

MY LAST KICK

husband. I have that *fidélité du cœur*, which is the true, the only faithfulness.

Oh, God, oh, my God, deliver me from this shame ! The blood has left my heart and swells my face. I feel as if I had been caught naked by a stranger. God, I burn—I cannot bear it. Austen has my journal—all that I have written since the birth of the twins till we left Algiers. I gave it to Médor to keep because I have lost the key of my *attaché* case. I knew Médor would not read it, but I never imagined he would dare—dare—oh, I am suffocating—dare give it to Austen. Oh, the fiend ! oh, the traitor ! I could kill him ! What did I care that Austen should be convinced—better he should believe I was Blaise's mistress than know all my thoughts. God ! all that I thought of him, all my desires, my little ugly thoughts, my small contempts of him. I wrote of things that I would never have said aloud to my own self. Oh, Médor, Médor, what have you done ? The humiliation will eat into me all my life.

When Médor told me, I could not believe him at first. I thought it was a sort of a joke, and then he said :

“ It was your last chance. I knew you wrote down truthfully almost everything that happened to you—you read me some pages yourself, you remember, and I thought if anything can convince him this can. Forgive me if I had to trick you in your own interest. I can't stand by and see you being racked every day by his contempt. I told him, ‘ You won't believe me—you think I am shielding her—lying for her sake.