical Anarchist and a Republican Representative in La Vendee Geo.
Fawcett*

BOURDOTTE, a "Sans Culottes" Edward Coleman

GOUJON, a Corporal in the Battalion of the Bonnets Rouges E.M. Hurd

TABOOZE, an officer of Gens d'Armes J.F. Wentworth

first orderly E.R. Spencer

second orderly A.S. Palmer

first Sans culottes Rufus William

second Sans culottes R.S. McBRIDE

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Ladies:

Diane de Beaumont, daughter of the Duke Miss *Carrie Turner*
Nanette Potin Miss *Helen mar*
Scarlotte Miss *Lizzie* RECHELLE

And the following trained auxiliaries:

Ladies.

Miss Bune. Miss Moore. Miss Becks. Miss Marshall.
Miss Pierson. Miss Maguire. Miss Forster. Miss Gianetti.
Miss Frozar. Miss Hughes. Miss Weltars. Mrs. Hughes.
Miss Weeks. Miss Naylor. Miss Lavard. Miss Hearn.
Miss Smith. Mrs. Boware. Miss Arnold. Mrs. Lack

Gentlemen.

Mart Townsend. Wm. Sharkey. Chas. Belmont. T. Mitchell.
Henry Schaffer. Wm. Brown. H. Marks. B. Fisher.
W.W. Waters. Geo. Masten. C.M. Mackay. Chas. Nuger.
Geo. Turner. Frank Comstock. T. Jarvis. H. Frees.
F. Daley. Wm. Chambers. S. Sullivan. J. Smith.
F. King. F. Reynolds. E. Russell. Daniel Charles.
R. Ryan. S.B. Caruth. J. Godfrey. S. Rosenthal.
J. Sheehan. J. Sawyer. G.B. Merton. A. Goldsmith.
R. Mansfield. G. Shaffer. P. Berger. Jas. O'Brien.
Rufus Williams. C. Bird. J.J. Blake. Wm. Mack.
Benj. Blons. H. Hamill. Chas. Marshall. C. Brady.
John Kenny. W. Sullivan. H. Gordon. G. Harvey.
Ben. Sharwood. F. Medina. M. Brickner. C. King.
Al. Young. Ed. Ryerson. L.T. McDermott. J. Macarthy.
Chas. Norman. E. Morrison. F. Allen.
Geo. Hopper. F. Blake. J. Harris.

* * * * *

Charles Haslam Business Manager of "Paul Kauvar" Company
Jere. Stevens Stage Manager
Ralph Welles Assistant Stage Manager
John Ginsinger Master Mechanic of Miner's Newark Theatre
Charles W. Helnert Assistant Master Mechanic of Miner's Newark Theatre
Joseph Logan Master Mechanic of "Paul Kauvar" Company
Harry Cashion Chief Flyman of H.C. Miner's Newark Theatre



Charles Dunlap Master of Properties of Miner's Newark Theatre
Ed. Lawrence Master of Properties of "Paul Kauvar" Company
A.C.E. Sturgis Chief Electrician of Miner's Newark Theatre
William Maston Assistant Electrician of Miner's Newark Theatre
Charles L'Orange Musical Director of Miner's Newark Theatre

* * * * *

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The Tableau of the “Dream” in the First Act represents

“The tyranny of terror.”

Scene—France. Time. 1794.

Act I.—The terror. Scene—The interior of the study of Paul Kauvar.

Act II.—The inhumanity of man. Scene—Prison of the Conciergerie adjoining the Revolutionary Tribunal in Paris.

Act III.—The confession. Scene—The Grand Hall of the Chateau of Delaroche in La Vendee.

Act IV.—On parole. Scene—Same as Act III.

Three minutes will elapse between Acts IV. and V.

Act V.—“Twixt love and Honor.” Scene—Same as Act IV.

The Tableau which concludes this performance, and rivals in power and beauty the famous dream scene of the first act, represents allegorically

“The Conquest of evil.”

It is a poetic picture, full of deep thought and careful study. The central figure is that of the Angel of Conquest, with one foot upon the prostrate fiend Anarchy, holding high that irresistible weapon of progress, the Sword of Light. The fiend carries in his hands the Torch and Flag of Anarchy, and with these is about to sink into the Abyss of Darkness.

* * * * *

PAUL KAUVAR;

Or,

ANARCHY

A PLAY IN FIVE ACTS

By Steele Mackaye

1915, by Harold Steele Mackaye

1919, by Harold Steele Mackaye

[The Editor wishes to thank Mrs. Steele Mackaye and Mr. Percy Mackaye for their permission to include “Paul Kauvar” in the present Collection. All rights are fully secured, and proceedings will immediately be taken against anyone attempting to infringe them.]

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Men.

Paul Kauvar, Age 30.—President of the Revolutionary Section of Fraternity. Afterwards Captain on GENERAL KLEBER’S staff.

HENRI DE LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN, Age 22. Commander of the Royalist forces in la Vendee.

GENERAL KLEBER, In command of the Republican forces in la Vendee.

HONORE ALBERT MAXIME, DUC DE BEAUMONT, Age 65. Cousin of LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.

GOUROC, alias MARQUIS DE VAUX, Of the Jacobin Club, and one of the Public Accusers of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

COLONEL LA HOGUE, On the staff of LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.

MARDOCHE, alias the ABBE DE ST. SIMON.

JEAN LITAIS, A peasant of Brittany—formerly a servant of the DUC DE BEAUMONT. Then for a time turnkey in the prison of the Republic.

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ARISTIDES, *alias* DODOLPHE POTIN, *An usher of the Revolutionary Tribunal, afterward Sergeant in the Battalion of the Bonnet Rouge.*

CARRAC, *Republican Representative in Vendee.*

GOUJON, *Private in the Battalion of the Bonnet Rouge.*

BOURDOTTE, *Sans Culotte.*

TABOOZE, *An officer of the gens d'armes.*

ORDERLIES, *On the Staff of LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.*

WOMEN.

DIANE DE BEAUMONT, *Daughter of the Duke.*

NANETTE POTIN, *Wife of ARISTIDES.*

DENISE DUBOIS, *Foster-sister of LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN and fiancée of JEAN LITAIS.*

Soldiers, Peasants, "Sans Culottes", Turnkeys, &c.

SCENE. *France.*

TIME. *1794.*

Under the title of "ANARCHY," the play was first performed at Buffalo, New York, May 30, 1887, at the Academy of Music. The following was the cast:

PAUL KAUVAR Steele MacKaye.

GENERAL LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN Eben Plympton.

DUC DE BEAUMONT Frederick de Belleville.

MARQUIS DE VAUX, *alias* GOUROC Henry Lee.

ABBE DE ST. SIMON John A. Lane.

COLONEL LA HOGUE H.B. Bradley.

CARRAC M.B. Snyder.

ARISTIDES POTIN Sidney Drew.

JEAN LITAIS B.T. Ringgold.

GENERAL KLEBER Jerome Stevens.

BOURDOTTE Julian Mitchell.

GOUJON Edward M. Hurd.

DIANE DE BEAUMONT Genevieve Lytton.

NANETTE POTIN May Irwin.
DENISE Marie Hartley.
SCARLOTTE Maud Hosford.
ALINE Alice Hamilton.

Cast of the first New York performance, December 24, 1887, the Standard Theatre. The name was changed to "Paul Kauvar".

PAUL KAUVAR Mr. Joseph Haworth.
HONORE ALBERT MAXIME Mr. Edwin Varrey.
MARQUIS DE VAUX, *alias* GOUROC Mr. Wilton Lackaye.
GENERAL DELAROCHE Mr. Nestor Lennon.
THE ABBE DE ST. SIMON Mr. B.F. Horning.
GENERAL KLETERRE Mr. Jerome Stevens.
COLONEL LA HOGUE Mr. Leslie Allen.
DODOLPHE POTIN, *alias* ARISTIDES Mr. Sidney Drew.
CARRAC Mr. George D. Fawcett.
BOURDOTTE Mr. Edward Coleman.
GOUJON Mr. Edward M. Hurd.
TABOOZE Mr. Charles Mitchell.
FIRST ORDERLY Mr. E.R. Spencer.
SECOND ORDERLY Mr. A.E. Lohman.
FIRST SANS CULOTTE Mr. Fred Clifton.
SECOND SANS CULOTTE Mr. C.H. Wentworth.
DIANE DE BEAUMONT Miss Annie Robe.
NANETTE POTIN Miss Louise Rial.
SCARLOTTE Miss Lillie Eldridge.

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PAUL KAUVAR

ACT I.

TIME. *The Terror*. 1794.

SCENE. *Paris. Study of PAUL KAUVAR'S apartment.*

The decorating is in the classic style of the painter David. Old-fashioned escritoire with chair. Folding doors across corner up stage. Window, with table beneath it. Fireplace, with picture of PAUL KAUVAR over it, and fire on andirons. Doors at the right and left of stage.

At the Rise of Curtain_, NANETTE crosses to fireplace and shovels ashes into a pail. POTIN is heard outside, singing, in loud and discordant tones, "La Marseillaise."

NANETTE.

[Starting up angrily.]

There's that lazy man of mine, singing, while I work.

[Crosses to folding doors, flings them open and shouts roughly.]

Dodolphe!—Dodolphe Potin!

POTIN.

[Meekly, outside.]

Aye, aye!

NANETTE.

I want you!

POTIN.

[Outside.]

Aye, aye!



NANETTE.

Hurry up!—Do you hear?

POTIN.

[Appearing.]

I could hear your sweet voice if I were deaf as Justice.

NANETTE.

Fool! Justice is blind, not deaf.

POTIN.

True! That's why you always get the better of me, dear. Justice listens too much and looks too little.

NANETTE.

Bah!

[Pointing to pail.]

Take that rubbish to the cellar.

POTIN.

[Crosses, lifts pail, and looks into it.]

Ashes!—Heigho! Every fire has its ashes.

NANETTE.

Aye—and the fire that warms a man's home may burn his house down!—Mark you that, Citizen.

POTIN.

Oh, I see! You mean a wife, who should be a comfort, often proves a curse.

NANETTE.

I mean, Citizen Potin, that in days of revolution, husbands are easily suppressed.

POTIN.

[Starting.]

Take care! A word against the Revolution is treason and sure death.

NANETTE.

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Bah! Better death, than a life of terror like that in France to-day.

POTIN.

[Terrified.]

Good heavens, Nanette! Fewer words than these have guillotined our betters! Can you never hold your tongue?

NANETTE.

Never!—while I have a truth to tell.

POTIN.

Tell the truth! Good Lord, that's fatal.

NANETTE.

Aye, for in these noble days of liberty we are only free to lie.

POTIN.

[Turning away in disgust.]

Damn it! I must run or be ruined.

[Starts to go, but, in passing window, recoils with a cry of dismay.]

Sacristie!—See!—See there!

[Points out of window.]

NANETTE.

[Contemptuously looking out of window.]

What now?



POTIN.

There goes the Phantom!

NANETTE.

[Starting.]

The dumb girl of the guillotine!

POTIN.

Who glides like a phantom through the streets, without home, friend, or occupation.

NANETTE.

[With horror.]

Except to stand by the scaffold, and count the heads that fall from the guillotine.

POTIN.

They say that calamity overtakes everyone she follows: that it's disaster to stand in her way, and sure death to notice her.

NANETTE.

Aye, even those who think themselves too great to believe in God, have faith in the fatal power of this pale child. My God! look there!

POTIN.

Good Lord!—It's Mademoiselle Diane! She's crossing the street in front of the Phantom.

NANETTE.

Aye!—Go.—Hurry Mademoiselle here, before she has a chance to heed this messenger of misery.

POTIN.

[Going hurriedly.]

Goddess of Reason, save us all!

[Exit.]

NANETTE.

Goddess of Reason!—A fine deity for days as mad as these:

[Crossing to mantel and looking at KAUVAR'S picture.]

Ah, Citizen Kauvar!—Patriot!—Revolutionist!—Bold son of Liberty, as you are!—You'd love this age of terror less if it brought death to Mademoiselle Diane.—Yes, I've watched ye, sturdy citizen, and in spite of your stern devotion to the Republic, I suspect you carry another idol in your heart.



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DIANE

[Outside, laughing.]

All right, Citizen,—I'll not forget; though the poor crazed girl is not half as harmful as her saner neighbours.

NANETTE.

Ah! Here she comes—Diane Leblanc,—a ray of sunlight in this prison men call Paris.

DIANE.

[Entering with flowers.]

Ah, Nanette! Quick! Water and a vase. See!

NANETTE.

What—flowers?

[Brings vase.]

DIANE.

Yes, they bloom even in this reign of terror.

[Putting flowers in vase.]

But you see these fragile beauties are sinless, and therefore know no fear.—Is my father in his room?

NANETTE.

No. He went away an hour ago.

DIANE.

Gone an hour, and not returned? That makes me anxious!—Is Citizen Kauvar at home?

NANETTE.

Not yet! He's been away all night.

DIANE.

Good heavens!—Nanette—can anything have happened?

NANETTE.

Yes, what happens every day. Innocence is slaughtered!

DIANE.

But he—Citizen Kauvar—?

NANETTE.

Has doubtless fought all night to stop the useless flow of noble blood.

DIANE.

Yes, he is brave, merciful.

NANETTE.

Ah! He was one of the fiercest champions of Freedom when the people first arose; but now I think he'd give his life to still the tempest he did so much to rouse.

DIANE.

He will return sad and worn; we must do our best to cheer him when he comes.



NANETTE.

One look—one smile of yours will banish every thought of sorrow from his tired brain.

DIANE.

Hush, Nanette;—you must not talk like that.

A VOICE.

[*Outside.*]

Nanette!—Diane!

NANETTE.

[*Startled.*]

What's that?

DIANE.



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[Frightened.]

My father!

DUKE.

[Entering wildly.]

My child! Diane!—Where is she?

DIANE.

[Rushing to him.]

Here!—Safe in your dear arms!

DUKE.

[Embracing her.]

Thank God!

[Turning to NANETTE.]

My good Nanette, leave us alone awhile.

NANETTE.

[Going.]

All right, Citizen.

DUKE.

And warn us when anyone is coming.

NANETTE.

[At the door.]



Don't fear! I'll stand good guard.

[*Exit.*

DIANE.

Father, why are you so moved?

DUKE.

But now, the mob seized some poor young girl they found without protection in the street. I heard of this and fearing for your life, I hurried here in awful agony of mind. Ah! Diane, this dread of peril to you is worse than the worst of deaths to me.

DIANE.

Take heart, dear father! Does not Paul Kauvar, strong and true, stand between us and danger!

DUKE.

Yes; but 'tis hard that I, a peer of France, should owe my daughter's life to a peasant's son—a workman!

DIANE.

A, workman with a brush so potent that the noblest born do honour to his art. What would have been our fate but for his devotion?

DUKE.

He's a plebeian—a Republican! The sense of my obligation to him—the enemy of my race—is almost unendurable. Ah, but for you I should long since have braved the scaffold and buried humiliation in the grave.

NANETTE.

[*Hurrying in.*]

Take care!—A committee from the Section is on its way upstairs.

DIANE.

[In fear.]

A committee coming here? How strange!

NANETTE.

No, not strange! Treachery is at every door. They are coming. Quick!—To your work!

[The DUKE sits at the desk and pretends to write. DIANE sits at table and takes up sewing. NANETTE dusts. Knock is heard outside. NANETTE answers roughly.]

Come in!

Enter GOUROC, POTIN, GOUJON *and two* SANS CULOTTES.



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GOUROC.

Health and fraternity, Citizens! We come for Paul Kauvar, President of our Section.

NANETTE.

[Gruffly.]

He's not at home.

GOUROC.

Ah, indeed!

[Sitting.]

Then we will await him here.

[All sit in silence.]

NANETTE.

[Aside, in irritation.]

Oh, the impudence of these men! How my nails ache to get at their ugly faces!

[Crossing.]

How often have I told you that this apartment is not a public office?

POTIN.

But, my precious angel—

NANETTE.

Bah! Religion is abolished, and angels are suppressed! I wish friends were too!



POTIN.

[Laughing.]

Talk of the rack! What is it to a woman's tongue?

NANETTE.

What know you of a woman's tongue?

POTIN.

Enough to damn me, if knowledge were a crime.

NANETTE.

[To GOUROC.]

Come, Citizen, there's no use waiting. President Kauvar don't do business at home; you've no rights here.

GOUROC.

[Rising sternly.]

The patriot has unlimited rights, woman. He may dare all—violate all, in his zeal for the Republic.

NANETTE.

Well, then, dare my dusting.

[Strikes brush into her hand and sends dust all over GOUROC.]

GOUROC.

[Moving off, sputtering.]

Who is this, Citizen Potin?



POTIN.

[Proudly.]

My wife, Citizen Gouroc.

GOUROC.

Who taught her manners?

POTIN.

The Goddess of Liberty, a rough and ready teacher.

GOUROC.

Who teaches with sharp tools.

NANETTE.

Aye—tools so sharp they often cut the fools that use them. Mark that.

GOUROC.

[Crossing to DIANE.]

You are the wife of President Kauvar, I suppose?



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[DIANE *starts up and stares. The DUKE rises and advances with stern hauteur. At sight of GOUROC, he starts, and surveys him with amazement.*]

Well, old man, are you mad, or do you know me?

DUKE.

[*Significantly.*]

I think we have met before.

GOUROC.

Yes, and may meet again. Permit me to introduce myself. I am Citizen Gouroc, of the Jacobin Club, and one of the Public Accusers of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

[DIANE *draws close to NANETTE.*]

Now, who are you?

DUKE.

I am George Leblanc, private secretary to Paul Kauvar.

GOUROC.

Ah, indeed!—His private secretary? Then I can do my business with you. It is said that two aristocrats in disguise are lurking about this house.

[*All start.*]

I must communicate with you in secret, Citizen.

[*Turning to DIANE.*]

Are you the daughter of this old man?

DIANE.

I am his daughter, Diane Leblanc.



GOUROC.

You remain.

[*To SANS CULOTTES.*]

You, Comrades, wait across the street;

[*Exeunt SANS CULOTTES.*]

and you, Citizen Potin, take your wife, leave the room, and wait within call. You understand?

POTIN.

I do, Citizen. When the Republic commands, I obey.

[*Exit, with NANETTE.*]

GOUROC.

[*Bowing with great politeness.*]

Monsieur le Duc de Beaumont.

[*DIANE starts.*]

DUKE.

[*Turning with contempt.*]

Monsieur le Marquis de Vaux.

DIANE

[*Amazed.*]

This—the Marquis de Vaux?

GOUROC.

You are surprised to see me in this garb. I am equally surprised to find you the guests of Citizen Kauvar, President of the Republican Section of Fraternity.

DUKE.

Not quite as strange as discovering the dainty Marquis de Vaux a Public Accuser and the servile slave of the guillotine.

GOUROC.

Reserve your contempt till you understand the meaning of my presence here. I come to warn you against your host.

DIANE.



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[Haughtily.]

How, sir! You suspect the loyalty of Monsieur Kauvar?

GOUROC.

What if he has trapped you here only to betray you?

DIANE.

That's impossible, sir! Monsieur Kauvar is the soul of honour and devotion.

DUKE.

Besides, his head is surety for ours. The discovery that he had sheltered us would entail his own death.

GOUROC.

Precisely! And what if the sense of that danger had prompted a denunciation, while there still was some merit in it?

[The DUKE starts. DIANE turns aside with scorn.]

One thing is certain: an anonymous denunciation of you, describing your disguise and your retreat, has been made to our club.

DIANE.

[Clasping her father.]

What!—Discovered and denounced?

GOUROC.

As Public Accuser, the denunciation fell first into my hands. I have risked my life by withholding it from the Tribunal until your safety is assured.



DUKE.

[Giving GOUROC his hand.]

Pardon, Marquis, that I did not realize before the motives of your course.

GOUROC.

Grant me, then, the privilege of saving you.

DUKE.

We will. You belong to our own race; we may trust you.

GOUROC.

Then prepare for sudden and secret flight.

DIANE.

[Starting.]

Flight! Where can we be safer than under our present host's protection?

GOUROC.

Under mine, Mademoiselle. Kauvar is a man of the people. To him such words as loyalty, truth and honour are but empty puffs of air.

DIANE.

[Proudly and passionately.]

On whose lips is there meaning purer, or prouder, than on Paul Kauvar's?

DUKE.

[With haughty surprise.]

Mademoiselle! When you speak so warmly, you forget the distance that separates you from one of his rank.

[Cries in the distance of “To the Guillotine!” with the roll of muffled drums.]

DIANE.

[In solemn voice.]

Nay, father, listen!—Do we need more to remind us of the nearness of the protected to the protector?

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[The DUKE listens with bowed head. GOUROC goes to window.]

DUKE.

[To GOUROC, as drums draw near.]

Is it the patrol?

GOUROC.

[Solemnly.]

No. 'Tis the guard of the death-cart, with to-day's load for the guillotine.

DIANE.

[Hiding her face.]

This constant agitation is torture.

GOUROC.

You can easily escape it, Mademoiselle. Accept the refuge I offer you.

DUKE.

We will, Marquis, at once. Come to my room, and we will complete our plans.

[To DIANE.]

My child, prepare to leave this house to-night, in haste and in secret.

[Exit with GOUROC.]

DIANE.

Fly from this house to-night?—No! I will not go! And yet I must, or tell my father the secret I have kept from him so long.

PAUL.

[Outside.]

I am not at home to anyone. I will not brook intrusion here.

NANETTE.

[Outside.]

I'll keep out all I can.

DIANE.

Paul is coming!—How can I tell him we must part?

[PAUL enters. DIANE turns quickly toward him.]

PAUL.

[Absorbed in documents he is carrying. Crossing slowly to desk, he lays the papers down and, turning, sees DIANE.]

Diane! Thank heaven you're alone!

[DIANE checks him by a warning gesture; crosses quickly to the door, listens a moment, then slowly approaches PAUL, looking back anxiously.]

Have you no word of welcome for a very weary friend?

DIANE.

[Throwing herself with nervous impetuosity into his arms.]

Ah, Paul! God bless and keep you!

PAUL.

God blessed me beyond measure, when he made your heart my own.

DIANE.

[Leading him with nervous intensity to a chair.]



Sit here—sit here!

[*She sits beside him.*]

Let me look at your face, and listen to your voice, while I can—while I can!

PAUL.

How strangely you say this!

DIANE.



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Do you remember the old days—before this reign of terror darkened all our lives—the sunny room in my father’s chateau, where you taught me to paint the flowers we had gathered—oh! so gaily!—from the quaintest corners of the garden?

PAUL.

Ah! those were ideal days.—You, almost a child—a girl just blooming into womanhood, like those rosebuds in your hair.

DIANE.

Oh, how happy I was!—So happy, earth seemed heaven! So happy, sorrow seemed almost a myth!—I little dreamed that I would ever drink the bitterest dregs of that black cup.—The Revolution rushed upon us—and then, oh then!—

[Hides her face on PAUL’S breast.]

PAUL.

Then we parted, I thought forever.

DIANE.

You came no longer. The sunshine lost its smile—the flowers faded.

PAUL.

And yet, amidst the fearful tumult of these distracted times, we met once more.

DIANE.

[Starting up.]

Oh, my God! That meeting! I see the frightful scene again! My father there before me—old—helpless, dragged from his own house by a horde of brutal beasts.—I, shrieking, fighting vainly at his side—amidst their mocking laughs and jeers. Ah! I can hear them now—yes, and high above their hideous jests, rings out a clarion voice—’tis yours—silencing this crowd of curs!—With what sublime audacity you claim my father as your cousin, saving him and me, by the coolness of your courage!—Paul, from that hour you were more than man to me; you were a God, a hero, my father’s Saviour!



PAUL.

[Rising.]

Better than all that now—your lover—guardian—husband.

[Embraces her, then staggers.]

DIANE.

Paul—what is it?

PAUL.

Nothing,—fatigue from last night's bitter work.

[DIANE brings wine and offers it. He puts it away.]

No—one kiss from you will give me more strength than all the wine in France.

[She kisses him.]

DIANE.

Heaven knows you need more than human strength.

PAUL.

Aye, Titan strength, to stem the tide of madness that overflows the mind of France! Ah, Diane! if it were not for your dear love, I fear my mind would falter at the task before me.

DIANE.

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Oh, Paul! Why undertake this task?—Why not fly to peace in other lands?

PAUL.

Fly!—Desert France in the hour of her agony?—In the awful travail which gives birth to a new and nobler era for mankind?—No, no! I love you more than life, but my Country—ah, that is mother, sister, wife, and child!

DIANE

But Paul—

PAUL.

Hush, sweetheart, you must not make the struggle harder! The infant age is threatened with miscarriage!—The torch of Liberty, which should light mankind to progress, if left in madmen's hands, kindles that blaze of Anarchy whose only end is ashes.

DIANE.

[Suddenly starting.]

Hush! Listen! What is that?

PAUL.

[After listening.]

Nothing, foolish child.

[He is about to embrace her.]

DIANE.

[Turning sadly away.]

Nay, we are too rash! We forget the dangers that environ us.



PAUL.

Would we could forget the weak concealment that makes cowards of us both!—Oh, that something would happen to make us end this living lie!

DIANE.

[Solemnly.]

Perhaps that something has happened, Paul. We have been warned that we're no longer safe beneath this roof.

PAUL.

[Amazed.]

Warned!—By whom?

DIANE.

What matter by whom?—Enough that we've been told the Civil Guard may search the house this very day.

PAUL.

[With sudden resolution.]

I am glad of it. Thank fate that something forces us to tell your father you are mine.

DIANE.

Nay, Paul—I cannot, dare not tell him that!

PAUL.

Then leave the task to me.

DIANE.

'Twould be but to win his curse. You little dream the deathless pride that's rooted in his heart! To wrench out that pride would break the heart that holds it.

PAUL.

[Bitterly.]

Then let it break! I, too, am proud, Diane, proud as all are proud to be who owe their manhood to their God and not to the favour of a king!—If your father scorns the sacred work of heaven's hand, then he is only fit for scorn himself.

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DIANE.

Oh, Paul! Be charitable!

PAUL.

Charitable! To what?—Your father's pride in the race from which he springs—the race whose iron rule for centuries stamped shame on honest labour—crowned infamy with honour—made gods of profligates and dogs of workingmen—ruining their wives—insulting their mothers—debasement their daughters, and sowing the seeds of madness in their veins?—Ah, Diane! when I face your father, 'tis not your husband who should blush for his race.

DIANE.

My father's race is mine.—I forgot its glories, and atoned its wrongs in marrying you!—But I love, revere, my father still, and have hoped each day that he would come to love you for your saving care of me—and grow content to take you as a son.

PAUL.

Who knows—perhaps he will.

DIANE.

[*Sadly.*]

Ah, no! The more you do for me, the more his pride revolts, till now I dare not tell him of our marriage.

PAUL.

Diane—listen. The time has come when you must choose between us. I staked my life in saving yours, and his! He loves but little if he hesitates to keep the precious life I saved unmarred by sorrow.

DIANE. Well, then, so be it! Have your will! But oh, seek first his blessing for our love, before you tell him of our secret marriage.



PAUL.

My love for you will teach me tenderness for him. Go now and send him here.

[Kissing her.]

Courage! All may yet be well.

[Exit DIANE. PAUL sits at desk wearily.]

Hateful humiliation!—to stoop in pleading for that already mine! But patience, Paul Kauvar; he is the father of the woman you adore.

DUKE.

[Entering and advancing to PAUL.]

One word before we part, good friend. I thought to leave this house without farewell, but I cannot be so cruel. I have learned that this is no longer a safe retreat. I am forced to seek one safer.

PAUL.

And where will you find one, Monsieur?

DUKE. I shall best serve you by keeping that a secret.

PAUL.

And does your daughter go with you?

DUKE.

Could you think that I would leave her here?

PAUL.

Certainly, Monsieur. If to stay seemed less perilous than to go. Why not let me replace you for awhile?



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DUKE.

You guard my daughter here alone?

PAUL.

In my character of cousin to Diane Leblanc, gossip has already united us by even a closer tie.

DUKE.

To my infinite annoyance, sir.

PAUL.

Monsieur le Duc, in times like these, Madame Kauvar would be far safer than Mademoiselle de Beaumont.

DUKE.

[With quiet hauteur.]

There are some means of safety forbidden to my rank, sir.—Pardon me if I must say that what you suggest is one of them.

PAUL.

What if I dared to love your daughter, to hope that you would grant me the right to guard her as my wife?

DUKE.

Seriously?

PAUL.

Seriously!



DUKE.

[Shrugging his shoulders.]

This is another of the many insanities of the times.

PAUL.

[Haughtily.]

Suppose I had reason to believe that your daughter would consent?

DUKE.

[Sternly.]

One moment, Monsieur! Your first proposition involves but madness,—your last implies dishonour.

PAUL.

[Indignantly.]

Dishonour!

[Checking himself.]

Monsieur, honesty is honoured now, even though it be not allied to an empty title. 'Tis not a crest, but character, that measures manhood in this modern age. Therefore I do not fear to tell you—

[DUKE turns quickly. PAUL hesitates.]

that I love your daughter.

DUKE.

[With terrible contempt.]

And you take this time to declare it! When you have burdened me with obligations that leave me powerless at your feet?—when I must see in the demand for the daughter's hand, a possible bargain for the father's life.

[PAUL turns fiercely. The DUKE checks him.]



No more, sir! Happily I have two securities against dishonour: my child's sense of what is due to herself—my own scorn of life purchased at such a price.

PAUL.

Perhaps your daughter may not deem the protection of my name so great a degradation as yourself.—Dare you put her to the test?

DUKE.



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What test can you propose?

PAUL.

[Seating himself at desk and writing.]

Here is a pass procured at the risk of my life.—I fill it out for George Leblanc.—It will convey you, alone, safely beyond our borders. Here is another. I make this out for George Leblanc and Diane his daughter. This will enable both of you to escape.—These passes have the signatures of the chief of police; I countersign them, thus—a double surety for you, a double risk for me.—Now, Monsieur, either one of these passes is yours, as your daughter may decide, if you will offer her the choice of remaining under my protection, or of leaving France with you.

DUKE.

[Striking a bell.]

The choice is at her will.

[Enter NANETTE.]

Send my daughter here at once.

[Exit NANETTE.]

PAUL.

One word, Monsieur. These passes are at stake, and my life as well. I promise to be bound by the decision of your daughter.—If she decides to remain, you promise to go and leave her here with me?

DUKE. I promise this on one condition. I pledge my honour to put the alternative fairly before her. You must pledge yours to use no word to influence her choice.

PAUL.

I pledge myself to silence.



DIANE.

[Entering pale and anxious.]

You sent for me, Father?

DUKE.

I did. Listen, child. I am about to leave France. By my side there is peril—here is safety. Answer frankly: will you follow me, or remain here under the protection of Monsieur Kauvar?

DIANE.

[Aside.]

What can this mean? He could not ask this if he knew the truth.

[Aloud.]

Father, I do not understand.—What shall I say?

DUKE.

What your heart prompts, child.

[Turning away.]

Nay, do not hesitate; I will not influence your choice even with a look.

DIANE.

If I shrink from danger, if I stay here, what becomes of you?

DUKE.

I go alone.

DIANE.

Alone to meet your peril?—Then, by the bond of a daughter's duty, my place is at my father's side.

[PAUL *staggers*. The DUKE *retires quietly to desk*. DIANE *speaks aside to PAUL*.]

Remember he is old, with none but me to comfort his last days.

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PAUL.

[With stern self-control.]

Monsieur, the double pass for George Leblanc and Diane his daughter has been fairly won.

[Hands the pass to the DUKE, bows coldly, and leaves the room without a look at DIANE, who falls into a chair and hides her face.]

DUKE.

[Looking suspiciously at DIANE.]

Could there be warrant for his strange presumption? If so, this separation is none too soon.

[Enter GOUROC.]

Ah, Marquis, congratulate us. We are now released from all need of burdening even you.—See! Here is a pass which opens the doors of our prison. We fly to-night to Vendee, where we hope you may soon rejoin us, and our cousin Rochejacquelein.

GOUROC.

[Aside.]

The devil!—

[Aloud.]

You are fortunate, Duke. Alas that I cannot go with you!

DUKE.

Well, come, Diane; time flies. We must prepare for our escape.

[Going with DIANE.]

Au revoir, Marquis.



GOUROC.

Au revoir, Monsieur le Duc, and bon voyage, Mademoiselle de Beaumont.

[Exeunt the DUKE and DIANE. GOUROC changes to a fierce and hurried manner.]

Ah!—Not so fast, dear Duke! You're not out of France yet. This sudden flight destroys all my plans. Again this girl, the heiress of ten millions, will get beyond my reach.—No!—death, dishonour—nothing shall snatch her from me now!—Aye, but how to prevent it?

[Reflecting.]

The Duke has not many years to live, and in these ticklish times old men's days are easily shortened. He dead, his daughter's at my mercy.

[With sudden triumph.]

I have it!—I see the way to place her wholly in my grip!—A brilliant move and easy to execute!—Kauvar knows nothing of my rank!

[Rings bell, goes to desk and begins to look at papers.]

Yes, these are what I need to guarantee my triumph!

[Enter POTIN.]

Have you any blank warrants?

POTIN.

I have!—I keep them always handy, especially for the petticoat sex.

[Giving them.]

I say, Comrade, I hope it's a she-man this time, for there's nothing like this—*[Making sign across throat]* to stop the wag of a woman's tongue.

GOUROC.

Go.—Remain in the ante-room.—I may want you to summon a guard.

POTIN.



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[*Going.*]

All right, Citizen! I'm always ready at the call of the Republic.

[*Exit.*]

GOUROC.

Good!—Now to secure my victory!—But where can I find Kauvar?

[*Starts for door. KAUVAR enters, absorbed in thought, without seeing GOUROC, who watches him.*]

He's just in time! Fate conspires with me for success.

[*PAUL seats himself at desk and buries his face in his arms.—GOUROC goes over quietly and touches him on the shoulder.*]

PAUL.

[*Starting up in dismay*]

You here, Gouroc!

GOUROC.

I am, old friend,—though you seem scarce glad to see me.

PAUL.

Pardon, Comrade; you find me at a moment when my mind's absorbed with many cares.

GOUROC.

I understand;—in times like these perplexity pursues the patriot. I would not now intrude, dear friend, if duty did not force me.



PAUL.

[With sudden suspicion.]

Duty! And what duty can bring you here?

GOUROC. I have important warrants for your signature.

PAUL.

[Sitting again, with a sigh of relief.]

Another time.—I cannot sign them now.

GOUROC.

[Firmly.]

Friend, the business of the Republic is sacred; it cannot be postponed.

PAUL.

[Wearily.]

Well, well!—What are these warrants?

[Takes up pen carelessly.]

GOUROC.

[Calling off papers, as he gives them to PAUL to sign.]

Warrants for the arrest of Catherine Cler—

[PAUL signs.]

Maxime Berton—

[PAUL signs.]

Marie Legrand—

[PAUL signs.]



And this blank warrant for a suspected party, whose name that fool Potin has registered so badly that I must get him to decipher it before I can fill it in.

[PAUL *signs mechanically.*]

[*Aside.*]

Tis done!—And she is mine!

[*Aloud.*]

Shall you be at the club to-night, friend?

PAUL.

[*Shortly.*]

No!

[*Night comes on.*]

GOUROC.

What excuse shall I offer the fraternity?



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PAUL.

Say I am busy—busy—[*Striking his breast.*] breaking the heart of a traitor to France!

GOUROC.

[*Going.*]

A welcome message.—I sha'n't forget it.

[*Exit.*]

PAUL.

Wife gone!—Home desolated!—Naught left but the haunting memory of joy forever lost!—Ah, I am weary, heart-broken—helpless!

[*He sinks into the chair at desk, and buries his face in his arms. Slowly the light dims to darkness. At back, the stage is transformed into a TABLEAU OF KAUVAR'S DREAM OF ANARCHY.*]

Mysterious music accompanies the Dream, which consists of a tableau of the guillotine in the Place de la Revolution, in Paris, by moonlight.

Here is seen the scaffold, with its ghastly paraphernalia, surrounded by ferocious_ SANS CULOTTES, and GENS D'ARMES. *Amidst them is an old hag.*

The death-cart, with its load of victims, is seen in the foreground—the entrance to the garden with the palace of the Tuilleries in the background.

The_ HEADSMAN *stands ready, near the knife of the guillotine.*

From the death-cart_ DIANE *glides on and slowly goes up the scaffold steps.*

As she reaches the top, she is seized roughly by the_ HEADSMAN.

At this moment PAUL starts with a cry of agony from his chair—and at his shriek, the whole Tableau of the Dream instantly disappears.

PAUL.

[*Starting up wildly.*]



No, no!—My life for hers!—My life for hers!

[Waking, as the Dream disappears, he looks about dazed and bewildered; then bursts into hysterical laughter.]

A dream!—Thank God, a dream!—Only a horrible dream!

[Suddenly stops short in horror.]

How dark and still the house is. My God!—Something has happened!—What is it?

[Shrieks with terror.]

Diane!—Diane!

NANETTE.

[Entering with lamp.]

What's the matter?

PAUL.

Diane—Mademoiselle Diane, where is she?

DIANE.

[Appearing, dressed to go away.]

Here!

PAUL.

[Makes a spontaneous movement toward her, then checks himself and turns to NANETTE.]

Leave us!

[NANETTE goes silently away. PAUL speaks to DIANE hoarsely.]

Where are you going?

DIANE.

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I am going to do my duty—follow the father who would die without my care.

PAUL.

[After a pause.]

Yes, I remember now.—You are right.—You will be safer out of France.—The dream! The dream!

DIANE.

What dream?

PAUL.

No matter! I am resigned now! Yes, resigned—resigned—resigned!

[Sinks sobbing into chair.]

DIANE.

No, no, Paul!—I cannot endure this!—I will stay! I will stay!

PAUL.

[Starting up.]

No! You must not! I dare not keep you here.—I fear the worst!

DIANE.

What do you mean?

PAUL.

Don't ask me. I do not know myself. But you—when you are gone—you will not forget me?



DIANE.

Not while memory lasts!

PAUL.

And I—perhaps I—some day—shall be free to seek you.

DIANE.

God grant that day is near!

PAUL.

And we—when we meet again, will you find courage to acknowledge who I am?

DIANE.

Nay—if you desire it—I'll prove my deathless love before I go.—I'll tell my father all.

PAUL.

No, never!—Never till I've won a name that even your proud father is forced to honour. Meantime, I ask but this—your love and trust, while I have life to strive.

DIANE.

You shall have it!—Yes, through sunshine and shadow, I will love and trust you to the end.

[They embrace.]

DUKE.

[Outside.]

Nanette, the coach is ready: be quick, bear our baggage to the door.

[PAUL and DIANE separate quickly. Entering, the DUKE glances suspiciously at the two, then advances to PAUL.]



Paul Kauvar, let us not part in bitterness. I owe you much; I grieve to see you suffer. Courage! Believe me, I never honoured you as I do now.

[Extends his hand. PAUL turns away.]

Will you not take my hand?

PAUL.

No, Monsieur. Not until you think it worthy to guide and guard your daughter, as my wife.



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DUKE.

[Starts haughtily, then turns to DIANE.]

Come, child! Tis time that we were gone.

DIANE.

[Crossing and extending her hand to PAUL.]

Farewell!

PAUL.

[Taking her hand, speaks aside to her.]

Remember, love and trust.

DIANE.

Forever!

[PAUL kisses her hand. She comes slowly to her father, keeping her eyes in anguish on PAUL.]

[The DUKE leads her toward the folding doors which are suddenly thrown open, disclosing a platoon of GUARDS. DIANE shrieks, the DUKE starts back, PAUL turns in horror. TABOOZE advances into the room.]

TABOOZE.

In the name of the Republic, I arrest Honore Albert Maxime, heretofore Duc de Beaumont.

DIANE.

[Clasping the DUKE.]

Father!



PAUL.

[Sternly.]

What does this mean?—Whose name is on that warrant?

TABOOZE.

[With surprise.]

Why, your own, Citizen.

[PAUL recoils, stunned.]

DUKE.

What! Betrayed by you?

DIANE.

No, no! It is not true!

[Snatching the paper, looking, then with a cry.]

Great heaven!—It is!—His name and hand!

[She sinks down in despair.]

PAUL.

[Passionately, to the DUKE.]

I betray you!—I, Paul Kauvar.—Tis false!

[To DIANE.]

You at least will not believe this lie.

DUKE.

[Interposing.]

Silence! Better death to her than the pollution of another word from you!



PAUL.

But my God!—You do not know.—She is—

DIANE.

[Starting up wildly.]

Stop!—I forbid you to say more!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE. Interior of the Prison of the Republic. A room with cells.—Entrance to outer corridor. Table with chairs near it.—As curtain rises, howls of a Mob are heard outside.

POTIN.



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[Entering in the midst of the howls, then clapping his hands to his ears.]

Oh, that I were deaf! Then I'd escape the shriek of my wife, and the roar of this cursed tribunal condemning poor devils to death.

[Renewed howls.]

Aye, that's right! Howl on, hyenas! I could howl, too, yesterday, as well as the worst of ye. But I can't now; no, not since the arrest of the poor old Duke. There he lies, in yonder cell, and here am I quartered as a witness against him—and that villain Gouroc has done all this!

[Enter GOUROC quietly in the background.]

Curse him! He rules me with a rod of red-hot iron! I wish I had him here now! By the gods! I'd take courage for once; I'd tackle him with my tongue—like my wife. I'd say—

GOUROC.

[Advancing coolly.]

Well, Citizen,—you'd say—?

POTIN.

[Aside, startled.]

The devil take you!

GOUROC.

What would you say?

POTIN.

Nothing!—anything!—everything!



GOUROC.

That's lucky!—I have much for you to say before the day is done. The trial of the Duke will soon begin. When asked who gave you the order for the Duke's arrest, you must swear that it was Paul Kauvar who did so.

POTIN.

Why, Lord help me! 'Twas you who gave me the order, and forced me to carry it, too.

GOUROC.

Possibly; but, in spite of that, my name must not be mentioned in the affair, to any one, do you hear?

POTIN.

Alas, I do!

GOUROC.

And will swear as I command?

POTIN.

[With sudden resolution.]

Never!

GOUROC.

Do you care to save your head?

POTIN.

Of course! What could I do without it?

GOUROC.

If you refuse to attest as I have dictated, I will declare you guilty of treason in trying to conceal the presence of the Duke in Paris. Such a declaration from me is sure perdition to you. How say you now: will you swear?

POTIN.

[*Wilting.*]

I will swear.

GOUROC.



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You are wise.

[Going.]

Within an hour, the trial comes on. Be at hand, or—

[Making a sign across his throat.]

There's nothing like this to quiet a traitor's tongue.

[Exit.]

POTIN.

[Looking after him.]

To lie living, and be a coward—or to lie dead, and be a corpse; that's the riddle.—No! I'll be neither a coward nor a corpse. I'll run away!—run like a brave man, enlist in the army of Vendee, and so escape damnation, and my wife.

[Starts off.]

Liberty, lend thy wings that I may fly—

[NANETTE appears.]

Ye gods!—Fate is false again!

NANETTE.

Ha! It's you, is it?

POTIN.

No, it was me; but now you're here, I'm nobody.

NANETTE.

Where's the Duke?



POTIN

[Pointing.]

In that cell.

NANETTE.

And I believe 'twas you betrayed him!

POTIN.

[Indignantly.]

That's a lie!

NANETTE.

Well said! Short and sharp, like the truth.

[She pats POTIN on the back. He turns away.]

Bravo!—But one moment! Do you know who did betray him?

[POTIN shakes his head mournfully.]

You do know! I can see by the wag of your head you know, and I mean to make you tell me!—But I can't stop now; I'm here to see Mam'selle Diane; where is she?

POTIN.

[Pointing to cell.]

There—with her father.

NANETTE.

I'll be back soon, and then I'll give you a piece of my mind.

POTIN.

Give me peace if you like, dear, but keep the mind for yourself; you've none to spare.

NANETTE.

Woe to you when next we meet!

[She flounces out.]

POTIN.

Yes, it's woe to me whene'er we meet!—But now to fly; I've no time to lose; between my wife and Gouroc, I shall go cracked. So here's for liberty, and Vendee!

[Exit into his room.]

Enter GOUROC, followed by GUARDS escorting MARDOCHE.

GOUROC.



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[To GUARDS.]

You may leave the prisoner with me.

[Exit GUARDS.]

And so, Mardoche, you have been tried and condemned.

MARDOCHE.

Yes. Accused by beasts, tried by fools, and condemned by assassins.

GOUROC.

And of what were you accused?

MARDOCHE.

I was a quiet cobbler; I made shoes for Jacobins that pinched their toes, so I was accused of sympathy with aristocrats.

GOUROC.

Is this all the cry they raised against you?

MARDOCHE.

No. I was never heard to swear, so I was watched—and was seen upon my knees. As piety is poison to the Republic, I was accused of being a priest! I was searched, and these were found upon me.

[*Showing a crucifix and rosary.*]

This was enough. I was immediately condemned to die.

GOUROC.

A fine fool you were, to be caught with such baubles in your bosom. Had you forgotten old mother Dupaix?



MARDOCHE.

The old woman who never gossiped, wore clean linen, and kept four cats?

GOUROC.

The same—who was therefore accused of being a Duchess in disguise, and sent to the guillotine.

MARDOCHE.

Moral:—In this age of reason, death to him who prays!

GOUROC.

Or keeps four cats! But cheer up, Citizen; I have a crumb of comfort for you yet. In your cell someone is waiting impatiently to see you.

MARDOCHE.

Who?

GOUROC.

Your sister.

MARDOCHE.

Great heavens! Of what do they accuse her?

GOUROC.

Nothing. She is here by my care to bid you farewell.—Listen and understand.—You are going to die, and leave your sister in poverty amidst the perils of the Republic.—What would you be willing to do to provide her with an independence?

MARDOCHE.

I would do anything. I can do nothing.



GOUROC.

You are mistaken. If you choose, before you die, you can place in her hands 10,000 francs.

MARDOCHE.



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How?

GOUROC.

By helping me to save another man's life.

MARDOCHE.

I do not understand.

GOUROC.

The Due de Beaumont has been discovered, and is about to be condemned. For reasons of my own, I wish to save his life. There is but one way. You, who are destined to die soon, must be disguised as the Duke, answer to his name, and go to the scaffold in his stead. Consent to do this—and you shall place in your sister's hands 10,000 francs in gold.

MARDOCHE.

What! That Jacobin of Jacobins, Gouroc, asks a cobbler to save a Duke—?

GOUROC.

Why not? The Republic is poor, the Duke is rich. He has been condemned for our glory. But if his secret escape will bring us gold, why not crown the Republic with riches as well as fame? Is not this Patriotism?

MARDOCHE.

Yes, Patriotism to-day! Yesterday and to-morrow—Jesuitism.

GOUROC.

Well, your answer. Will you save the Duke?



MARDOCHE.

[After a pause.]

I will.

GOUROC.

Good! In your cell you'll find everything for your disguise.

MARDOCHE.

[As howls are heard outside.]

Listen.—That is the voice of fraternity shrieking for fratricide!

GOUROC.

By heaven! No cobbler talks as you do!—Who are you? What are you?

MARDOCHE.

A victim—to present madness! An atonement—for past wrongs! A pledge for future progress!—The Abbe de St. Simon.

GOUROC.

Ha! As I suspected.

[SOLDIERS are heard approaching.]

Take care!—Hurry to your cell; they are coming for the Duke.

MARDOCHE.

And my sister—?

GOUROC.

You shall have the money at your parting.

MARDOCHE.

Thus my death will bring her more than all the years I might have lived to love her. [*Exit.*

OFFICER.

[*Entering, followed by GUARDS, and presenting paper to GOUROC.*]

An order for the person of Duc de Beaumont.



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GOUROC.

[Looking at order.]

Correct.—There is his cell.

OFFICER.

[Reading from paper at the door of DUKE'S cell.]

Honore Albert Maxime, heretofore Duc de Beaumont, you are called for trial for your life. In the name of the law, stand forth!

The DUKE appears with DIANE clinging to him, followed by NANETTE.

DUKE.

I am ready.

[The GUARDS surround him.]

OFFICER.

[To DIANE.]

Young woman, free your father; he must follow me alone.

DIANE.

If he is guilty, then I am guilty. I have shared his prison; I claim the right to share his scaffold.

OFFICER.

You are not called, and cannot go with him.



DUKE.

Courage, child! Remember who you are, and scorn to show these miscreants what you feel.

[Putting her gently from his breast.]

We shall meet again.—

[Turning to OFFICER.]

Lead on, sir.

[The GUARDS go off with the DUKE.—DIANE falls into a chair near table, overcome. NANETTE approaches her; GOUROC waves her back.]

GOUROC.

[Pointing to cell.]

Wait there, till you're wanted.

[NANETTE goes out sullenly. GOUROC draws near to DIANE.]

At last I'm free to crave your pardon for the part I'm forced to play in these dark days of tragedy.—Say you'll forgive me.

DIANE.

I have nothing to forgive, sir.—You did not betray my father, and if you dare to feel for such as we, then it is for the Republic to pardon your secret treachery.

GOUROC.

Always cruel, Mademoiselle. If you knew the truth, you could not wound me with your scorn.

DIANE.

[Going.]

If my face offends you, I will go.

GOUROC.

Stay, and be just.—I am the slave of a great purpose. I am fast securing the ruin of the Republic. My affected zeal but masks the well-aimed blows I strike at the enemies of our order.—Before many weeks have past, Robespierre will go to the scaffold, the Jacobins be ruined, and the Republic crushed.—To this great end I am content to suffer anything, even your contempt, if need be.



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DIANE.

Yes, I despise all blows dealt in darkness.

GOUROC.

Even though those very blows could save your father's life?

DIANE.

[Turning and staring at him.]

Save my father's life?

GOUROC.

Yes; I hold it in my power to set your father free, and escape with both of you to Vendee.
—Say but the word and it is done.

DIANE.

Tell me the word that I may speak it quickly.

GOUROC.

You know the past.—My one wild dream was to win you as my wife. Revolution came; I lost you in the chaos of the times; and when at last I found you, a traitor had nearly caused your death.

DIANE.

[In anguish.]

No more, sir! No more!

GOUROC.

But I can save you yet.



DIANE.

Save my father! That is all I ask.

GOUROC.

To save his life I must imperil my own. I am willing to do this, but—

DIANE.

[Scornfully.]

You must have your price!

GOUROC.

Yes—that price, the right to save and guard you as my wife. One word of hope, and I am your slave forever.

DIANE.

Such a word would be cruelty to you, and crime in me.

[She starts to go.]

GOUROC.

[Seizing DIANE'S hand.]

Hear me, I beg—beseech—

[A bell tolls.]

Nay—I command!—Listen!

A VOICE.

[Calls slowly in the distance.]

Hubert, Marquis de Ferrand,—Comte de Vigny,—Duc de Beaumont——

[DIANE turns in horror.]



GOUROC.

Your father is called for trial! That means certain death.

DIANE.

[Kneeling.]

Save him!—I will pay the price with everything I have.

GOUROC

I may hope?

DIANE.

Yes! Take hope from my despair.

GOUROC.



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Then you will be my wife?

DIANE.

When he and I are free.

GOUROC.

Your father shall be saved!—I go to perfect all my plans.

[Kissing her hand.]

From this moment I am yours—body, mind and soul!

[Exit hurriedly.]

DIANE.

When he has saved my father—death shall deliver me.

[Exit.]

POTIN *enters cautiously, with various things hidden under his clothes, giving him a grotesque appearance.*

POTIN.

Now, O Fate, is your chance to protect a patriot! If I can only get away,—I shall escape perjury in Court, and tongue-lashing from my wife!—Now to run!—To run for Vendee! Better the awful thunder of masculine war than the piercing tenderness of a woman's tongue!

[Starting to run of, he begins to sing—to the tune of the Marseillaise chorus:]

To leave—to leave my wife!—

NANETTE.

[Rushing in and stopping him.]

Hold, Citizen Potin!



POTIN.

[Wilting.]

Oh, Republic, I am lost!

NANETTE.

Dodolphe—you're up to mischief! Speak out—what's up?

POTIN.

Patience, gentle lamb!

NANETTE.

Don't lamb me, sir!

[Twisting him round.]

What's this mean?

[Tapping him.]

Porpoise!

[Pulling breeches from under his coat.]

Culottes!

[Pulling cap from his breast.]

Ye gods, what's this?

[Pulling hose from his pockets.]

By heaven! A woman's hose!

[Shaking hose in his face.]

What does this mean?



POTIN.

Nothing, precious love! This is my uniform;—I have recruited for Vendee.

NANETTE.

You—a soldier?

POTIN.

[Posing.]

Yes: The safety of France demands it. I go to preserve the Republic! France beckons —while Victory extends her arms, panting to embrace my noble form!

NANETTE.

Embrace ye?

[Putting his head under her arm.]

Let Victory try it if she dare!

TURNKEY.



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[Entering with GUARD.]

Citizen Potin, you are wanted as a witness.

POTIN.

Caught!—From the frying-pan into the fire!

NANETTE.

We shall meet again, my dear.

POTIN.

Don't remind me now; I'm sick enough already.

[Enter PAUL KAUVAR. POTIN starts at sight of him, and speaks to the GUARD.]

I'm ready; show the way.

PAUL.

[To POTIN.]

Stop!—Thank heaven I have found you! Tell me, who ordered the Duke's arrest?

POTIN.

[Sullenly.]

What I know of, that I'll tell only to the Court.

[Exit.]

PAUL.

[Turning to NANETTE, who is going.]

Nanette, one word.



NANETTE.

What word can an honest woman speak that you would care to hear?

PAUL.

Justice!—I want that word, and all it signifies.

[Mob howls outside.]

NANETTE.

Listen! Go to them—they'll give you justice, aye, and glory, for you betrayed the innocent—to glut their appetite for blood.

PAUL.

That's a lie—a vile, infamous, monstrous lie!

NANETTE.

Is it a lie that you signed the warrant for the Duke's arrest?

PAUL.

My name was forged.

NANETTE.

I know your hand too well to be deceived. I've seen the warrant; it bears your name, and written by yourself.

PAUL.

Then it was obtained by some strange trick! I've tried to learn the truth, but no one will tell me who took the warrant to the office of the Guard.

NANETTE.

I wish I could believe you.

PAUL.

[Forcing her to face him.]

And so you shall!—Do I look like the vilest of mankind?

NANETTE.

No; in looks you're lucky!

PAUL.

Would any man conspire to kill the wife he adores?

NANETTE.

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Why ask that?

PAUL.

Because Diane de Beaumont is my wife.

NANETTE.

Your wife?

PAUL.

Yes! For me to betray her father would be to break her heart! Pain to her is the anguish of the damned to me! Can you not see that I am—I must be innocent?

NANETTE.

In these days the fairest faces mask the foulest souls! Looks and words prove nothing! Evidence alone will clear you of this crime.

PAUL.

That—I have not been able to obtain.

NANETTE.

Then get it quickly before it is too late.

PAUL.

Where is Diane—my wife?

NANETTE.

[Pointing.]

There!—Praying for the father she believes you betrayed.



PAUL.

No, she cannot! By the light of her own love she sees the innocence of mine.

NANETTE.

Then love is lunacy!

PAUL.

Send her here to me!

NANETTE.

She will not come.

PAUL.

I'll stake my life she will!

NANETTE.

You shall see.

[*Exit.*

JEAN LITAIS *enters, watching PAUL intently.*

PAUL.

Two things at any cost I must accomplish! First, prove my innocence of treachery, and save her father from the guillotine.

JEAN.

[*Advancing.*]

For that I came to help you.

PAUL.

Who are you?

JEAN.

Look well and you will see.

PAUL.

I've seen your face before, but have forgotten where we met.

JEAN.

I am Jean Litais. Six months ago, I was accused, and about to be condemned. You saw—took pity—spoke in my behalf—and by your eloquence saved my life! So now the life you saved, and all its service, is yours to use, or forfeit as you please! A lion freed a mouse—the mouse now comes to serve the lion.



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PAUL.

I do not understand.

JEAN.

I am turnkey here, though once a servant of the Duke's. You love his daughter; I can help her father to escape.

PAUL.

How?

JEAN.

[Crossing to the door.]

This opens on a staircase leading to the river. Here's the key. I have a boat below. Tonight I'll creep up the stairs and knock three times. Open, then, this door—and you'll find deliverance for those you love.

PAUL.

[Taking the key.]

How can I repay this deed?

JEAN.

Trust me—that is all.

PAUL.

[Extending his hand.]

I will—I do!



JEAN.

[Kissing PAUL'S hand.]

I'm yours in life or death.

[Goes to door.]

Till to-night!

[Exit.]

PAUL.

[Alone.]

Saved!—Thank God!—Their freedom in my hand!—

[Pausing.]

And yet she does not come.—Can it be that she believes me guilty—esteems me lower than the foulest worm?

[Enter DIANE.]

No, no,—I was right!

[Going toward her.]

I knew you'd come.

DIANE.

[Checking him.]

Stop!—Let me look at you and say farewell.

PAUL.

Then you really think me guilty?

DIANE.

If an angel had accused you, I would say it was a lie.



PAUL.

Diane! Diane!—My loyal wife!

[He embraces her.]

DIANE.

[Shrinking from him.]

No, no! I am not worthy of your love! I must save my father's life, no matter what it costs me.

PAUL.

Courage, dear heart! I hold here salvation for you both.

DIANE.

You?

PAUL.

Yes! This very night your father shall fly with us to England.

DIANE.

Ah! Then I am free! I need owe him nothing!



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PAUL.

Owe whom nothing?

[The tramp of SOLDIERS is heard outside.]

DIANE.

Hark!—The Guard!—Take care!

Enter the DUKE, with GUARD and POTIN.

DUKE.

[Contemptuously to PAUL.]

You here, traitor?

DIANE.

[Aside to the DUKE.]

You must not call him that. He did not betray. The proof is this—that he has come to save you.

DUKE.

And so make my debt to him a means of reaching you;—but I would not accept my life from hands unclean with treachery.

PAUL.

There's not a drop of traitor's blood within my veins!

DUKE.

Yet you signed the warrant for my arrest.



PAUL

Then another hand than mine—unknown to me—filled in your name.

DUKE.

Plausible trickster!—We have here double proof that you are guilty.

[Enter GOUROC in background.]

The evidence of the man to whom you gave the warrant, commanding him to take it to the Guard.

PAUL.

There's no such man alive—or dead!

DUKE.

Potin, advance.

[POTIN comes forward sullenly.]

Repeat what you swore in court.—From whom did you receive the warrant for my arrest?

POTIN.

[After a struggle.]

I received it from—

[Hesitates.]

GOUROC.

[Aside to POTIN.]

Take care!—If I denounce—you die!

DUKE.

Well, sir, we are waiting.

POTIN.

[Desperately.]

I received it—*[Pointing at PAUL.]* from him.

[PAUL recoils with horror. DIANE, with cry of agony, hides her face upon her father's breast.]

PAUL.

[Crossing to POTIN.]

Potin, look at me.—On your word hangs the honour of your old and steadfast friend! Look in my eyes, and, in the name of your own salvation, speak nothing but the truth.

DUKE.



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[*Sternly.*]

'Tis useless to intimidate the witness. He will not prove himself a perjurer, and condemn himself to death, even to please so dear a friend as you.

PAUL.

My God!—There is some wicked plot!

DUKE.

Yes—and you're the plotter.

[PAUL *falls prostrate into chair near table. Supporting* DIANE *to the door of his cell, the* DUKE *pauses and speaks.*]

Paul Kauvar, we shall never meet again.—Remember my last words.—Beggars, thieves, assassins may escape perdition; but neither here, nor hereafter, is there any hope for Judas.

[*Exit, supporting* DIANE.

[NANETTE *follows the* DUKE *off. POTIN goes into the opposite cell. GOUROC crosses to* PAUL.

GOUROC.

How's this, old Comrade? I thought you were antique in the mastery of your emotions.—A man of iron—firm as flint!

PAUL.

Agony is fire that melts the mettle of the hardest man.

GOUROC.

But why should you—a Jacobin—care for this old Duke?



PAUL.

I loved his daughter—she became my wife.

GOUROC.

[Starting.]

What! Diane de Beaumont is your wife?

PAUL.

Yes—has been my wife in secret—for six months.

GOUROC.

[Aside.]

So I have a double task! To save her—and kill her husband.

[Aloud.]

The same old story, Comrade, and as usual a woman mars the plot! You were a patriot, till love enmeshed you in his magic web; then you became the weakest of mankind—a husband. I am sorry, very sorry; but Paul—my friend—if I can serve you now, I beg of you command me.

PAUL.

Yes, you can serve me. You have been my friend—be more!

GOUROC.

Your sorrow seems so deep, I swear I think I'd serve it—even at the cost of conscience! Speak then, without fear.

PAUL.

Help me to save the father of my wife!—See! This key opens yonder door; to-night, at any moment, you may hear three knocks.—That signal will be given by a man who will conduct you safely out of France.

GOUROC.

A man that you can trust?

PAUL.



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To the death.—I saved his life.

GOUROC.

But suppose the Duke is called before the signal comes!—I must go and find some man to take his place.

GOUROC starts to go. PAUL'S face lights with a sudden resolution.

PAUL.

Stop! The man is found.

GOUROC.

Who is he?

PAUL.

The man they call a traitor—Paul Kauvar.

GOUROC.

[Suppressing a smile of surprise.]

You?

PAUL.

Yes. When safely out of France, tell them of my fate. My death may convince them I loved too deeply to betray.

[A bell begins to toll.]

A VOICE.

[In the distance.]

Hubert, Marquis de Ferrand,—Mardoche, alias the Abbe de St. Simon—



GOUROC.

They're calling the condemned; there's not an instant to be lost.

[Crossing to cell.]

In this cell there hangs an old man's coat and wig, kept here to disguise the spies connected with the prison. Luckily they'll serve your purpose well.

[Opening cell door.]

Quick!—Get ready to answer when the Duke is called.

PAUL.

Tell my wife I died for love of her, and honour.

[Exit.]

GOUROC.

[In exultation.]

Thank luck!—This man's death clears my path, and saves the money I meant to pay the Abbe.

Enter DIANE and NANETTE.

DIANE.

Where is he? I must see him once again!—Paul! Paul!

[Starting at sight of GOUROC.]

Who's there?

GOUROC.

Tis I! Here to save your father.

THE VOICE.

[Outside.]



Comte de Vigny,—Andre de la Roche—

GOUROC.

That's the last call of the condemned.—Your father's name stands next upon the roll.

DIANE.

Save him!—Save him!

GOUROC.

Obey me instantly, or all is lost; hide quickly in this cell! Trust to me and wait.

DIANE.



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[Going with NANETTE into a cell.]

God deal with you as you now deal with me!

[Exit.]

Tramp of GUARDS outside.

GOUROC.

[Crossing to cell and calling.]

Kauvar!—Be quick!—stand ready. By heaven!—A close shave!

OFFICER *and* GUARDS *enter.*

OFFICER.

[Advancing.]

Honore Albert Maxime, Duc de Beaumont, you are called to the guillotine.

[PAUL comes forth in silence.]

Fall in.—Forward, march!

[As the GUARDS start with PAUL, DIANE rushes in with a cry of agony.]

DIANE.

Father!—Father!—We have been deceived!

[DIANE rushes into PAUL'S arms; he embraces her passionately. GUARDS force them apart and go out with PAUL.]

[Held back by GOUROC and NANETTE, DIANE shrieks.]

Father—father!

DUKE.

[Entering.]

Diane!—What is it?

DIANE.

[Turning in amazement and joy.]

What!—You are there?

GOUROC.

Yes, saved by me.

DIANE.

And he—? Who was he they dragged away?

GOUROC.

A man condemned to die—whom I disguised—to take your father's place.

DIANE.

[Falling on her knees.]

O God! Spare this man all pain in death—and give him life eternal!

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE. Headquarters of Royalists in Vendee. Interior of hall in old chateau. Fireplace; large doorways with staircase leading to terrace, overlooking Granville; Faubourg de Calvaire in middle ground. Doors from hall. Bay window with large table covered with papers, maps, etc. Charts near table and fireplace.

DISCOVERED: SENTINEL on terrace; LA HOGUE seated at the table busy with papers.

At rise of curtain—drums and fifes heard in distance.

DENISE enters, goes to terrace, gazes anxiously, then turns and crosses quickly to LA HOGUE.

DENISE.

[Shouting loudly.]

Monsieur La Hogue!

LA HOGUE.

[Gruffly.]

Well?



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DENISE.

Do you hear?

LA HOGUE.

[Impatiently.]

Hear what?

DENISE.

The drums and piccolos yonder.

LA HOGUE.

[Listening.]

I can hear nothing.

[Drums, etc., sound more loud.]

DENISE.

But listen now, it grows louder—up from Ville d’Avranches.

LA HOGUE.

[Starting up.]

D’Avranches?—Ha! Re-inforcements for the Kings’ army! None too soon!

[Drums, etc., cease.]

[Enter an ORDERLY, who presents papers. LA HOGUE takes papers, reads, and exclaims.] The Count de Parame with recruits!

[To the ORDERLY.]



Tell your Colonel to report here instantly! General de la Rochejacquelein [*Enter LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.*] is indignant at his delay, and—

LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.

[*To LA HOGUE.*]

Gently, old friend! La Rochejacquelein will speak for himself.

[*To ORDERLY.*]

Ask the Count to honour me with his presence here as speedily as possible.

[*Exit ORDERLY.*]

Now these re-inforcements have arrived, we'll give these rebels battle.

LA HOGUE.

At last, thank God! And we're ready for the fight.

[*Pointing.*]

In the Faubourg de Calvaire there's hardly a house but harbours a detachment of our men.

LA ROCHE.

With that village in our hands we'll bring Granville town to terms. To-night we will assault the place at every point.

LA HOGUE.

[*Reverently.*]

And God in mercy aid King Louis' men!

LA ROCHE *and* DENISE. [*Together.*]

Amen!

LA ROCHE.

[*To LA HOGUE.*]



Await the Count upon the terrace, and take him to my private room. But no roughness to the Colonel—try to be charming for a change.

LA HOGUE.

Bah! Leave charmers to women,—only fighters win at war!

[Exit.]

LA ROCHE.

[To DENISE.]

How long since you have heard from Jean Litaïs?

DENISE.

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Not since he, my lover, went to Paris to aid the Duc de Beaumont to escape.

LA ROCHE.

This fiendish reign of terror has prevented me from hearing of the Duke till now.

DENISE.

And you have heard—?

LA ROCHE.

The worst of news! Among some papers captured in a skirmish, I found this journal, [*Producing paper.*] printed at Paris some three months ago. It contains a list of those beheaded the preceding day.—See this name I've underlined.

DENISE.

[*Reading.*]

“The Duc de Beaumont.”

Enter a MAN from panel in wall up stage.

LA ROCHE.

Guillotined at night, upon the tenth of last October.

DENISE.

My God! If Jean has failed to save the Duke, he must be dead himself!

THE MAN.

[*Advancing.*]

Not yet!



LA ROCHE.

[Turning quickly.]

Who's this?

DENISE.

It's Jean!—

[Rushing into his arms.]

My Jean returned!

LA ROCHE.

Litais!—Is it really you?

JEAN.

Every bit of me, my lord.

DENISE.

Thank heaven!

LA ROCHE.

How did you pass the guard?

JEAN.

Faith, I know every corner of the old chateau. No guard could bar my way while I'd such news to bring! The Duke and his daughter are here—in the park.

LA ROCHE.

Alive and safe—?



JEAN.

As you are!—Grant me a guard to bring them through our lines.

LA ROCHE.

[Strikes a bell.]

[Enter ORDERLY, who salutes.]

See that Monsieur and his friends have safe passage through our lines.

ORDERLY crosses stage and stands at door.

JEAN.

In an instant we'll return.—Come, Denise; you shall see your old master once again.

DENISE.

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And never let you leave my side while I have life to love you.

[Exeunt DENISE, JEAN and ORDERLY, who salutes GUARD before departing. Tumult in distance.]

LA HOGUE.

[Entering.]

The Count is here and anxious for the fight.

[LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN, listening, pays no attention. LA HOGUE speaks impatiently.]

Do you hear?

LA ROCHE.

Yes, I hear a tumult yonder! Can it be mutiny—revolt?

[Enter SECOND ORDERLY. He presents paper to LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN, who reads it aloud.]

“Have captured Jacobin soldiers. The peasants demand their lives. Shall I surrender them or hold them at your pleasure? La Val—Captain of King’s Guards.”

[To LA HOGUE eagerly.]

We may obtain information from these fellows. See La Val at once, command him to guard his prisoners with his life, and send them here to me.

LA HOGUE.

But the Count is awaiting orders for to-night’s attack.

LA ROCHE.

[Going.]

While you see La Val, I’ll see the Count.

[Exit.]



LA HOGUE.

[To ORDERLY.]

To Captain La Val!

[Exit quickly with ORDERLY.]

SENTINEL.

[Outside.]

Who goes there?

JEAN.

[Outside.]

A friend!

SENTINEL.

[Outside.]

Advance with countersign.

ORDERLY advances, salutes the SENTINEL, whispers in his ear, then steps back against balustrade of terrace as characters enter.—When characters are on, ORDERLY salutes SENTINEL, who returns salute. ORDERLY goes out. SENTINEL about faces and disappears.

Enter JEAN, DENISE, GOUROC, NANETTE, DUKE, AND DIANE.

JEAN.

[To the DUKE.]

You're safe at last, Monsieur, among your friends.

DIANE.

[Grasping JEAN'S hand.]

Thanks to your devotion.

DENISE.

[*To the DUKE.*]

I will announce your coming to the General.

[*Exit.*]

NANETTE.

[*To DIANE.*]

Here, child, be seated, and taste comfort once again.



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[DIANE *sits near the fire; the DUKE and GOUROC at table.*]

Now try to smile a bit.

DIANE.

I have forgotten how.

[*Calling.*]

Jean!

JEAN.

[*Crossing to DIANE.*]

Yes, Madame?

DIANE.

Hush! Do not let my father hear you call me Madame.

[*Converses aside with JEAN.*]

GOUROC.

[*Taking a newspaper from table.*]

Strange!—a Paris journal, dated the day after our escape.

DUKE.

[*Taking the paper.*]

There may be some notice of our flight.

[*Reads.*]



JEAN.

[To DIANE.]

Will you never confess your marriage to Kauvar?

DIANE.

Never!—Unless he finds us with evidence of innocence none can question.

JEAN.

He will! We can trust the wit of his deep love for that.

DIANE.

So you believe him innocent?

JEAN.

As innocent as my own sweetheart, dear Denise.

[DIANE weeps.]

What—tears, Madame?

DIANE.

Tears of triumph—that your heart echoes mine! Ah, Jean, we two, alone, of all the world, believe he's not a traitor.

DUKE.

Here's a list of martyrs slaughtered the day that we escaped.

GOUROC.

[*Taking the paper.*]

And here's a name underlined with ink.

[*Starting up with great joy.*]



By heaven, your own!—See!—In the list of fallen heads—the Duc de Beaumont!

[*The DUKE takes paper.*

DIANE.

[*Coming toward GOUROC.*]

You speak of the man who took my father's place, as though you exulted in his death!
—Was he an enemy of yours?

GOUROC.

I rejoice that the man's disguise was not discovered—for the report of your father's death prevented our pursuit.

DUKE.

[*Joyfully to GOUROC.*]

You remember the Abbe de St. Simon?

GOUROC.

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Yes. He was condemned to die with you.

DUKE.

This journal says that he escaped from the death-cart as it rumbled to the scaffold through the crowd.

GOUROC.

[Starting, and with great emphasis.]

Impossible!

DUKE.

[Holding out the paper.]

See for yourself!

[GOUROC takes paper eagerly.]

LA ROCHE.

[Entering, with a cry of joy.]

Duke!

DUKE.

[Holding out his arms.]

Henri!

LA ROCHE.

[Embracing the DUKE.]

In days of misery, a moment such as this is sweet indeed. But how did you escape? I saw your name among the guillotined.



DUKE.

[Turning to GOUROC.]

This gentleman wrought a way for our deliverance!—Monsieur le Marquis de Vaux.

LA ROCHE.

[Grasping GOUROC'S hand.]

Monsieur—the King's friends are all your debtors.

GOUROC.

Nay, sir, the debt is mine. Tis a privilege to save such precious lives.

DUKE.

[Presenting DIANE.]

Here's a lass you played with, years ago.

LA ROCHE.

What!—My little cousin—grown so stately and so sad! Mademoiselle, I claim a kinsman's right to kiss away these shadows.

DIANE.

And I yield the right with pleasure, cousin Henri.

LA ROCHE.

[Kisses her.]

Good cheer, sweet cousin! You are now protected by the soldiers of the King, who—God willing—will punish those who brought this shadow to your face.

GOUROC.

That may not prove an easy task! Granville is overrun with rebels, who are urged to most atrocious crimes by Carrac.

LA ROCHE.

Yes—Thomas Carrac—a brutal monster, reeking with loyal blood; a loathsome anarchist, who glories in the vilest deeds.

GOUROC.

Ravishing without remorse the daughters of our race.

LA ROCHE.

If we could capture wretches such as he, it might end our civil war.

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DIANE.

Is he so hard to take?

LA ROCHE.

Yes. Reptiles are worse to overcome than lions. They bite unseen, and escape by crawling. This Carrac is brave in words, but too craven to face fighting in the field. Our soldiers rarely reach these civil sinners.

DUKE.

Let us forget them here. For now we will task your hospitality for a time.

LA ROCHE.

I swear I have not felt the poverty that war entails till now. My old chateau has been dismantled—this hall alone is habitable. I feel ashamed to offer you such shabby quarters.

DUKE.

Nay, cousin, a bed of stones with friends is better than a bed of down with those we do not love.

DENISE.

[Entering, speaks to LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.]

A couch and fire are ready in the room that was your mother's.

LA ROCHE.

[To DIANE.]

Where doubtless you'll be glad to take some rest.



DIANE.

I confess the need, Monsieur.

LA ROCHE.

Denise, show the way.

[DENISE *crosses to the door.*

DIANE.

[*At the door.*]

Till to-night, kind friends.

LA ROCHE.

Till then, good rest.

[DIANE *courtesies and goes out with NANETTE.*]

Gentlemen, I pray you, make yourselves at home; important business claims my time.
—I'll rejoin you within an hour.

DUKE.

We're here to help, not mar the cause; command us in all ways.

LA ROCHE.

Presently!—Till then the poor old house is yours.

[*Exit.*

[*Exit* JEAN.

DUKE.

[*Sitting near the fire.*]

At last, praise God! We're out of reach of traitors!



GOUROC.

Not yet!—The rebel hosts have gathered here at Granville in great force. They may rout the royal army, and capture all of us.

DUKE.

No, not all, for I shall die first, fighting in the ranks.

GOUROC.

But Diane, your daughter—?



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DUKE.

Must take the chances of a soldier's child.

GOUROC.

You forget her peril from this scoundrel, Carrac.—Why not put her safely out of the reach of such a brute?

DUKE.

How?

GOUROC.

There are vessels here by which we can escape to England.

DUKE.

I fly no further. I owe the King and country service here.

GOUROC.

Then let Diane go with me to friends in London. When I've found for her safe asylum, I'll return to do my duty at your side.

DUKE.

The daughter of a peer of France could hardly go so far without protection worthy of her rank.

GOUROC.

That she can secure as a Marquise, and my wife.

[*The DUKE turns quickly in surprise.*]



I know, dear Duke, that you are richer, nobler than myself, but then the love I bear your daughter, together with the dangers that surround her life and honour here—

DUKE.

Say no more!—There's nothing that would ease my mind so much as to see Diane your wife.

GOUROC.

Then plead my cause with her.

DUKE.

I'll more than plead.—Her perils urge me to command this marriage.

GOUROC.

Then do not lose a moment; the attack begins to-night. Before our army strikes, she and I, as man and wife, should sail for England.

NANETTE.

[Entering.]

Monsieur, your daughter desires a word with you—*[Glancing at GOUROC.]* alone.

DUKE.

Say I'll see her here at once.

[Exit NANETTE.]

I'll broach this marriage to my child without delay.

GOUROC.

[Going.]

I'll be at hand in case you call me.

[Exit.]

DUKE.

[Alone.]

This alliance secures Diane from peril. The Marquis is young, noble,—has saved her life, and has a claim on it. She must marry while there's time to get away.

[Enter DIANE.]

Now, dear child, what is it?

DIANE.



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Father, I loathe this useless life of mine! I long for action—danger—anything that stirs the blood, and brings oblivion.

DUKE.

Oblivion!—Nay, Diane, I have something happier to suggest than that. Time and circumstance commend to you a marriage. We owe our lives to the wisdom of a man who seeks your hand to-day.

DIANE.

The Marquis?—*[After a pause.]* I cannot marry, for I do not love him.

DUKE.

Then 'tis time you did.

DIANE.

No more, I beg of you.—It is impossible!

DUKE.

Impossible! When prompted by the wisdom of a father's love? When your escape from peril and my peace of mind demand it?

DIANE.

I cannot argue.

DUKE.

Then at least explain.

DIANE.

Alas, I dare not.



DUKE.

You fear mere frankness with your truest friend?

[DIANE *sinks into a chair and hides her face. The DUKE looks at her with suspicion.*]

By heaven! You hide your face as though to speak implied dishonour.

DIANE.

No, no! It is not that!

DUKE.

Then why torture me with this concealment? Have I been cruel, or faithless as a father?

DIANE.

Never!

DUKE.

Then I claim a father's sacred right to confidence. Give me one good reason why you refuse the man to whom we owe our lives?

DIANE.

I love another.

DUKE.

[*Starting.*]

Another!

[*After a pause.*]

His name—?

DIANE.

What matter, since we shall never meet again?



DUKE.

I understand at last!—'Tis Paul Kauvar!

[DIANE *bows her head.*]

So! The saviour of your father's life is scorned for his betrayer! No wonder that you blush to own it! This makes my course more clear. The safest cure for this disgraceful love will be your marriage.

DIANE.



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That cannot be!

DUKE.

[Going.]

I say it shall!

DIANE.

[Startled.]

Where are you going?

DUKE.

To seek the priest! Delay is dangerous! You wed to-day and sail to-night for England.

DIANE.

No, no! Have pity! I have no right to marry.

DUKE.

[In horror.]

No right?

DIANE.

[Falling at his feet.]

I am a wife already.

DUKE.

His wife?—You, my flesh and blood, a traitor's wife!—Oh God! What have I done to merit such a blow as this?



DIANE.

Father,—forgive! Hear me!

DUKE.

[Flinging her off, rushes to the door.]

Henri, Marquis—here! All of you!

[Enter LA HOGUE, LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN, GOUROC, JEAN and DENISE.]

[To LA ROCHE.]

Call your guards! Drag this woman away! Fling her to these rebel dogs—for she is one of them!

GOUROC.

What has she done?

DUKE.

Deceived a father's love! Become the mate of my betrayer.

[Turning on DIANE.]

Degraded remnant of my race!—Go! Back to your own, wife of a Sans Culotte!

GOUROC.

[Stepping between them.]

Stay! There must be some mistake!

DUKE.

No! She has confessed that she's the wife of Paul Kauvar.

GOUROC.

That cannot be, for Paul Kauvar is dead.



DUKE.

Dead? How do you know that?

GOUROC.

Because he, disguised, took your place on the guillotine.

DIANE.

[Rising.]

My God!

DUKE.

What! I owe my life to him?

GOUROC.

He died to atone his treachery to you.

DIANE.

Traitors do not die to save their victims! His life was noble! His death sublime!



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[*To the DUKE.*]

You have foully wronged the man who bravely met a martyr's death for you!—have scorned and spurned me from your side, because I was his wife. You have disowned me—I now disown you!

[*Turning, she goes swiftly up the steps to the terrace.*]

LA ROCHE.

Where are you going?

DIANE.

Back to the Sans Culottes!

DUKE.

Diane!—Daughter!

DIANE.

No! Not your daughter—but his wife! No longer Diane de Beaumont—but, thank God, —Diane Kauvar!

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE. *Same as Act III.*—DUKE *discovered seated in attitude of despair.*—GOUROC *standing near mantel.*—LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN *enters sadly.*

DUKE.

[*Rising anxiously.*]

What news?



LA ROCHE.

None.

[The DUKE sinks back into chair.]

GOUROC.

Then she has positively escaped?

LA ROCHE.

While we stood dazed with horror at her words—she vanished. Our soldiers have searched, but can find no trace of her.

DUKE.

[Starting up.]

I will find her!

LA ROCHE.

[Barring his way.]

This is madness.

DUKE.

Let me pass!

LA ROCHE.

Hear me!

DUKE.

While I listen, she is lost!—An army shall not stop me.

[Breaks from him towards door.]



DENISE.

[Entering joyfully.]

She is found!

ALL.

Found?

DENISE.

Yes. Jean tracked her,—they are bringing her here.

JEAN.

[Entering.]

General, I have not failed.

LA ROCHE.

[Grasping his hand.]

You never do.

LA HOGUE enters first, followed by two GUARDS, whom he directs to the entrance at top of steps.—DIANE enters, followed by two GUARDS.



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DIANE.

[To LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.]

By what authority, Monsieur, am I arrested?

DUKE.

By mine. I am your father.

DIANE.

My marriage has set me free of parental rule. I claim the right to fly from those who have defamed my noble husband. General, command your soldiers to release me!

GOUROC.

No!—You shall not go.

DIANE.

What will prevent me?

GOUROC.

The force of your own honour.

DIANE.

Honour commands me to return to my husband's friends.

GOUROC.

Honour commands you to keep your word with me.

[DIANE *starts and turns away.*]



You promised, if I saved your father, and you were free, you'd be my wife.—I have done my part, you must do yours.

DIANE.

[Passionately, to GOUROC.]

Now I understand your joy when you read of the beheadal of the man who took my father's place!—You knew he was my husband.

GOUROC.

I did.

DIANE.

You planned his death to free and force me to this marriage.

GOUROC.

I did not learn that you were his wife till he was going to the guillotine.—Then he told me all, confiding you to my care. I promised him I'd shield you from all peril.—I but keep my word with him, in asking you to keep your word with me.

DIANE.

So you would wed the widow of a Sans Culotte?

GOUROC.

Your husband was my friend; I knew and honoured him.

DIANE.

Ah, you believe, then, that Potin lied when he declared he got the warrant for the Duke's arrest from Paul Kauvar?

GOUROC.

I now believe that your husband was the victim of a trick.

DIANE.

Then swear—before those who have heard the dead defamed—swear that you believe my husband was innocent of infamy.

GOUROC.

[With deep sincerity.]

As I hope for mercy from my God, I believe that Paul Kauvar was guiltless of dishonour.



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DIANE.

[Impressed with his sincerity.]

Then his widow swears to keep her word with you.

[She extends her hand to GOUROC.]

LA HOGUE *crosses, up steps, to GUARDS, and directs them silently to exit.—They about-face, and go out.*

GOUROC.

[Aside, triumphantly kissing DIANE'S hand.]

At last!

[Howls of execration outside.]

What is that?

LA ROCHE.

The mob howling at some captured rebels.

[Enter ORDERLY, who presents paper.]

[Reading paper, LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN speaks to ORDERLY.]

Conduct the prisoner here.

[Exit ORDERLY.]

[Turning to DIANE.]

Cousin, I must ask you to retire. We have secret business to transact.

DUKE.

[Giving DIANE his arm.]

We will await you in my daughter's room.



[To GOUROC.]

Marquis, we can complete the plans for your marriage and escape to England.

[*Exeunt* DIANE, DUKE, JEAN, DENISE *and* GOUROC.]

GOUROC.

[*Aside, as he goes out.*]

Now I know that I shall triumph!

LA ROCHE.

[To LA HOGUE.]

When and where were these prisoners secured?

LA HOGUE.

At dawn this morning, in the centre of the Faubourg. They fought like fiends! Their leader is a veritable lion.—Though overcome by numbers, he don't seem conquered in the least!—Hang my hide! I cannot help but like him!

[*Howls renewed outside.*]

ORDERLY.

[*Entering.*]

The prisoner is here, General.

LA ROCHE.

Bring him in.

[ORDERLY *beckons.*—*Yells outside.* GUARDS *enter and form on terrace behind entrance.*—*Enter* PRISONER, *who strides haughtily in.*]

[To ORDERLY.]

Retire and guard the doors.

[ORDERLY *right-faces*.—GUARD *goes of with* ORDERLY.]

[*Politely to* PRISONER.]

I see, sir, you're an officer.

PRISONER.

Yes.—Captain of Volunteers in the ranks of the Republic.

LA ROCHE.

To what corps do you belong?

PRISONER.



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Kleber's—who waits upon the banks of the river to cut off your retreat.

LA ROCHE.

[Smiling.]

We do not propose to retreat, but to advance.

PRISONER.

Before another day you will be driven, routed, into the heart of Vendee.

LA ROCHE.

If boasting wins, your side will doubtless better ours.

PRISONER.

If blows win—your side is sure to fail. You've not a regiment that's trained better than a pack of boys!

LA HOGUE.

I wish he were a liar, but he isn't.

LA ROCHE.

Our boys struck hard enough, it seems, to capture you.

PRISONER.

We were ten, surprised by a battalion, and yet it cost you nearly fifty of your friends to take but ten of us.

LA HOGUE.

There he goes again riddling us with facts.



LA ROCHE.

Sir,—you know there is no quarter given to traitors found in arms against the King.

PRISONER.

France has no sovereign but the people.—It is you who are the traitors.

LA ROCHE.

Answer civilly and I may show you mercy.

PRISONER.

I neither ask, nor accept mercy. I have done my best to deal a crushing blow to you.—
So call your guards, and shoot me without more waste of words.

LA ROCHE.

I see that you are brave.

PRISONER.

Brave? Because I'm not afraid to die?

[Laughs bitterly.]

Bah! It takes more courage sometimes to consent to live.

LA ROCHE.

You are young, a Frenchman, and—though misled—a credit to your country. If you'll give me some excuse, I swear I'd rather spare your life.

PRISONER.

[Laughing.]

Thank you, General; but frankly, I'd rather give you some excuse to take it.

Tremendous explosion heard in the distance. Then a second explosion. The Faubourg in middle ground is blown up and is seen to burn into a blaze.

LA ROCHE.

My God!—See!—The Faubourg!

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PRISONER.

[Triumphantly.]

Blown up and burning!—In an hour the houses that were to shelter your attack on our defenses will be gone, and you will have to fight our forces in the open field.—That means defeat for you.

LA HOGUE.

Sacristi! Gag this rogue, or we'll be whipped before we fight.

LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN *writes hastily, and strikes a bell. Enter GOUROC, who starts and goes out again with a gesture of menace towards the PRISONER. Enter ORDERLY.*

LA ROCHE.

[To ORDERLY.]

Despatch these orders instantly, and send a guard with loaded muskets here at once.

[Exit ORDERLY.]

[Turning despondently to LA HOGUE.]

I fear this is a death-blow to our plans to-night.

PRISONER.

A death-blow dealt by me!—You'd better kill me quickly before I do more damage.

LA ROCHE.

You are right, sir; I should be faithless to my King if I showed you mercy now.

PRISONER.

Bravo! Mercy to enemies is as base as cruelty to friends.



LA HOGUE.

Damn me! There's no fun in killing such a fool—he seems to like it!

[Enter ORDERLY with GUARDS.]

LA ROCHE.

[To ORDERLY.]

Take the prisoner outside and shoot him there at once.

[GUARD crosses to PRISONER.]

Have you any last request?

PRISONER.

But one.—You have shown me the kindness of an honest-hearted man. War has made us enemies, but, in the presence of the peace of death, I would like to feel that as Frenchmen we are friends, and ask one parting grasp from you.

LA ROCHE.

[Grasps his hand.]

With all my heart!—May we meet like this above.

LA HOGUE.

[With emotion.]

Curse these youngsters, they make me snivel like a fool.

[He blows his nose furiously.]

The_ PRISONER bows, takes his place in the platoon of GUARDS, who begin to march off. When they are on the terrace, LA HOGUE suddenly cries out.

LA HOGUE.

Halt!—

[ORDERLY about-faces and waits for orders.]



You have not given us your name.



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PRISONER.

I prefer to let it die with me.

LA HOGUE.

Hang it, sir! Courage is glorious even in a rebel rascal like yourself.

LA ROCHE.

Some friend may be glad to know how fearlessly you met your fate.

PRISONER.

The only ears I'd care to reach would rather never hear my name again.

LA HOGUE.

But curse your stubbornness! I want to know your name myself. Can't you be civil as well as brave?

PRISONER.

[*Laughing.*]

Well, then, to please your gentle highness, I must give it. I am Captain on the Staff of General Kleber—Captain Kauvar.

LA ROCHE *and* LA HOGUE.

[*Starting.*]

Kauvar?

PAUL.

Yes—Captain Paul Kauvar.



LA ROCHE.

[Turning amazed to LA HOGUE.]

What do you think of this?

LA HOGUE.

That if I had a regiment of Paul Kauvar's, I'd conquer Europe.

LA ROCHE.

My cousin's husband was guillotined. There's some mistake.

[To GUARD.]

Leave the prisoner, and wait outside for orders.

PAUL.

[Stopping the GUARD.]

Stay!—

[ORDERLY waits for further orders.]

[To LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.]

General, I beg of you to spare me further waiting.—Make an end of this.

LA ROCHE.

When I have questioned you again.

PAUL.

I shall refuse to answer further questions.

LA ROCHE.

I may find a way to break your silence.

PAUL.

I swear you cannot do it.

LA ROCHE.

[Motions GUARDS to go.]

[ORDERLY about-faces, goes on to terrace. GUARDS then march off.]

We shall see! You've given a name that's not your own.

[PAUL starts, but remains silent.]

Paul Kauvar was guillotined the night of the ninth of May.

[PAUL turns, amazed but silent.]

He died to save my kinsman, the Duc de Beaumont.



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[PAUL, *about to speak, checks himself.*]

He was the husband of my cousin.

PAUL.

[*Exploding.*]

Diane—your cousin?

LA ROCHE.

Ha! I thought I'd make you speak.

PAUL.

[*Eagerly.*]

You know her?—She has escaped?—Is safe?—alive?—happy?

LA ROCHE.

Oh, ho!—So you would turn the tables—question me?

PAUL.

Is she alive and well?—I ask to know but this.

LA ROCHE.

I'll tell you more, if you will answer first my questions.

PAUL.

All!—that do not force me to betray my cause.



LA ROCHE.

Explain!—You escaped the guillotine?

PAUL.

The story is too long.

LA ROCHE.

Make it brief, but answer.

PAUL.

In the death-cart I found a priest confessing those about him. He questioned me, soon saw that I was not the Duke. "My child," he said, "I die to-day, but as a priest shall be the last to mount the scaffold.—Let me take your place, assume the same disguise, while you slip from the cart and live." At first I refused, as I no longer cared for life! But when he said Diane might not escape unless I lived to aid her, I yielded.—The night was cloudy. When the moon was hidden, the priest put on my coat and wig, and as the death-cart neared the scaffold, I slipped through its slatted floor, and in the darkness mingled with the crowd.

LA ROCHE.

Who was the holy man who set you free?

PAUL.

The Abbe de St. Simon.

LA ROCHE.

Strange! We heard the Abbe had escaped.

PAUL.

He answered when the Duke was called and so was guillotined; but when the Abbe's turn had come, they could not find him, and so gave out that he'd escaped.

LA ROCHE.

Yes, I understand it now.—Proceed!

PAUL.

I found Diane had gone, believing I was guilty of a most ignoble crime. Too sick at heart to follow her, I enlisted and, seeking death, obtained promotion to my present grade.



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LA ROCHE.

What if your willingness to die to save her father had convinced Diane that you were innocent, and had taught her a deeper love for you?

PAUL.

Ah! Then life would be worth living once again!—Can you have heard from her—seen her?

LA ROCHE.

You can see her for yourself—save your own life—and bring boundless joy to hers.

PAUL.

How?

LA ROCHE.

Espouse our cause!

PAUL.

What!—Betray my country?

LA ROCHE.

No.—Redeem your country!—Desert the side of those who bring disgrace upon your native land—of fiends, who drown her soil in blood!—blood bred from the noblest heroes of her history.

PAUL.

Heroes who debauched our women, and enslaved our men!—Libertines who let harlots reign in France! Despots whose arrogant descendants are crushed to-day beneath their fathers' sins!



LA ROCHE.

What, sir! You, a soldier, justify these Jacobins—anarchists like Carrac, who slaughter hundreds of defenceless women every day, and even outrage little children?

PAUL.

Anarchists are monsters your race bred when it brutalized their mothers.

LA ROCHE.

Enough, sir! I see that I must leave you to your fate.

PAUL.

But Diane, my wife! Give me one word of her.

LA ROCHE.

Yes. You shall know that she believes you innocent, is sick with grief and desolation in thinking you are dead.

PAUL.

You have seen her, then?

LA ROCHE.

Yes—here, within an hour.

PAUL.

She is here now, within call—?

[LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN *makes sign of assent.* PAUL *kneels at his feet.*]

My God! In pity's name, let me see her once again.

LA ROCHE.

And so re-open the old wounds?—re-awaken hope, but to deepen her despair?

PAUL.

[Rising slowly.]

No, no! You're right. I will not purchase joy at the cost of pain to her!—Call your guards. I die happy, knowing she'll remember me with love.

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LA ROCHE.

For her sake renounce rebellion, and I unite you both forever.

PAUL.

Better I should never see her face again than be unworthy of her love.

LA HOGUE.

Great Caesar! Here's an eagle facing death in loyalty to carrion crows!—The noble bird is mad! We must not kill, but cure him.

LA ROCHE.

What do you propose?

LA HOGUE.

Put him on parole. Let him give his word that he'll not fight until he's exchanged.

LA ROCHE.

True! Captain Kauvar, you are a prisoner of war, a man of proven honour.—Give me your word that you will not lift your sword against the King, till you're exchanged, and you're paroled and free.

PAUL.

Free with honour, to see my wife once more?

LA ROCHE.

Yes!



PAUL.

Oh, generous foe! Next to my country, my life belongs to you.

LA ROCHE.

I have your word?

PAUL.

[Raising his hand.]

You have.

LA ROCHE.

Captain Kauvar, you are paroled.

PAUL.

And my wife?

LA ROCHE.

[Going.]

Shall come to you at once.

[Exit.]

PAUL.

Great heavens!—I'm going mad with joy!

[Turning to LA HOGUE.]

Colonel, I must explode or die!

[He embraces LA HOGUE.]



LA HOGUE.

[Submitting with gusto.]

Damme! Embraced by a Sans Culotte! I like it, too!

Artillery is heard in the distance.

PAUL.

[Looking off.]

By heavens!—The Republicans are sweeping down from Granville!

[To LA HOGUE.]

Colonel, see! My comrades have attacked you under cover of the town I burned.

[Crash of artillery again.]

LA HOGUE.

Damnation!

Enter LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.

ORDERLY.



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[Rushing in.]

General, the enemy are upon us!

LA ROCHE.

[Excitedly to LA HOGUE.]

Quick!—To arms!—We must rouse and lead our men!

PAUL.

But Diane—my wife?

LA ROCHE.

Gone!—to England.

[Handing a paper.]

Read, and remember, whatever be my fate, you are on parole.

[He rushes off with LA HOGUE.]

The crash of firearms increases.

PAUL.

[Reading.]

“Dear Henri:—The town is burning, my daughter in peril. I see Diane embarked for England, and join you on the field.—Duc de Beaumont.”—Gone!—No! I will find her, and fly with her myself.

[Noise of battle outside.—PAUL is about to go, but stops.]

No, no! My God!—She’s lost to me again! I cannot go to seek her, for I’m a prisoner on parole!

[He falls prostrate on the stairs.]



CURTAIN.

ACT V.

SCENE. *Same as Act IV—one hour later. Noise of battle in distance.—PAUL discovered looking on and listening in excitement.—Noise increases and sounds nearer.*

PAUL.

[Triumphantly.]

Ah!—The enemy weakens!—gives way!—falls back!—The Royalists fly!—The Republic wins!—Progress triumphs!

[The noise of battle grows louder, but the cries of triumph from Republicans decrease, then die away.—PAUL checks his joy and speaks in changed tones.]

And I—I have no part in this glorious play—because I'm on parole.

[Walking up and down excitedly.]

What torture!—to be here; with heart aflame, and limbs all free; to see the fight, and yet be bound to idleness by an oath, as much a prisoner as though in fetters at the bottom of a cell!

[Changing his whole manner.]

And Diane—where is she? But now within my reach—almost in my arms—naught between us but a promise, a mere breath—that breath as strong as adamant walls to part us!

JEAN.

[Entering, sees PAUL and cries out.]

Kauvar!

PAUL.

[Turning, starts.]

Jean Litais!

JEAN.

You, alive?

PAUL.

My wife!—Where is she?

JEAN.



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Don't ask me!

PAUL.

You promised to save her.

JEAN.

I did.—But for the burning of the Faubourg, and the attack of the rebels, she would be alive and safe.

PAUL.

And now—?

JEAN.

She's lost!—She, with her father and the Marquis, fell into an ambush—were fired on from every side—

PAUL.

Killed! And I am her assassin!

JEAN.

You?

PAUL.

Yes! I planned the burning of the Faubourg, placed the mines that blew it up, and opened a way for our attack.—In serving my country, I have killed my wife!

JEAN.

You are a soldier, then,—one of the blues?



PAUL.

Yes—and captured there at dawn. [*Points at the Faubourg.*]

JEAN.

And not shot?

PAUL.

No—paroled!—paroled!—paroled!

JEAN.

Impossible! The watchword on both sides is “No mercy.”

PAUL.

La Rochejacquelein spared my life, that I might once more see my wife.—Useless generosity, for she had gone to meet her death!

JEAN.

But he—the General—was merciful, magnanimous to you?

PAUL.

He was. I owe him an eternal debt.

JEAN.

Are you willing to pay your debt?

PAUL.

With my life!

JEAN.

His army is routed. He will be captured—shot like a dog, unless he’s saved.

PAUL.

He must be saved.

JEAN.

There's a secret passage from this castle to the glen. If I could put his pursuers off his track, he would escape.

PAUL.

Bring the General here and leave the rest to me.

JEAN.

You will aid him?

PAUL.



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I will.—Be quick; we're wasting time.

[JEAN crosses to door and beckons; enter LA HOGUE, LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN and DENISE.

PAUL.

[Putting off his coat and crossing.]

General, off with your coat!

LA ROCHE.

What does this mean?

PAUL.

You were merciful to me—'tis my turn now! We exchange uniforms; I am captured in your place, mislead your pursuers while you escape.

LA ROCHE.

For you to assist me is treason to your cause.

PAUL.

Ingratitude is treason to my God!—I owe you more than life; let men call this what they will; I have a divine right to pay my debt.

LA ROCHE.

I refuse to let you do a deed that may bring dishonour on your head.

PAUL.

Then I refuse to owe my life to you.—Accept my assistance, or

[Drawing pistol from the belt of LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.] with my own hand I'll shoot the prisoner you paroled.



LA HOGUE.

[Grasping PAUL'S arm.]

Stop! This can be arranged.

PAUL.

How?

LA HOGUE.

You are a prisoner on parole.—The General is as good as captured now.—Let him release you from your word, then his escape will only be an exchange of prisoners.

PAUL.

Will you consent to this?

LA ROCHE.

No, I cannot. The exchange would not be fair to the side you serve. I am a General; you, but a Captain.

LA HOGUE.

But we have the other prisoners, the comrades of the Captain; we can shoot them all at once, or exchange them if we choose for you.

PAUL.

Free them—and I but make a fair exchange in helping you to get away.

[Shouts outside.]

[Cheers.]

JEAN.

My God! The crowd rush on this way.

DENISE.

[Kneeling to LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.]

In Mercy's name—!

LA HOGUE.

The King's cause dies with you!—You are bound to live for him!



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LA ROCHE.

[Stripping off his coat.]

Enough—I consent.

DENISE.

Thank God!

PAUL *and* LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN *exchange uniforms.*

LA ROCHE.

By heavens! I never thought to wear this colour on my back! I do it for King Louis' sake.

PAUL.

And I wear this in honour of the King of Kings, who is our common Father.

LA ROCHE.

My saviour!

PAUL.

Nay, your brother!

PAUL *and* LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN *look in each other's eyes a moment, then part in silence.* JEAN *and* DENISE *cross to panel in wall.* LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN *crosses and turns.*

LA ROCHE.

[Saluting PAUL.]

Long live the King!



PAUL.

[*Saluting* LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN.]

Long live the Republic!

LA HOGUE.

[*As* LA ROCHEJACQUELEIN *goes out*,.]

Your comrades are there.

[*Pointing*.]

This key will set them free.

PAUL.

[*Taking* LA HOGUE'S *hand*.]

Our lives are yours!—Farewell!

LA HOGUE.

Damme! I never thought I'd live to love a Sans Culotte!

[*As* LA HOGUE *goes out*, JEAN *crosses to* PAUL.

JEAN.

When you are recognized, our pursuit will recommence.

PAUL.

How much time is needed to make sure your escape?

JEAN.

At least one hour.—If your disguise is discovered in less time, you will have risked your life in vain.



PAUL.

Don't fear!

JEAN.

I have your word, and no matter what happens, you will play your part for one whole hour?

PAUL.

You have my word, however tragic this comedy may become.

JEAN.

When the General is free, I shall return.

[A bell tolls the hour of Two.]

Listen! Remember, you have pledged your honour to endure all things for an hour. Till then—God help you!



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[Exit.]

Shouts and yells outside from Republican soldiers; PAUL sits near the fire and pays no attention. Firing outside, followed by cries and cheers.

POTIN.

[Outside.]

This way!—This way!—That's his nest!—We'll find the bird in there!

[Rushes on, followed by SOLDIERS.]

[Looking around.]

Deserted! The rogue of a royal General is hiding like a mouse! We'll unearth him!—Come on!

[He is going toward door, followed by his MEN, when he sees PAUL, and starts back.]

Halt!

[Points at PAUL.]

See!—There is La Rochejacquelein!

[To the MEN.]

Make ready—Aim!

[SOLDIERS aim at PAUL, who does not move]

[To PAUL.]

General La Rochejacquelein, we recognize your uniform. Surrender!

[PAUL does not move.]

General, your sword, or we fire!

PAUL.

[Rising coolly.]



Fire!

POTIN.

We do not want to kill you.

[Advancing with extended hand.]

We'd rather have your sword.

PAUL.

[Recognizing POTIN, speaks aside.]

Potin!—The wretch!—He may recognize me before the hour is up!

[He draws his sword and extends it backward.]

POTIN.

[Taking the sword.]

General, you are our prisoner.

[To SOLDIERS.]

Comrades, to us—a squad of the battalion of the Bonnet Rouge—is due the glory of taking the leader of these Royalist Brigands!—Hurrah for our Battalion!

[All cheer.]

VOICES.

[Outside.]

Long live the Republic!

POTIN.

[Looking off]

Bah! Here come the rabble—a crowd of anarchists!



GOUJON.

Who never share the fighting.

POTIN.

But claim all the glory fighting brings.

GOUJON.

Curse these civil shouters!

SOLDIERS *all groan. Cries of "Carrac! Carrac!" with cheers heard outside.*

POTIN.

Here they come, led on by Scarlotte—

GOUJON.

Scarlotte! A woman in form—a fury in nature!



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POTIN.

Like my wife.

[Cheers outside.]

Good heavens! Worse and worse! Yonder comes Carrac—the king of curs!—Damme! The devil himself is a saint compared with him.

GOUJON.

The beast!

POTIN.

The bloodiest beast of all—a tiger!

[To SOLDIERS.]

Quick, form on this side *[Pointing to the left.]* and protect the General.—This hog will want to eat him, before we can deliver him to Kleber and get the credit of his capture.

[SOLDIERS form in front of PAUL.]

SCARLOTTE.

[Outside.]

This way, you fools!—Death to Rochejacquelein. Come on!

MOB.

[Outside.]

Death to Rochejacquelein!

SCARLOTTE.

[Entering, followed by MOB.]



Rochejacquelein!—Rochejacquelein!—Where is Rochejacquelein?

MOB.

Down with Rochejacquelein! Down with Rochejacquelein!

BOURDOTTE.

[Appearing.]

Silence! Here comes Carrac, the great Carrac—representative of the Republic—who never spares an enemy!

[Comes down stage.]

POTIN.

And never makes a friend.

MOB.

Carrac!—Carrac!—Long live Carrac!

CARRAC appears, followed by a second MOB, and makes a gesture commanding silence.

CARRAC.

So—this is the ancestral hall of that cursed kin of kings, La Rochejacquelein!—Ha! He's doubtless sneaking like a coward in some safe corner of his den. Is the place surrounded?

BOURDOTTE.

On every side.

SCARLOTTE.

Good!—Tear his house about his ears!

CARRAC.

Aye—strip the old hawk's nest.

MOB.

Aye!—Aye!

[The MOB dismantle the house, with yells of exultation.]

SCARLOTTE.

[Urging them on.]

Heroes of Liberty!—demolish every trace of beauty in the place!

Amid a scene of anarchic rage and turmoil, the room is stript stark.



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CARRAC.

Well done—noble levellers of the age!—Pull the boasted culture of the nobility to the gutter.—Bravo!—We've demolished the old nest; now to hunt the young hawk down!

MOB.

Aye!—Aye!

POTIN.

[Waving the MOB back.]

Stop!—La Rochejacquelein is found!

SCARLOTTE.

Where is he?

POTIN.

There—our prisoner.

SCARLOTTE.

Drag him to the river!

MOB.

Aye—to the river!

POTIN.

Stand back!—He belongs to our battalion.

CARRAC.

What insolence is this? We demand his surrender here—to us.



POTIN.

We surrender him to none but our own Colonel.

CARRAC.

We are the people and supreme!—We represent the civil power of the State, that rules the soldier.

MOB.

Aye!—Aye!

POTIN.

[*To the SOLDIERS.*]

Make ready!—Aim!

[*SOLDIERS aim;—the MOB fall back.*]

You're ten to one.—Come on, you civil rulers, and take him if you can.

CARRAC.

This is treason!

SCARLOTTE.

Aye—treason!—Treason!

[*The MOB groan.*]

POTIN.

Soldiers have no rulers but their officers!

CARRAC.

Someone go for General Kleber. Bid him come at once—to quell this mutiny.



SCARLOTTE.

I will bring him.

[Crosses.]

Death to all who dare to balk the people's will!

[Exit.]

BOURDOTTE.

Meantime, Citizen Carrac, we have some prisoners here at hand that we can dispatch at once.

CARRAC.

How many?

BOURDOTTE.

Five.—Two men, and three women—perfect beauties!

CARRAC.



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Bravo! Their beauty and their lives are ours!

[*Cheers from MOB.*]

Bring them in!

[*Exeunt eight SANS CULOTTES.*]

Citizens, we've won to-day a glorious victory.

POTIN.

There he goes boasting, when he never struck a blow.

CARRAC.

Let's complete our triumph—prove our power—

MOB.

Bravo!—Bravo!

CARRAC.

You are the people!—You are France!—Let the Nation voice her will through you.—
What shall we do with our prisoners?

BOURDOTTE.

Kill them.

MOB.

Aye—kill them—kill them!

BOURDOTTE.

Drown the men like puppies, and put the women to public shame!

MOB.

Aye! Aye!

CARRAC.

The voice of the people is the voice of God.—Have your will—it is God's command!

Enter CITIZENS, dragging the DUKE, GOUROC, DIANE, NANETTE, and ALINE, a young girl.

The MOB groan and laugh mockingly.

The young girl is dragged forward—two_ SANS CULOTTES *contending for her.*

FIRST SANS CULOTTE.

She's mine!

SECOND SANS CULOTTE.

You lie!—I caught her first!

ALINE.

Mercy!—Kill me if you will,—but spare me this!

CARRAC.

[Laughing.]

Citizens,—behold your victims!

[MOB rush forward with ferocious yells.]

DUKE.

[Interposing.]

No, no!—Let my grey hairs suffice!

[The MOB pause.]



PAUL.

[Starting up, speaks aside.]

My God!—That voice!

[During what follows, PAUL—screened from the MOB'S view by his soldier GUARDS—expresses in pantomime his conflicting emotions.]

CARRAC.

[To the DUKE.]

Who are you?

GOUROC.

[Speaking quickly.]

We are Citizens of the Republic!—He



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[Pointing at the DUKE.]

is George Leblanc—and I, Citizen Gouroc of the Committee of Public Safety.

[CARRAC and MOB draw back with astonishment.]

PAUL.

[Aside.]

And Diane!—Is she there?—I must see!

[Starts, stops.]

No, no!—They would know me; the hour is not up!

CARRAC.

You, Citizen Gouroc?—I don't believe it.

GOUROC.

[Holding out papers.]

Here are our credentials.

CARRAC.

They may be forgeries.

MOB.

Aye—forgeries! forgeries!

CARRAC.

[To the MOB.]

Silence! While we proceed in our examination.



[*The MOB utter low murmurs. CARRAC turns to NANETTE.*]

Who are you?

NANETTE.

[*Advancing defiantly.*]

I am Citizeness Nanette Potin.

POTIN.

[*Aside.*]

My wife!—

[*Sneaks behind comrades.*]

CARRAC.

Ha, wait!

[*Seeing DIANE, he drags her forth.*]

By the gods!—here's a feast for Jupiter himself.—Speak out, delicious wench, and tell us who you are.

DIANE.

I am Diane—

GOUROC.

[*Interrupting quickly.*]

She is Diane Gouroc.—

[*Pointing at the DUKE.*]

His daughter and my wife.

PAUL.

[*Exploding.*]



Liar!

[All start and turn toward PAUL, who speaks aside.]

God help me!—I forget; the hour is not ended.

CARRAC.

Who is it calls this citizen a liar?

GOUJON.

The prisoner.

CARRAC.

Ah, ha! It seems he knows these citizens.—In the name of the law and the Republic, I summon instantly as a witness Henri de la Rochejacquelein.

DIANE.

My cousin captured?

[All turn toward her, amazed.]

GOUROC.

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[*Starting.*]

My God!—We're lost!

CARRAC.

So—the prisoner is the beauty's cousin.

[*To GOUROC.*]

Traitor! You have lied!—This convicts you all.

MOB.

To the guillotine!—To the guillotine!

BOURDOTTE.

No! A marriage! A Republican marriage!

MOB.

Aye! A marriage! marriage!

[BOURDOTTE *drags forth* NANETTE.

NANETTE.

What are you going to do?

BOURDOTTE.

Tie you to this man and throw you in the river.—That's the way we marry Royalists!

[*The MOB laugh mockingly.*

NANETTE.

[*Shrieking.*]



Help!

POTIN.

[Exploding.]

Damnation!—Tongue or no tongue, I must save her.

[Bounds forward and frees his wife.]

Nanette!

NANETTE.

[Joyfully embracing POTIN.]

Dodolphe!

CARRAC.

What does this mean?

POTIN.

This is my wife; the wife of a soldier of the Republic, and so, sacred to her country.

SOLDIERS.

Aye! Aye!

POTIN.

[Pointing to GOUROC.]

Do what you like with him—for such cattle as he deserve to die!

[GOUROC turns and glowers.]

Glare! Who cares? I'm a soldier. 'Tis my turn now!—You shall pay dearly for making me a perjurer!

[To MOB.]

Citizens, this devil here forced me to swear falsely against a patriot.

BOURDOTTE.

When was this?

POTIN.

Three months ago in Paris.—I was secretary to my Section.—This man had a blank warrant signed by our president, Paul Kauvar.—He made me fill it in with the name of the Duc de Beaumont—and, after, falsely swear that Kauvar had ordered the arrest.

[Cries of execration from the MOB.]

DIANE.

Father! You hear? It is to him that we owe our agony!—One of your own race.

POTIN.



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Kauvar was his friend—this dog betrayed him!

NANETTE.

Yes, while he himself was all the time a Marquis in disguise.

PAUL.

He, my friend—a traitor!

CARRAC.

Death to the brigand!

MOB.

Death to him! To the river! Drown him!

[They seize GOUROC.]

GOUROC.

[Breaking away from them.]

Fiends—I defy you, and escape you!

[Draws pistol, fires, and falls dead.]

BOURDOTTE.

[Feeling GOUROC'S breast.]

Dead.—Dead as potted pork.

CARRAC.

And the people cheated of their just revenge!

CITIZENS *bear GOUROC'S body off.*



BOURDOTTE.

Ah, look, we have still the old Aristo and his daughter!

MOB.

Aye!—Aye! Away with them! Away with them!

[They rush on the DUKE and DIANE.]

PAUL.

My God! Will this hour never end?

CARRAC.

[To the MOB.]

Here! Strip her! Drive her to her death!

[The MOB howls.—DIANE breaks from CARRAC.—Bell tolls.]

PAUL.

[With a cry of joy.]

The hour strikes!—I'm free!

[CARRAC seizes DIANE again and drags her to the centre of the stage.]

Rushing from his concealed position_, PAUL tears DIANE, fainting, from the arms of CARRAC, whom he flings to the ground—warning back the MOB, who pause for a moment, staring in amazement.

BOURDOTTE.

Ha—the brigand—kill him!—

MOB.

[Advancing.]

Kill him!—Kill him!



POTIN.

[Aiming, with SOLDIERS.]

Halt!—He is our prisoner.

[The MOB recoil.]

PAUL.

[Flinging off his coat and hat.]

No! Not your prisoner! Your officer!—Captain on Kleber's staff:
Captain Paul Kauvar.

DIANE.



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[With a cry—quivering, incredulous.]

Paul!—Alive!

PAUL.

Heaven is merciful at last!

[He takes her in his arms.]

POTIN.

By the gods, it is!—The Citizen Kauvar!

GOUJON.

Then La Rochejacquelein has got away?

CARRAC.

[Rising, to PAUL.]

If you are a soldier of the Republic, how is it we find you in the coat of a brigand?

PAUL.

That's my affair, not yours.

CARRAC.

What! You refuse to answer? *[Coming close to PAUL.]* Do you know who I am?

PAUL.

[With quiet, increasing intensity, before which CARRAC is utterly cowed.]

Yes,—Carrac—an anarchist—a fiend—in the name of liberty invoking the tyranny of terror! An assassin—shouting fraternity and committing fratricide! A libertine—claiming



equality with the good, while ravishing the pure! A monster—part vulture, part toad—who, in the holy name of progress, makes our Country and our Cause revolting to the world!

BOURDOTTE.

Ha! See! Carrac recoils! He's found his match at last!—

[*MOB laugh and jeer.*]

SCARLOTTE.

[*Appearing.*]

Room there!—Room for General Kleber.

MOB.

[*Falling back on both sides.*]

Kleber!—Kleber!—Long live Kleber!

KLEBER.

[*Entering with three OFFICERS.*]

I am told there is mutiny—treason here. Who and where are the accused?

CARRAC.

[*Pointing at PAUL.*]

There stands the worst of them!

KLEBER.

[*Astounded*]

Captain Kauvar!—Of what is he accused?

CARRAC.

Treachery to France! He has worn the colours of the Royal Cause.

GOUJON.

We arrested him as Rochejacquelein.

CARRAC.

Whom he has aided to escape.

KLEBER.

A terrible charge! The punishment is instant death.—Captain Kauvar, what have you to say?



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PAUL.

But little.—I led last night the band of men who mined the Faubourg and cleared the road for our army to advance.

KLEBER.

A desperate undertaking, crowned with great success!—We gave you all up as dead.

PAUL.

We should have been, but for the clemency of Rochejacquelein. He spared my men, and put me on parole. He could have shot us all, but by letting him escape I saved the band of patriots to whom our army owes its victory to-day.

[All cheer.]

KLEBER.

Captain Kauvar, you did right!

[The MOB cheer.]

CARRAC.

Citizens, the watchword sent from Robespierre to Vendee was this:
“Death without mercy to the Aristocrats.”

[Pointing at the DUKE.]

Here is one, at least; I claim him for the guillotine.

MOB.

Aye—to the guillotine! To the guillotine!

KLEBER.

[As the MOB rush on the DUKE.]



Halt!

[The MOB fall back.]

Citizens, I bring you glorious news! These despatches have just reached me on the field. They come from the National Convention at the Capitol of France. Listen!

[Reads.]

“The tyrant Robespierre has been guillotined. The reign of terror is at an end. Proclaim amnesty, mercy, and fraternity to all Frenchmen in Vendee.”

[All cheer.]

CARRAC.

Robespierre dead! What will the people do without the guillotine?

PAUL.

Drive anarchists and Carracs out of France!

BOURDOTTE.

Aye! Away with him! Away with him!

[Rushing on CARRAC, the MOB nearly tear him to pieces as they bear him away.]

SCARLOTTE.

[Fighting the MOB.]

Ingrates—traitors—dogs—ye shall not harm him—back! back! back!

[Exit, facing the MOB, and trying to save CARRAC.]

JEAN.

[Bounding in from panel, speaks to PAUL.]

You see I have returned!

DUKE.

And the General?

JEAN.

Has escaped to England, [*Pointing to PAUL.*] thanks to him.

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KLEBER.

[Taking a cross from his own breast, and advancing to PAUL.]

Captain Kauvar, you risked almost certain death to purchase victory for France. In the name of the Republic, I decorate you for heroic courage on the field!

[He places the cross on PAUL'S breast. All cheer.]

DUKE.

[Extending his hand to PAUL.]

My son!—

[PAUL clasps it.]

DIANE.

At last, thank God, dear France is free of tyrants.

PAUL.

Liberty is wed to Justice, and Anarchy is ended!

CURTAIN.

End of the Play.