

room around her, turned with a smile to the two men, bowed, laughed with a laugh that had yet a little catch in it, and vanished like a dream.

Rosine came in and removed the boxes. They heard the carriage starting and De Sartines, walking to the bureau, saw a paper there with his name upon it.

It was the paper that had fooled De Maupeou.

He picked it up, opened it, and read: "Order of release for Monsieur de Sartines from the worry of a woman; once his admirer, but now his friend."

He dropped the paper. What did she mean? Had she—had she—? Then he remembered De Lussac. No, it was impossible. The comte had always been her lover.

He came to the window, opened it and stood looking out, watching the lights of the lanterns lining the Rue Coq Héron, and listening to the noise of the streets. It was as though he were looking for something he had lost.

Then he turned from the window.

"*Cordieu!*" said he. "What a woman!"

THE END