

were drawn back. Her brother knelt beside his bed. His hands were clasped above his head, as if uttering a passionate prayer. Marie listened intently; she heard deep drawn sobs. At last he raised himself; his face was deadly pale. He set a small alarm clock, and placed it on the table. His sister did not dare to disturb him. She returned to her room. As soon as she had entered there was a knock at her door, and Henri, the old servant, appeared.

"What is the matter? What has happened to my brother?" she asked with half-stifled voice.

"Oh, mademoiselle, you alone can keep him from going! you—so dearly loved—"

"What is it? Speak, Henri!"

"He will be shot to-morrow if you do not prevent it. The prisoners in Auray were sentenced to-day; to-morrow at day-break they will be shot at Vannes."

"And my brother?"

"He also is sentenced to death; but he gave his word of honor to return if he was allowed to see his beloved ones once more. Matthew, the groom, has been in Auray. There he heard all the particulars. How shall he be saved? What is to be done?"

"He gave his word of honor," she said, in slow, measured tones; "the promise of a nobleman must be kept."

"He will not break it. This evening he said to me: 'Henri, wake me at four o'clock; be careful that no one is disturbed.' I have promised to do it. I must wake him to meet his death—the son of my mistress, the child I have worshipped as an idol! O God, why did you not spare us this!"

While the old man was thus lamenting, Marie's face flushed, her figure seemed to grow more erect. She surveyed herself in the opposite mirror with something akin to pride. Then she said,—

"My brother must not die! he shall not die! Do not wake him—everything will be well!"

"I will do just as you say, mademoiselle. What would your mother do if she did not possess him?"

Henri left her. His fears were allayed by the tranquil words of his mistress. Marie felt that there was but one course left. Yes—she would succeed. The

moments were precious; it was already past midnight. She seated herself at the table and wrote a few lines, leaving them unsealed. She cut off her heavy mass of dark hair and placed it beside the note.

Then she stole noiselessly into Paul's room. He was sleeping soundly, being completely exhausted after the exertions of the day. She stepped softly to his bedside, gazed on him with ineffable fondness, kissed him with a scarcely perceptible touch on his lips. She took away the clock and his clothes. Upon the threshold she paused once more.

"Farewell!" she murmured huskily; "Farewell! May God protect you!"

After returning to her room, she hurriedly dressed herself in his uniform, and cast one more glance into the mirror. She stepped back surprised, the resemblance was so great. Only a mother could have known the sister and brother apart. The resemblance, that had so often gladdened them when children, was to save her brother's life.

She went to the stable, and there found Paul's horse ready for the morning. She threw a last look up at the walls of the castle, and rode off to Vannes.

The morning sun just appeared in the east and flung out into the sky its banners of crimson and gold, when Marie entered the gates of Vannes. The town was already in commotion. The streets were crowded with people. Following the throng, she came to the prison where the prisoners of Quiberon were assembled. Just as she arrived the roll was called. Marie waited.

"Paul de Turgis!"

"Here!" replied a gentle but firm voice.

Marie joined the ranks of soldiers, her heart throbbing wildly. She had taken her brother's place, and escaped detection.

The first division of victims, consisting of seventy men, was headed by General Sombreuil. Solemnly they marched along. Marie's companions were too occupied with their own thoughts to detect the deception. She trembled lest her plan would be thwarted. If possible she would have quickened her steps.

At last they arrive at the place where the execution was to be held. A priest offered a prayer for the repose of the unfortunate victims' souls. Marie looked