

*cien militaire*, to Mademoiselle Pauline, *figurante*, it was not very unnatural to infer, that they were not utter strangers to each other ; and that, in that case, as well as in the event of his being there at the moment, it might not be altogether prudent to venture into her presence without some plausible pretext.

In the next instant he was supplied with one, and tapping gently at the door, a female voice invited him to enter. The marquis opened the door of a room, measuring, as he had anticipated about ten feet square, in which lay scattered, in various directions, all the wretched paraphernalia of a woman of the last rank upon the stage. His glance at the interior was, however, but cursory, his attention being more particularly drawn to the lady, who, as he had justly conjectured, was accompanied by Monsieur Précourt, the *ancien militaire*, who, in the faded uniform of a common soldier, and a tattered foraging cap or *bonnet de police*, sat with his arms encircling the form of Mademoiselle Pauline, which was of true Amazonian proportions, and only partially covered with a soiled cotton *robe de chambre*—her hair *en papillottes*, and her naked feet *en pantoufles*. Startled at this unexpected sight, De Forsac drew back involuntarily, too much discomposed, by the disappointment he felt at seeing what he thought a monster of a woman, instead of the delicate, young, and voluptuous creature he had anticipated, to say a word.

"*Ah ça l'ami,*" said the soldier, fiercely erecting his tall frame, and touching the ceiling with his head, while, as usual, he stroked his moustache in token of hostility—" *Que désirez-vous ici ?*"—and he advanced a pace or two towards him.

Fortunately for De Forsac, he recollected the man, who had formerly served in the same regiment with him. This, however, was long before he had obtained his marquisate.

"*Quoi, gaman, est-ce toi ? ne te rappelle-tu pas de*