ness, if your Majesty needed him. Sir John Fenwick persisting, I ask your Majesty's indulgence while I fetch him."

The King nodded, but with a pinched and dissatisfied face; and Sir William retiring, in a moment returned with the Duke. At his entrance, His Majesty greeted him dryly, and with a hint of displeasure in his manner; thinking probably that this savoured too much of a *coup de théâtre*, a thing he hated. But seeing the next instant, and before the Secretary took his seat, how ill the Duke looked, his face betrayed signs of disturbance; after which, his eyelids drooping, it fell into the dull and Sphinx-like mould which it assumed when he did not wish his thoughts to be read by those about him.

That the Duke's pallor and wretched appearance gave rise to suspicion in other minds is equally certain; the more hardy of those present, such as my Lord Marlborough and the Admiral, being aware that nothing short of guilt, and the immediate prospect of detection, could so change themselves. And while some felt a kind of admiration, as they conned and measured the stupendous edifice of skilful deceit, which my lord had so long and perfectly concealed behind a front of brass, as to take in all the world, others were already busied with the effect it would have on the party, and how this might be softened, and that explained, and in a word another man substituted with as little shock as possible for this man. Nor were these emotions at all weakened when my lord, after saluting the King, took his seat, without speaking or meeting the general gaze.

"Now, sir," said the King impatiently, when all was quiet again, "the Duke is here. Proceed."

"I will," Sir John answered with greater hardiness than he had yet used, "I have simply to repeat to his face what I have said behind his back: that on the 10th of last June, in the evening, he met me at Ashford, in