

Thus it comes about that history is in a quandary to state who is justly entitled to the credit of rescuing Marie de Médicis.

On the night of the twenty-first of February, Cardillac left Montrichard on horseback, with a carriage and pair belonging to his host of the Tête Noire, driven by the stout landlord himself.

They arrived at the end of the bridge about one o'clock in the morning of the twenty-second, Cardillac ordering the carriage to wait in one of the side streets of the little village of Vienne, on the southern bank of the Loire. He left his horse also in charge of the inn-keeper, and crossed the bridge on foot. At half-past one he reached the castle, and found the rope ladder in place.

The sight he saw on looking through the window, after climbing to the first floor, was not inspiring.

The Queen stood surrounded by her women, the very picture of irresolution. A maid, weeping bitterly, was engaged in collecting the numerous jewels and putting them away in boxes. Marie de Médicis had all but ruined Henri IV by indulging in her passion for collecting precious stones, that were now to provide the sinews of war for a contest against his son.

Thérèse de Montreuil seemed to be the only person in the room with dry eyes. All the others