

wish to be sure of something that will overcome all temptation to stay in Paris, something to bring me back. You know, sometimes the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

"Your mother," uttered Vivienne.

"No, yourself," cried the Count.

"But you do not love me!"

"I have said that I did not, but I will say more—I love no one else."

Vivienne was in a quandary. What should she do? Her own mind seemed powerless to direct her, and almost in a state of despair she recalled the advice Clarine had given.

Forcing a smile she turned towards the Count. "If I promise to marry you, Count, if before I become yours you see another whom you will love, will you come to me and tell me? No, no, I will not ask that; but if I learn that you do love some one else, it is understood and agreed that the knowledge of that fact will free me from the carrying out of my promise?"

"Oh, yes," said the Count, "I agree to that willingly; it is but fair that I should." He took her hand in his, raised it to his lips and kissed it. "This is the bond," he cried; "you are to be mine. I am the happiest man in Corsica."

"Do not say that," cried Vivienne. "You have no right to utter those words until I look into your face and say that I am the happiest woman in Corsica."

Shortly after Vivienne had given her promise to the Count, he made his way to her brother.

"It is all right," he cried. "It was a hard fight, but my eloquence won; she has promised to be my wife."

"But when?" asked Pascal.

"Oh, I did not go so far as to fix the date. That is usually left to the lady, you know."

"But it must be soon," said Pascal. "There are weighty reasons."