

tic songs on Madame Veto, they clap hands, and point at her with the finger of scorn.

She, however, is calm; her look, cold and indifferent, runs over the crowd; only once it flames up with a last angry flash as she passes by the Palais Royal, where Philippe Egalité, the ex-Duke d'Orleans, resides, as she reads the inscription which he had placed at the gate of his palace.

At noon the chariot reaches at last its destination. It stops at the foot of the scaffold, and Marie Antoinette alights from the wagon, and then calm and erect ascends the steps of the scaffold.

Her lips have not opened once on this awful journey; they now have no word of complaint, of farewell! The only farewell which she has yet to say on earth is told by her look—by a look which is slowly directed yonder to the Tuileries—it is the farewell to past memories—it deepens the pallor on the cheeks, it opens her lips to a painful sigh. She then bows her head—a momentary, breathless silence follows. Samson lifts up the white head, which once had been the head of the Queen of France, and the people cry and shout, “Long live the republic!”

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### THE ARREST.

UNINTERRUPTEDLY had the guillotine for the last three months of the year 1793 continued its destructive work of murder, and the noblest and worthiest heads had fallen under this reaper of Death. No personal merit, no nobility of character, no age, no youth, could hope to escape the death-instrument of the revolution when a noble name stood up as accuser. Before this accuser every service was con-

sidered as nothing; it was enough to be an aristocrat, a *ci-devant*, to be suspected, to be dragged as a criminal before the tribunal of the revolution, and to be condemned.

The execution of the queen was followed by that of the Girondists; and this brilliant array of noble and great men was followed in the next month by names no less noble, no less great. It was an infuriated chase of the aristocrats as well as of the officers, of all the military persons who, in the unfortunate days of Toulon and of Mayence, had been in the army, and who had been dismissed, or whose resignation had been accepted.

The aristocrats were tracked in their most secret recesses, and not only were they punished, but also those who dared screen them from the avenging hand of the republic. The officers were recognized under every disguise, and the very fact that they had disguised themselves or remained silent as to their true character was a crime great enough to be punished with the guillotine.

More than twenty generals were imprisoned during the last months of the year 1793, and many more paid with their lives for crimes which they had never committed, and which had existence only in the heated imagination of their accusers. Thus had General Houchard fallen; he was followed in the first days of the new year of 1794 by the Generals Luckner and Biron.

Alexandre de Beauharnais had served under Luckner, he had been Biron's adjutant, he had been united with General Houchard in the unfortunate attempt to relieve Mayence. It was therefore natural that he should be noticed and espied. Besides which, he was an aristocrat, a relative of many of the *émigrés*, the brother of the Count de Beauharnais, who was now residing in Coblenz with the Count d'Artois, and it had not been forgotten what an important part Alexandre de Beauharnais had played in the National Assembly; it was well known that he belonged

to the moderate party, that he had been the friend of the Girondists.

Had the Convention wished to forget it, the informers were there to remind them of it. Alexandre de Beauharnais was denounced as suspected, and this denunciation was followed, in the first days of January, by an arrest. He was taken to Paris, and at first shut up in the Luxemburg, where already many of his companions-in-arms were incarcerated.

Josephine was not in Ferté-Beauharnais when the emissaries of the republic came to arrest her husband. She was just then in Paris, whither she had gone to seek protection and assistance for Alexandre at the hands of influential acquaintances; in Paris she learned the arrest of her husband.

The misfortune, which she had so long expected and foreseen, was now upon her and ready to crush her and the future of her children. Her husband was arrested—that is to say, he was condemned to die.

At this thought Josephine rose up like a lioness; the indolence, the dreamy quietude of the creole, had suddenly vanished, and Josephine was now a resolute, energetic woman, anxious to risk every thing, to try every thing, so as to save her husband, the father of her children. She now knew no timidity, no trembling, no fear, no horror; every thing in her was decision of purpose; keen, daring action. Letters, visits, petitions, and even personal supplications, every thing was tried; there was no humiliation before which she shrank. For long hours she sat in the ante-rooms of the tribunal of the revolution, of the ministers who, however much they despised the aristocrats, imitated their manners, and made the people wait in the vestibule, even as the ministers of the tyrant had done; with tears, with all the eloquence of love, she entreated those men of blood and terror to give her back her husband, or at least

not to condemn him before he had been accused, and to furnish him with the means of defence.

But those new lords and rulers of France had no heart for compassion; Robespierre, Marat, Danton, could not be moved by the tears which a wife could shed for an accused husband. They had already witnessed so much weeping, listened to so many complaints, to so many cries of distress, their eyes were not open for such things, their ears heard not.

France was diseased, and only by drawing away the bad blood could she be restored to health, could she be made sound, could she rise up again with the strength of youth! And Marat, Danton, Robespierre, were the physicians who were healing France, who were restoring her to health by thus horribly opening her veins. Marat and Danton murdered from bloodthirsty hatred, from misanthropy and vengeance; Robespierre murdered through principle, from the settled fanatical conviction, that France was lost if all the old corrupt blood was not cleansed away from her veins, so as to replenish them with youthful, vitalizing blood.

Robespierre was therefore inexorable, and Robespierre now ruled over France! He was the dictator to whom every thing had to bow; he was at the head of the tribunal of revolution; he daily signed hundreds of death-warrants; and this selfsame man, who once in Arras had resigned his office of judge because his hand could not be induced to sign the death-warrant of a convicted criminal\*—this man, who shed tears over a tame dove which the shot of a hunter had killed, could, with heart unmoved, with composed look, sit for long hours near the guillotine on the tribune of the revolution, and gaze with undimmed eyes on the heads of his victims falling under the axe.

He was now at the summit of his power; France lay

\* See "Maximilian Robespierre," by Theodore Mundt, vol. i.

bleeding, trembling at his feet; fear had silenced even his enemies; no one dared touch the dreaded man whose mere contact was death; whose look, when coldly, calmly fixed on the face of any man, benumbed his heart as if he had read his sentence of death in the blue eyes of Robespierre.

At the side of Robespierre sat the terrorists Fouquier-Tinville and Marat, to whom murder was a delight, bloodshedding a joy, who with sarcastic pleasure listened unmoved to the cries, to the tearful prayers of mothers, wives, children, of those sentenced to death, and who fed on their tears and on their despair.

With such men at the head of affairs it was natural that the reign of terror should still be increasing in power, and that with it the number of the captives in the prisons should increase.

In the month of January, 1794, the list of the incarcerated within the prisons of Paris ran up to the number of 4,659; in the month of February the number rose up to 5,892; in the beginning of April to 7,541; and at the end of the same month it was reckoned that there were in Paris eight thousand prisoners.\*

The greater the number of prisoners, the more zealous was the tribunal of the revolution to get rid of them; and with satisfaction these judges of blood saw the new improvements made in the guillotine, and which not only caused the machine to work faster, but also prevented the axe from losing its edge too soon by the sundering of so many necks.

"It works well," exclaimed Fouquier-Tinville, triumphantly; "to-day we have fifty sentenced. The heads fall like poppy-heads!"

And these fifty heads falling like poppy-heads, were not enough for his bloodthirstiness.

\* Thiers, "Histoire de la Révolution Française," vol. vi., p. 41.

"It must work better still," cried he; "in the next decade, I must have at least four hundred and fifty poppy-heads!"

And then, as if inspired by a joyous and happy thought, his gloomy countenance became radiant with a grinning laughter, and, rubbing his hands with delight, he continued: "Yes, I must have four hundred and fifty! Then; if we work on so perseveringly, we will soon write over our prison-gates, 'House to let!'"\*

They worked on perseveringly, and the vehicles which carried the condemned to execution rolled every morning with a fresh freight through the streets of Paris, where the guillotine, with its glaring axe, awaited them.

The month of April, as already said, had brought the number of prisoners in Paris to eight thousand; the month of April had therefore more executions to engrave with its bloody pen into the annals of history. On the 20th of April fell on the *Place de la Révolution* the heads of fourteen members of the ex-Parliament of Paris; the next day followed the Duke de Villeroy, the Admiral d'Estaing, the former Minister of War Latour du Pin, the Count de Bethune, the President de Nicolai. One day after, the well-laden wagon drove from the Conciergerie to the *Place de la Révolution*; in it were three members of the Constituent Assembly, and to have belonged to it was the only crime they were accused of. Near these three sat the aged Malesherbes, with his sister; the Marquis de Chateaubriand, with his wife; the Duchess de Grammont, and Du Chatelet. It will be seen that the turn for women had now come; for those women who were now led to the execution had committed no other crime than to be the wives or the relatives of emigrants or of accused persons, than to bear names which had shone for centuries in the history of France.

\* "Histoire de l'Impératrice Josephine."

Josephine also had an ancient aristocratic name; she also was related to the migrated ones, the wife of an accused, of a prisoner! And she wearied the tribunal of the revolution constantly with petitions, with visits, with complaints. They were tired of these molestations, and it was so easy, so convenient to shield one's self against them! There was nothing else to do but to arrest Josephine; for once a prisoner, she could no longer—in anterooms, where she would wait for hours; in the street before the house-door, where she would stand, despite rains and winds—she could no longer trouble the rulers of France, and beseech them with tears and prayers for her husband's freedom. The prisoner could no more write petitions, or move heaven and earth for her husband's sake.

The Viscountess de Beauharnais was arrested. On the 20th of April, as she happened to be at the proper authority's office to obtain a pass according to the new law, which ordered all *ci-devants* to leave Paris in ten days, Josephine was arrested and led into the Convent of the Carmelites, which for two years had served as a prison for the bloody republic, and from which so many of its victims had issued to mount the wagon which led them to the guillotine.

Amid this wretchedness there was one sweet joy. Alexandre de Beauharnais had no sooner heard of the arrest of his wife, than he asked as a favor from the tribunal of the revolution to be removed into the same prison where his wife was. In an incomprehensible fit of merciful humor his prayer was granted; he was transferred to the Convent of the Carmelites, and if the husband and wife could not share the same cell, yet they were within the same walls, and could daily (through the turnkeys, who had to be bribed by all manner of means, by promises, by gold, as much as could be gathered together among the prisoners) hear the news.

Josephine was united to her husband. She received

daily from him news and messages; she could often, in the hours when the prisoners in separate detachments made their promenades in the yard and in the garden, meet Alexandre, reach him her hand, whisper low words of trust, of hope, and speak with him of Eugene and Hortense, of these dear children who, now deserted by their parents, could hope for protection and safety only from the faithfulness and love of their governess, Madame Lanoy. The thought of these darling ones of her heart excited and troubled Josephine, and all the pride and courage with which she had armed her heart melted into tears of anxiety and into longings for her deserted children.

But Madame Lanoy with the most faithful solicitude watched over the abandoned ones; she had once sworn to Josephine that if the calamity, which Josephine had constantly anticipated, should fall upon her and upon her husband, she would be to Hortense and Eugene a second mother; she would care for them and protect them as if they were her own children. And Madame Lanoy kept her promise.

To place them beyond the dangers which their very name made imminent, and also perhaps to give by means of the children evidence of the patriotic sentiments of the parents, Madame Lanoy left with the children the viscount's house, where they had hitherto resided, and occupied with both of them a small shabby house, where she established herself as seamstress. The little eleven-year-old Hortense, the daughter of the Citizeness Beauharnais, was now the assistant of the Citizeness Lanoy, at the trade of seamstress. Eugene was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker; a leather apron was put on, and then with a plank under his arm, and carrying a plane in his hand, he went through the streets to the workshop of the cabinet-maker, and every one lauded the patriotic sentiments of the Citizeness Lanoy, who tried to educate the brood of the ex-aristocrats into orderly and moral beings.

Eugene and Hortense fell rapidly and understandingly into the plan of their faithful governess; they transformed themselves in their language, in their dress, in their whole being and appearance, into little republicans, full of genuine patriotism. Like their cousin, Emile de Beauharnais, whose mother (the wife of the elder brother of the Viscount de Beauharnais) had already for a long time languished in prison, they attended the festivals which had for its object the glorification of the republic, and, alongside of the Citizeness Lanoy, the little milliner Hortense followed the procession of her quarter of the city, perhaps to awaken thereby the good-will of the authorities in favor of her imprisoned parents.

Then, when Madame Lanoy thought this good-will had been gained, she made a step further, and undertook to have the children present to the Convention a petition for their parents. This petition ran thus:

"Two innocent children appeal to you, fellow-citizens, for the freedom of their dear mother—their mother against whom no reproach can be made but the misfortune of being born in a class from which, as she has proven, she ever felt completely estranged, for she has ever surrounded herself with the best patriots, the most distinguished men of the Mountain. After she had on the 26th of Germinal requested a pass in order to obey the law, she was arrested on the evening of that day without knowing the cause. Citizen representatives, you cannot be guilty of oppressing innocence, patriotism, and virtue. Give back to us unfortunate children our life. Our youth is not made for suffering." Signed: EUGENE BEAUHARNAIS, aged twelve years, and HORTENSE BEAUHARNAIS, aged eleven years.\*

To this complaint of two deserted children no more attention was paid than to the cries of the dove which the

\* "Histoire de l'Impératrice Josephine," par Aubenas.

hawk carries away in its claws, but perhaps the innocent touching words of the petition had awakened compassion in the heart of some father.

It is true no answer was given to the petition of the children, but the Citizeness Lanoy was allowed to take the children of the accused twice a week into the reception-room of the Carmelite Convent, that there they might see and speak to their mother.

This was a sweet comfort, an unhopèd-for joy, as well to Josephine as to her husband; for if he was not permitted to come into the lower room and see the children, yet he now saw them through the eyes of his wife, and through her he received the wishes of their tender affection.

What happiness for Josephine, who loved her children with all the unrestrained fondness of a creole! what happiness to see her Eugene, her Hortense, and to be permitted to speak to them! How much they had to say one to another, how much to communicate one to the other!

It is true much had to be passed in silence if they would not excite the anger of the turnkey, who was always present at the meeting of the children with their mother. Strict orders had been given that Josephine should never whisper one word to the children, or speak to them of the events of the day, of what was going on beyond the prison walls. The least infringement of this rule was to be punished by debarring the children from having any further conversation with their mother.

And yet they had so much to say; they needed her advice so much, so as to know what future steps they might take to accomplish their mother's freedom! They had so much to tell to Josephine about relatives and friends, and above all so much to say about what was going on outside of the prison! But how bring her news? how speak to their mother? how receive her message in such a way that the jailer's ears could not know what was said?

Love is full of invention. It turns every thing into subserviency to its end. Love once turned the dove into a carrier; love made Josephine's children find out a new mail-carrier—it made them invent the lapdog mail.

Josephine, like all creoles, had, besides her love for flowers, botany, and birds, a great fondness for dogs. Never since the earliest days of her childhood had Josephine been seen in her room, at the promenade, or in her carriage, without one of these faithful friends and companions of man, which share with the lords of creation all their good qualities and virtues, without being burdened with their failings. The love, the faithfulness, the cunningness of dogs are virtues, wherewith they successfully rival man, and the dogs boast only of one quality which amongst men is considered a despicable vice, namely, the canine humbleness which these animals practise, without egotism, without calculation, whilst man practises it only when his interest and his selfishness make it seem advantageous.

Two years before, a friend of Josephine had given her a small, young model of the then fashionable breed of dogs, a small lapdog, and at once Josephine had made a pet of the little animal, which had been recommended to her as the progeny of a rare and genuine race of lapdogs. It is true the little Fortuné had not fulfilled what had been promised; he had not grown up exactly into a model of beauty and loveliness. With small feet, a long body of a pale yellow rather than red, a thick, double, flat nose, this lapdog had nothing of its race but the black face, and the tail in the shape of a corkscrew. Besides all this, he was undoubtedly of a surly, quarrelsome disposition, and he preferred the indolence and ease of his cushion to either a promenade with Josephine or to a game with her children.

But since Josephine was no more there, since her beautiful hands no more presented him his food, a change had come over Fortuné's character; he had awakened from the

effeminacy of happiness to full activity. The children had but to say, "We are going to mamma," and at once Fortuné would spring up from his cushion with a cheerful bark, and run out into the streets, describing circles and performing joyous leaps. Fortuné, as soon as the reception-room of the prison was opened, was always the first to rush in, barking loudly at the jailer; then, when his spite was over, to run with all the signs of passionate tenderness toward his mistress; then he would surround her with caresses, and leap, bark, and whine, until she noticed him, until she should have kissed and embraced the children, and then taken him up in her arms.

But one day, as the door of the reception-room opened, and Eugene and Hortense entered with Madame Lanoy, Fortuné's loud barking trumpet sounded not, and he sprang not forward toward Josephine. He walked on gravely with measured steps at the side of Madame Lanoy, who led him with a string which she had fastened to his collar. With important, thoughtful mien, he gazed resignedly and gravely at his mistress, and even for his hated foe the jailer he had but a dull growl, which he soon repressed.

Josephine was somewhat alarmed at this change in Fortuné's demeanor, and after she had welcomed, taken to her bosom and kissed her darling children, after she had saluted the good Madame Lanoy, she inquired why Fortuné was so sad and why he was led as a captive.

"Because he is so wild and unruly, mamma," said Eugene, with a peculiar smile, "because he wants always to be the first to salute you, and because he barks so loud that we cannot possibly for some time hear what our dear mamma has to say."

"And then, in the street, he is so wicked and troublesome," cried Hortense, with eagerness, "and he always begins quarrelling and fighting with every dog which passes

by, and we must stand there and wait for him when we are so anxious to see our dear mamma."

"For all these reasons," resumed Madame Lanoy, with slow, solemn intonation, "for all these reasons we have thought it necessary to chain Fortuné and to tighten up his collar."

"And you have done quite well, citizeness," growled the turnkey, "for I had already thought of silencing forever the abominable lapdog if he again barked at me so."

Josephine said nothing, but the peculiar smile she had noticed on her children's face had passed, at the words of Madame Lanoy, over Josephine's radiant countenance, and she now with her pet names called Fortuné to her, to press him to her heart, to pat him, and by all these caresses to make amends for his having his collar somewhat tightened.

But whilst thus petting him, and tenderly smoothing down his sleek fur, her slim fingers quickly and cautiously passed under the wide collar of Fortuné. Then her eyes were rapidly directed toward the jailer. He was engaged in animated conversation with Madame Lanoy, who knew how to make him talk, by inquiring after the health of his little sick daughter.

A second time Josephine's fingers were passed under Fortuné's collar—for she had well understood the words of Madame Lanoy—with a woman's keen instinct she understood why Fortuné's collar had been drawn closer about him. She had felt the thin, closely-folded paper, which was tied up with the string in the dog's collar, and she drew it out rapidly, adroitly to hide it in her hand. She then called Hortense and Eugene, and whilst she talked with them, she slowly and carefully, under pretext of adjusting more closely the kerchief round her neck, secreted the paper in her bosom.

The jailer had seen nothing; he was telling Madame Lanoy, with all the pride of a kind father, that all the pris-

oners were anxious about his little Eugénie; that all, more than once a day, inquired how it fared with the little one; that she was the pet of the prisoners, who were so delighted to have the child with them, and for long hours to jest and play with her. Unfortunate captives, who flattered the child, and feigned love for it, so as to move the father's heart, and instil into it a little compassion for their misfortune!

When Eugene and Hortense came the next time with their faithful Lanoy, Fortuné was again led by the string as a prisoner, and this time Josephine was still more affectionate than before. She not only welcomed him at his entrance, and lifted him up in her arms, but she was yet, if possible, more affectionate toward him at the time of departure, and embraced him, and tried if the collar had not been buckled on too tightly, if the string which was tied round it did not hurt him too much. And whilst she examined this, Eugene was telling the jailer that he was now a worthy apprentice of a cabinet-maker, and that he hoped one day to be a useful citizen of the republic. The jailer was listening to him with a complacent smile, and had no suspicion that at this moment Josephine's cunning fingers were making sure with the string under the collar the note in which she gave an answer to the other note that she had before found under the collar of Fortuné.\*

From this day, Josephine knew every thing of importance in Paris; from this time she could point out to her children the means to pursue so as to win to their parents influential and powerful friends, so that they might one day be delivered from their captivity. Fortuné was love's messenger between Josephine and her children; a beam of happiness had penetrated both cells, where lived Alexandre de Beauharnais and Josephine, and they owed this gleam only to the lapdog mail.

\* "Souvenirs d'un Sexagénaire," par M. L. Arnould, vol. iii., p. 3.