

CHAPTER VI

COMEDY OR TRAGEDY?

THE vice-chancellor, seated in the guard-room of the toll-gate beside the sleeping Gaillard, had been released by a miracle. Monsieur de Beautrellis, the captain of the guards, making a tour of the toll-gates of Paris that evening and going into the guard-room to sign his report, had instantly recognized and released him. Furious, like a hawk held from his prey and suddenly set free; sure, now, from the trick that had been played him that the game was desperate and that to seize the man he hated and break him he had only to close his hand, De Maupeou *commandered* not only the carriage of Captain Beautrellis, but the services of the captain himself.

Grim, yellow, commanding himself to appear calm, the vice-chancellor bowed to Madame la Baronne and to the guests.

Then he turned slightly, disclosing a form behind him.