

how he was free, but free he was, and he could snap his fingers again at the "Va pas!" of the signpost and the "Viens pas!" of the feudal arch. In spite of their warnings he had sought and found the violet sapphires; he had been privileged to serve and suffer, for her, all for her; and now the law seemed to be proving itself equity, and he was a free and vindicated man.

"First thing I want, old Frenchy," he said as he went downstairs, "is breakfast, breakfast! Fish, bifteck, bacon, something, anything—something to eat, to eat! Feed me, feed me well at once—I'm hungrier than any hunter, I'm hollower than any drum!"

"Ah, but that's topping again, perfectly topping!" he said, half an hour later, as across the breakfast table he sent the first whiffs from a cigarette. "Governor, do you know what's the worst thing you do to your patients? It's the cutting them off their smoke! Yes, give me your case, give me the lot, old Bodinton! So you found Robert Shott, did you, good chap? Ah yes, you and Pied-de-nez together, of course. . . . And M. de Grandemaison is dead, is he, Archange? Poor old gentleman! Dead nearly a month, and confessed, and you never let me know a word? Oh yes, of course, I understand you weren't certain that the law. . . . But, poor old gentleman! Heart, was it? I liked him, you know. I was proud to screen him, point of fact. Thought myself an ass, when I'd done it, at first: but not after a bit, when I could see what I'd spared him and . . . all of you, you know . . . Archange, tell me, how does your cousin bear it? I hope Mademoiselle does not know that—that her father—oh, *you* understand!"

"M. de Grandemaison told her what you had done for him," the Abbé said. "A week before he died. My cousin was very brave over it. It was she who persuaded him to—to make an affidavit, as you say in England."

"And the affidavit got you out, old man?" Bodinton cried. "That and Shott's deposition taken together. We found Shott at Boulogne easy enough, the second time we looked for him. He'd been in England six months, on equity business, he said. Fine fellow, Shott!"