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# Gaboriau

"Very good. Yesterday my master walked out at 2 o'clock. Of course I followed him. Do you know where he went? The thing was as good as a farce. He went to the Archangel to keep the appointment made by Nina Clipsy."

Gipsy."
"Well, make haste. They told him

"Well, make haste. They told him she was gone. Then?"

"Then? Ah, he was not at all pleased, I assure you. He hurried back to the hotel where the other, M. de Lagors, awaited him. And I have never heard so much swearing! M. Raoul asked him what had happened to put him in such a bad humor. Nothing, replied my master, 'except that little devil has gone off, and no one knows where she is. She has slipped through our fingers.' Then they both appeared to be vexed and uneasy. 'Does she know anything about us?' asked Raoul. know anything about us? asked Raoul. 'Nothing but what I fold you,' replied Clameran. 'But this nothing, falling in the ear of a man with any suspicions, would put him on the track of the would put aim on the track of the truth. Then Lagors exclaimed, if it is as serious as that, we must get rid of this little serpent! But my master shrugged his shoulders and, laughing, said: 'You talk like an idiot. When one is annoyed by a woman of this sort, one must take measures to get rid of her administratively.' This idea seemed to amuse them both very much."

much."
"I understand," said M. Verduret.
"It is an excellent idea. But the misfortune is it is too late to carry it out.
The nothing which made Clameran
uneasy has already fallen into a knowing ear. 'Nevertheless I must not let them see my hand."

With breathless curiosity Prosper listened to this report, every word of which seemed to throw light upon past events. This Raoul, in whom he had confided so deeply, was nothing more than a scoundrel. A thousand circum-stances, unnoticed at the time, now recurred to his mind and made him won-der how he could have been so long

Master Joseph continued his report.
"Yesterday after dinner my master lecked himself out like a bridegroom. I shaved him, eurled his hair and per-fumed him with especial care, after which I drove him to Provence street

"What!" exclaimed Prosper, "After the insulting language he used the day of the robbery did he dare go to the

house?"
"Yes, monsieur; he not only dared this, but he also stayed there until midnight, to my great discomfort, for I got as wet as a rat waiting for him."

"How did he look when he came out?" asked M. Verduret. "Less pleased than when he went in. After grooming my horses and putting away my carriage I went to see if he wanted anything. I found the door locked, and he swore at me through

the keyhole."
"Is that all?" questioned M. Verdu-

"All for yesterday, but this morning my master rose late, still in a horribly bad humor. At noon Raoul arrived, also furious. They at once began to dispute, and such a row! At one time my master seized the other by the throat and shook him like a reed. I thought he would strangle him. But

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had done me good and by the time it nished I was in excellent health and I advise all sufferers from heart and troubles to try them." 25 50 cts. per box, or 3 for \$1.55, all 15, or

my master drop him in a hurry."

"But what did they say?"

"Ah, there is the rub," said Joseph piteously, "They spoke English, so I could not understand them. But I am sure they were disputing about monary."

"How do you know?"

"Because I learned at the exposition that the word 'argent' meant money in every language in Europe, and this word they constantly used in their conversation."

M. Verdurge eat with hold however.

M. Verduret sat with knit brows M. Verduret sat with knit brows, talking in an undertone to himself, and Prosper, who was watching him, wondered if he was frying to understand and construct the dispute by merforce of reflection.

"When they had done fighting," continued Joseph "the villains began to

the in French again, but they only spoke of trifles—a fancy ball which is to be given by some banker. When Raoul was leaving, my master said, 'Since this thing is inevitable, and it

Since this thing is inevitable, and it must take place today, you had better remain at home, at Vesinet, this evening? Raoul replied, 'Certainly.'".

Night was coming on, and the room was gradually filling with men, who called for absinth or bitters, and youths, who perched themselves upon high stools and smoked their pipes.

"It is time to go," said M. Verduret to Joseph. "Your master will want

to Joseph. "Your master will want you. Besides, here is some one who wishes to speak with me. I will see

The newcomer was no other than Cavaillon, more troubled and frightened than ever. He looked uneasily around the room, as if he feared the whole Paris police force to appear and carry him off to prison. He did not sit down at M. Verduret's table, but stealthily gave his hand to Prosper, and, after assuring himself that no one was observing them, handed M.

Verduret a package, saying:
"She found this in a cupboard." It was a handsomely bound prayer book. M. Verduret rapidly turned over the leaves and soon found the pages from which the words pasted on the letter received by Prosper had been

"I had moral proofs," he said, hand-ing the book to Prosper, "but here is material proof sufficient in itself to

At sight of the book Prosper turned pale as a ghost. He recognized this prayer book instantly. He had given it to Madeleine in exchange for the medal. On the fly leaf Madeleine had written, "Souvehir of Notre Dame de Fourvieres, 17 January, 1866."

"This book belongs to Madeleine!" M. Verduret did not reply, but walked toward a young man dressed like a wine merchant, who had just entered the room. He glanced at the note which this person handed to him and

hastened back to the table.
"I think we have got them now!" he

said excitedly. .
Throwing a five franc piece on the table and without saying a word to Cavaillon, he hurried Prosper from the

"What fatality!" he said as he hastened along the street. "We may miss them. I fear we shall reach the St. Lazare station too late for the St. Ger-

main train." "For heaven's sake, where are you

oing?" asked Prosper. "Come on. We can talk on the way."
Reaching Palais Royal place, M.
Verduret stopped before one of the
hacks belonging to the railway station and examined the horses at a

"How much to Vesinet?" he asked of the driver.
"I don't know the road very well

The name of Vesinet was enough for

rosper. , "I will point out the road," he inter-

rupted quickly.
"Well," said the driver, "at this time of night in such dreadful weather it

"And how much for driving very rap-

"I leave that to your generosity, but if you make it 35 francs I think"— "You shall have a hundred." Inter-rupted M. Verduret, "if you overtake a carriage which has half an hour's start of us." "By thunder!" cried the delighted driver, "Jump in quick! We are los-ing time!"

And, whipping up his lean horses, he galloped them down Valois street.

CHAPTER X.

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EAVING the little station of Vesinet, we come upon two roads. One, to the left, macadamized and kept in perfect repair, leads to the village, of which there are glimpses here and there through the trees. The other, newly laid out and just covered with gravel, leads through the woods. At the junction of these two roads Prosper stopped the cab. The driver had gained his hundred francs. The horses were completely worn out, but before long M. Verduret could distinguish the lamps of a cab similar to the one he occupied about afty yards ahead of

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him. Alighting from the cab, he hand-

nim. Alighting from the cab, he handed the driver a bank note.

"Here," he said, "is what I promised you. Go to the first tavern you find on the right hand side of the road as you enter the village. If we are not there, you are at liberty to return to Paris."

The driver was profuse in his thanks. but neither Prosper nor his companion heard them. They had already started up the new road. The weather, which had been inclement when they set out, was now worse. The rain fell in torwas now worse. The rain fell in tor-reuts, and a furious wind bowled dis-mally through the branches of the trees. M. Verduret and Prosper had been walking along the muddy road for about five minutes when suddenly the latter stopped.

"This is Raoul's bouse," he said.

Before the gate of an isolated house stood the cab which they had follow ed. Reclining on his seat, wrapped in a thick cloak, was the driver, who, in spite of the pouring rain, was already asleep, evidently waiting for the per-son whom he had brought to this

M. Verduret went to him. pulled his cloak and said in a low voice: "Hello, my man."

The driver started and, mechanically gathering his reins, yawned out, "All

But when by the light of the carriage lamps he saw two men in this lonely spot he imagined that they wanted his

purse and perhaps his life.
"I am engaged!" be cried out as he cracked his whip in the air. "I am

waiting here for some one."
"I know that, you fool," replied M.
Verduret, "and only wish to ask you a question which you can gain five francs by answering. Did you not bring a middle aged lady here?" This question, this promise of five francs, instead of reassuring the coach-

francs, instead of reassuring the coachman, increased his alarm.

"I have already told you I am waiting for some one," he said. "Move on or I will call for help."

M. Verduret drew back quickly.
"Come away," he whispered to Prosper. The beast will do as he says and, the alarm once given, farewell to our projects. We must find some other entrance than by this gate."

trance than by this gate."
They went along the wall surround

ing the garden in search of a place where it was fossible to climb.

This was difficult to discover in the dark, the wall being twelve feet high. Fortunately M. Verduret was very agile, and, having decided upon the spot to be scaled, he drew back and, making a sudden spring remarkable for so big a man, seized one of the pro-jecting stones above him, drawing himself up by the aid of his hands and feet to the top of the wall. It was now Prosper's turn to climb up; but, though much younger than his companion, he had not his agility, and M. Verduret was obliged to pull him up, then help-ed him down on the other side. Once in the garden, M. Verduret took in the situation. The house occupied by M. de Lagors was built in the middle of a ries high and with garrets.

Only one window, in the second story, was lighted. "You have often been here and know

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the house?" said M. Verduret. "What room is that where we see the light?"
"Raoul's bedchamber."
"Very good. What rooms are on the list floor?"

"The kitchen, pantry, billiard room and dining room."

"And on the floor above?"

"Two parlors, separated by folding doors, and a study."

"Where do the servants sleep?"

"Room has none now. He is served."

"Raoul has none now. He is served' by a man and his wife, who come in the morning and go after dinner." M. Vørduret rubbed his hands glee-fully.

"All right," he said. "There is nothhig to prevent our hearing what Raoul has to say to this person who has come from Paris at 10 o'clock as night to see

him. Let us go in."

But unfortunately the heavy oak door was locked. M. Verduret shook it

"What an oversight," he said, with rexation. "I ought to have brought my instruments with me. A common lock which could be opened with a nail, and I have not even a piece of wire!"

Recognizing the uselessness of an at-tempt to open the door, he tried successively every window on the ground floor. Alas, every blind was securely fastened on the inside.

M. Verduret was exasperated. He prowled around the house like a fox around a hen coop, seeking an en-trance. Despairingly he came back to the place in front of the house whence he had the best view of the lighted

"If I could only look in!" he cried. "In there," pointing to the window, "is the solution of the mystery, and we are cut off from it by thirty or forty feet of these two stories. I must see, and I will see!" Suddenly Prosper seemed to remem-

ber something.
"There is a ladder here!" he cried.
"Why didn't you tell me? Where is

"At the end of the garden, under the They ran to the spot, and in a fer minutes the ladder was up against the

house. But to their chagrin they found that there were six good feet between the top of the ladder and the lighted "We cannot reach it," exclaimed

Prosper.
"We must reach it!" cried M. Verdu

And be quickly placed himself a vard off from the house and, seizing the ladder, cautiously raised it, resting the bottom round on his shoulders, at the same time holding the two uprights firmly and steadily with his hands. The obstacle was overcome.

"Now mount," he said to his compar

The situation was distressing for made a sudden spring and, seizing the lower rounds, quickly climbed up the tadder, which swayed and trembled beneath his weight. But his head had scarcely passed above the lighted window when he uttered a cry which was drowned in the roaring tempest and

dropped like a log down on the wet grass, crying: "The villain!" With wonderful promptness and vig-or M. Verduret laid the ladder on the ground and ran toward Prosper, fear-

"What did you see? Are you hurt?" he whispered.

But Prosper had already risen. Al-though he had had a violent fall, he was unhurt.
"I saw," he answered in a hoarse voice—"I saw Madeleine—do you un-

derstand, Madeleine?—in that room alone with Raoul." M. Verduret was confounded. Was it possible that he, the infallible ex-

pert, had been mistaken in his dedutions? He well knew that M. de Lagors' visltor was a woman, but his own conjec-tures and the note which Mme. Gipsy had sent to him at the tavern had fully assured him that this woman was

"You must be mistaken," he said to

mistake another for Madeleine. Ah, you who heard what she said to me yesterday, answer me. Was I to expect this infamous treachery? You said to me then, 'She loves you, she loves

you!"

M. Verduret did not answer. He had first been stupefied by his mistake and was now racking his brain to discover the cause of it, which was soon dis-

was now racking his brain to discover the cause of it, which was soon discerned by his penetrating mind.

"This is the secret discovered by Nina," continued Prosper. "Madeleine, this pure and noble Madeleine, whom I believed to be as immaculate as an angel, is alone with this thief who has even stolen the name he bears, and I, trusting fool that I was, made him my best friend. I confided to him all my hopes and fears, and he was her lover! Of course they ridiculed my absurd devotion and stupid confidence?"

"How do we know," said M. Verduret, "that Mile. Madeleine is here on her own account? Did we not come to the conclusion that she was sacrificing herself for the benefit of some one? That superior will which compelled her to your dismissal may have brought about this step tonight."

That which coincides with our secret wishes is always eagerly welcomed. This supposition, apparently improbable, appealed to Prosper.

"That might be the case," he said. "Who knows?"

"I would soon know," said M. Verduret, "if I could see them together in that room."

To Be Continued.

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