

"A Man Shall Cleave Unto His Wife"

"But, Madame," said the girl, paling under the Queen's wrath, but still speaking to my lady, "you hold me innocent?"

"God send me patience," broke in the Queen, with her old gesture; "what has that innocence to do with this guilt? Is the Prince of Béarn to be likened to the killing of a year-old nobody?"

"Madame!" cried my lady, sharply—"Madame!"

"Ay, I know," answered the Queen; "but there are a thousand such, and but one Prince of Béarn."

"But," said Mademoiselle, "the Prince of Béarn rode into Pau four hours ago."

"For which no thanks to Mademoiselle de Romenay," said the Queen, loudly; and what more she would have said I do not know, for the door was opened softly and De Crussenay entered, his face white and as hard set in anger as that of Jeanne herself. Ranging himself by the side of Mademoiselle Suzanne, and a half pace behind, he bowed deeply, then, like a soldier at his post, stiffened himself, speaking never a word.

"This is an intrusion, Monsieur," said Jeanne, severely. "You are over-presumptuous and must learn to mend your manners. How came Monsieur d'Arros to pass you in without our orders?"

"I had relieved Monsieur d'Arros, Madame, and—and—I heard Mademoiselle's name," stammered De Crussenay, shaken a little in his nerves for all his bold front.

"So you are on guard, Monsieur?" cried the Queen. "Was it thus Monsieur de Coligny taught you your duty?"