

CHAPTER II

HE came through the town and up the Grand Rue.

When he reached the ramparts he took a seat, despite the nipping east wind.

He looked at his watch.

Just about this hour every day it was the custom of Madame de Warens and her niece to take a walk on the ramparts.

It seemed the only fixed thing, except meals, in their desolate lives, this walk every day on the ramparts.

Hellier would meet them there. It was a sort of tacit appointment. No person, unless they were curiously blind, could fail to see that it was a rendezvous. The women came and the young man came and walked with them up and down on this desolate place for half an hour or so, talked about everything and nothing, returning to the hotel where he left them, perhaps not to see them again till the following day.

This afternoon they were late. Hellier looked at his watch again, it was ten minutes past the time of the usual meeting. He was rising to return, with a desolate feeling at the