# BOOK IV.

## *THE DUCHESS OF ST. LEU.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE BANISHMENT OF THE DUCHESS OF ST. LEU.

For the second time, the Bourbons had entered Paris under the protection of the allies, and Louis XVIII. was once more King of France. But this time he did not return with his former mild and conciliatory disposition. He came to punish and to reward; he came unaccompanied by mercy. The old generals and marshals of the empire, who had not been able to resist their chieftain's call, were now banished, degraded, or executed. Ney and Labédoyère paid for their fidelity to the emperor with their blood; and all who were in any way connected with the Bonapartes were relentlessly pursued. The calumnies that had been circulated in 1814 against the Duchess of St. Leu were now to bear bitter fruit. These were the dragon's teeth from which the armed warriors had sprung, who now levelled their swords at the breast of a defenceless woman.

King Louis had returned to the throne of his fathers,



but he had not forgotten that he had been told on his flight: "The Duchess of St. Leu is to blame for all! Her intrigues have brought Napoleon back!" Now that he was again king, he thought of it, and determined to punish her. He requested it of Alexander, as a favor, that he should this time not call on the Duchess of St. Leu.

The emperor, dismayed by the odious reports in circulation concerning Hortense, and already enchained in the mystic glittering web with which Madame de Krüdener had enveloped him, and separated from the reality of the world, acceded to the wishes of the Bourbons, and abandoned the queen. This was the signal that let loose the general wrath of the royalists; they could now freely utter their scorn and malice. By low calumnies they could now compensate themselves for their humiliation of the past, for having been compelled to approach the daughter of Viscountess de Beauharnais with the reverence due to a queen.

They could pursue the step-daughter of the emperor with boundless fury, for this very fury proved their royalism, and to hate and calumniate Bonaparte and his family was to love and flatter the Bourbons.

Day by day these royalists hurled new accusations against the duchess, whose presence in Paris unpleasantly recalled the days of the empire, and whom they desired to remove from their sight, as well as the column on the *Place Vendôme.*

While the poor queen was living in the retirement of

her apartments, in sadness and desolation, the report was circulated that she was again conspiring, and that she was in the habit of leaving her house every evening at twilight, in order to incite the populace to rise and demand the emperor's return, or at least the instalment of the little King of Rome on the throne instead of Louis de Bourbon.

When the queen's faithful companion, Louise de Cochelet, informed her of these calumnies, Hortense remained cold and indifferent.

"Madame," exclaimed Louise, "you listen with as much composure as if I were reciting a story of the last century!"

"And it interests me as little," said Hortense, earnestly; "we have lost all, and I consider any blow that may still strike us, with the composure of an indifferent spectator. I consider it natural that they should endeavor to caluminate me, because I bear a name that has made the whole world tremble, and that will still be great, though we all be trodden in the dust. But I will shield myself and children from this hatred. We will leave France and go to Switzerland, where I possess a little estate on the Lake of Geneva."

But time was not allowed the duchess to prepare for her departure. The dogs of calumny and hatred were let loose upon her to drive her from the city. A defenceless woman with two young children seemed to be an object of anxiety and terror to the government, and it made haste to get rid of her.



On the morning of the 17th of July, an adjutant of the Prussian General de Müffling, the allied commandant of Paris, came to the dwelling of the Duchess of St. Leu, and informed her intendant, M. Deveaux, that the duchess must leave Paris within two hours, and it was only at the urgent solicitation of the intendant, that a further sojourn of four hours was allowed her.

Hortense was compelled to conform to this military command, and depart without arranging her affairs or making any preparations for her journey. Her only possession consisted of jewelry, and this she of course intended to take with her. But she was warned that a troop of enraged Bourbonists, who knew of her approaching departure, had quitted Paris to lie in wait for her on her road, "in order to rob her of the millions in her custody."

The queen was warned to take no money or articles of value with her, but only that which was absolutely necessary.

General de Müffling offered her an escort of his soldiers; Hortense declined this offer, but requested that an Austrian officer might be allowed to accompany her for the protection of herself and children on the journey. Count de Boyna, adjutant of Prince Schwartzenberg, was selected for this purpose.

On the evening of the 17th of July, 1815, the Duchess of St. Leu took her departure. She left her faithful friend Louise de Cochelet in Paris to arrange her affairs, and assure the safe-keeping of her jewelry. Accompanied

only by her equerry, M. de Marmold, Count Boyna, her children, her maid, and a man-servant, she who had been a queen left Paris to go into exile.

It was a sorrowful journey that Hortense now made through her beloved France, that she could no longer call her country, and that now seemed as ill-disposed toward the emperor and his family as it had once passionately loved them.

In these days of political persecution, the Bonapartists had everywhere hidden themselves in obscure places, or concealed their real disposition beneath the mask of Bourbonism. Those whom Hortense met on her journey were therefore all royalists, who thought they could give no better testimony to their patriotism than by persecuting with cries of scorn, with gestures of hatred, and with loud curses, the woman whose only crime was that she bore the name of him whom France had once adored, and whom the royalists hated.

Count Boyna was more than once compelled to protect Hortense and her children against the furious attacks of royalists—the stranger against her own countrymen! In Dijon, Count Boyna had found it necessary to call on the Austrian military stationed there for assistance in protecting the duchess and her children from the attacks of an infuriated crowd, led by royal guards and beautiful ladies of rank, whose hair was adorned with the lilies of the Bourbons.*

Dispirited and broken down by all she had seen and

* Cochelet, vol. iii., p. 289.



experienced, Hortense at last reached Geneva, happy at the prospect of being able to retire to her little estate of Pregny, to repose after the storms of life. But this refuge was also to be refused her. The French ambassador in Switzerland, who resided in Geneva, informed the authorities of that city that his government would not tolerate the queen's sojourn so near the French boundary, and demanded that she should depart. The authorities of Geneva complied with this demand, and ordered the Duchess of St. Leu to leave the city immediately.

When Count Boyna imparted this intelligence to the duchess, and asked her to what place she would now go, her long-repressed despair found utterance in a single cry: "I know not. Throw me into the lake, then we shall all be at rest!"

But she soon recovered her usual proud resignation, and quietly submitted to the new banishment that drove her from her last possession, the charming little Pregny, from her "*rêve de chalet.*"

In Aix she finally found repose and peace for a few weeks—in Aix, where she had once celebrated brilliant triumphs as a queen, and where she was at least permitted to live in retirement with her children and a few faithful adherents.

But in Aix the most fearful blow that Fate had in store for her fell upon her!

Her action against her husband had already been decided in 1814, shortly before the emperor's return, and it

had been adjudged that she should deliver her elder son, Napoleon Louis, into the custody of his father. Now that Napoleon's will no longer restrained him, Louis demanded that this judgment be carried out, and sent Baron von Zuyten to Aix to bring back the prince to his father, then residing in Florence.

The unhappy mother was now powerless to resist this hard command; she was compelled to yield, and send her son from her arms to a father who was a stranger to the boy, and whom he therefore could not love.

It was a heart-rending scene this parting between the boy, his mother, and his young brother Louis, from whom he had never before been separated for a day, and who now threw his arms around his neck, tearfully entreating him to stay with him.

But the separation was inevitable. Hortense parted the two weeping children, taking little Louis Napoleon in her arms, while Napoleon Louis followed his governor to the carriage, sobbing as though his heart would break. When Hortense heard the carriage driving off, she uttered a cry of anguish and fell to the ground in a swoon, and a long and painful attack of illness was the consequence of this sorrowful separation.



## CHAPTER II.

### LOUIS NAPOLEON AS A CHILD.

The Duchess of St. Leu was, however, not destined to find repose in Aix; the Bourbons—not yet weary of persecuting her, and still fearing the name whose first and greatest representative was now languishing on a solitary, inhospitable rock-island — the Bourbons considered it dangerous that Hortense, the emperor's stepdaughter, and her son, whose name of Louis Napoleon seemed to them a living monument of the past, should be permitted to sojourn so near the French boundary. They therefore instructed their ambassador to the government of Savoy to protest against the further sojourn of the queen in Aix, and Hortense was compelled to undertake a new pilgrimage, and to start out into the world again in search of a home.

She first turned to Baden, whose duchess, Stephanie, was so nearly related to her, and from whose husband she might therefore well expect a kindly reception. But the grand-duke did not justify his cousin's hopes; he had not the courage to defy the jealous fears of France, and it was only at the earnest solicitation of his wife that he at last consented that Hortense should take up her residence at the extreme end of the grand-duchy, at Constance, on the Lake of Constance; and this permission was only accorded her on the express condition that neither the duchess nor her son should ever come to

Carlsruhe, and that his wife, Stephanie, should never visit her cousin at Constance.

Hortense accepted this offer with its conditions, contented to find a place where she could rest after her long wanderings, and let the bleeding wounds of her heart heal in the stillness and peace of beautiful natural scenery. She passed a few quiet, happy years in Constance, desiring and demanding nothing but a little rest and peace, aspiring to but one thing—to make of the son, whom Providence had given her as a compensation for all her sufferings, a strong, a resolute, and an intelligent man.

Her most tender care and closest attention were devoted to the education of this son. An excellent teacher, Prof. Lebas, of Paris, officiated as instructor to the young prince. She herself gave him instruction in drawing, in music, and in dancing; she read with him, sang with him, and made herself a child, in order to replace to her lonely boy the playmate Fate had torn from his side.

While reposing on her *chaise-longue* on the long quiet evenings, her boy seated on a cushion at her feet, she would speak to him of his great uncle, and of his heroic deeds, and of his country, of France that had discarded them, to be able to return to which was, however, her most ardent wish, and would continue to be while life lasted. She would then inspire the boy's soul with the description of the great battles which his uncle had won in Italy, on the Nile, on the Rhine, and on the Danube;



and the quiet, pale boy, with the dark, thoughtful eyes, would listen in breathless suspense, his weak, slender body quivering with emotion when his mother told him how dearly his uncle had loved France, and that all his great and glorious deeds had been done for the honor and renown of France alone.

One day, while he was sitting before her, pale and trembling with agitation, his mother pointed to David's splendid painting, representing Napoleon on the heights of the Alps, the genial conception of which painting is due to Napoleon's own suggestions.

"Paint me tranquilly seated on a wild horse," Napoleon had said to David, and David had so painted him—on a rearing steed, on the summit of a rock which bears the inscription "Hannibal" and "Cæsar." The emperor's countenance is calm, his large eyes full of a mysterious brilliancy, his hair fluttering in the wind, the whole expression thoughtful and earnest; the rider heedless of the rearing steed, which he holds firmly in check with the reins.

A beautiful copy of this great painting hung in the parlor of the duchess; and to this she now pointed while narrating the history of the emperor's passage over the Great St. Bernard with an army, a feat never before performed except by Hannibal and Cæsar, and perhaps never to be performed again.

As she concluded her narrative, an almost angry expression flitted across the young prince's countenance. Rising from his seat, and holding himself perfectly erect,

he exclaimed: "Oh, mamma, I shall also cross the Alps some day, as the emperor did!"

And while thus speaking, a glowing color suffused his face; his lips trembled, and the feverish beating of his heart was quite audible.

Hortense turned in some anxiety to her friend Louise de Cochelet, and begged her in a low voice to soothe the child with the recital of some merry narrative. As Louise looked around the room thoughtfully and searchingly, a cup that stood on the mantel-piece arrested her gaze. She hastened to the mantel, took the cup, and returned with it to little Louis Napoleon.

"Mamma has been explaining a very grave picture to you, Louis," said she; "I will now show you a merry one. Look at it—isn't it charming?"

The prince cast a hasty, absent-minded look at the cup, and nodded gravely. Louise laughed gayly.

"You see, Louis," said she, "that this is the exact counterpart of the picture of the Emperor Napoleon, who, while riding over the Alps, encounters on their summit the great spirits of Hannibal and Cæsar. Here is a little Napoleon, who is not climbing up the Alps, but climbing down from his bed, and who, on this occasion, meets a black spirit, in the person of a chimney-sweep. This is the history of the great and of the little Napoleon; the great meets Hannibal, the little the chimney-sweep."

"Am I the little Napoleon?" asked the boy, gravely.

"Yes, Louis, you are, and I will now tell you the



story of this cup. One day, when we were all still in Paris, and while your great uncle was still Emperor of France—one day, you met in your room a little Savoyard, who had just crept out of the chimney in his black dress, his black broom in his hand. You cried out with horror, and were about to run away, but I held you back and told you that these chimney-sweeps were poor boys, and that their parents were so poor that they could not support their children, but were compelled to send them to Paris to earn their bread by creeping into and cleaning our hot and dirty chimneys, with great trouble, and at the risk of their lives. My story touched you, and you promised me never to be afraid of the little chimney-sweeps again. A short time afterward, you were awakened early in the morning by a strange noise, your brother still lay asleep at your side, and your nurse was absent from the room. This noise was made by a chimney-sweep who had just come down the chimney and now stood in your room. As soon as you saw him, you remembered his poverty, jumped out of bed in your night-clothes, and ran to the chair on which your clothes lay. You took out of your pocket the purse you were compelled to carry with you on your walks to give money to the poor, and you emptied its entire contents into the black, sooty hand of the young Savoyard. You then tried to get back to bed, but it was too high for you; you could not climb over the railing. Seeing this, the chimney-sweep came to your assistance, and took the little prince in his arms to help him into bed. At this

moment, your nurse entered the room, and your brother, who had just awakened, cried loudly when he saw Louis in the arms of a chimney-sweep.

"This is the story of little Napoleon and the chimney-sweep! Your grandmother, the Empress Josephine, was so much pleased with this story, that your mother had the scene painted on a cup, and presented it to the empress, in order to afford her a gratification. And what do you think, Louis—this cup was also the cause of a punishment being remitted your cousin, the King of Rome, who now lives in Vienna!"

"Tell me all about it, Louise," said the prince, smiling.

"You shall hear it! Your mother had instructed me to take the cup to Malmaison to the empress. But before going, I endeavored to obtain some news about the little King of Rome for the empress. Your good grandmother loved him as though he had been her own child, although she had never seen him. I therefore went to the Tuileries to see the little King of Rome, with whose governess, Madame de Montesquieu, I was intimately acquainted. On entering the apartment, I saw the king cowering behind a chair in a corner of the room; Madame de Montesquieu intimated by a look that he was undergoing a punishment; I understood it, and first conversed with his governess for a short time. When I then turned and approached him, he concealed the tearful, flushed face, that his long blond curls covered as with a golden veil, whenever he moved behind the chair.



"'Sire,' said Madame de Montesquieu to him, 'sire, do you not intend to bid Mademoiselle de Cochelet good-morning? She came here expressly to see you.'

"'Your majesty does not recognize me,' said I, attempting to take his small hand in mine. He tore it from me, and cried in a voice almost choked with sobbing: 'She will not let me look at the soldiers of my papa!'

"Madame de Montesquieu told me that it was the little prince's greatest pleasure to see the Guards exercising on the *Place de Carrousel*, but that she had deprived him of this pleasure to-day, because he had been naughty and disobedient; that, when he heard the music and drums, his despair and anger had become so great that she had been forced to resort to severe means, and make him stand in the corner behind a chair. I begged for the young king's pardon; I showed him the cup, and explained the scene that was painted on it. The king laughed, and Madame de Montesquieu pardoned him for the sake of his little cousin, Louis Napoleon, who was so well behaved, and who was always held up to him as a model.* Now you have heard the whole story, are you pleased with it, Louis?"

"I like it very much," said the grave boy, "but I do not like my cousin's governess, for having intended to prevent him from looking at his father's soldiers. Oh, how handsome they must have been, the soldiers of the emperor! Mamma, I wish I were also an emperor, and had ever so many handsome soldiers."

* Cochelet, vol. i., p. 212.

Hortense smiled sadly, and laid her hand on the boy's head as if to bless him. "Oh, my son," said she, "it is no enviable fortune to wear a crown. It is almost always fastened on our head with thorns!"

From this day on, Prince Louis Napoleon would stand before his uncle's portrait, lost in thought, and, after looking at it to his satisfaction, he would run out and call the boys of the neighborhood together, in order to play soldier and emperor with them in the large garden that surrounded his mother's house, and teach the boys the first exercise.

One day, in the zeal of play, he had entirely forgotten his mother's command, not to go out of the garden, and had marched into the open field with his soldiers. When his absence from the garden was noticed, all the servants were sent out to look for him, and the anxious duchess, together with her ladies, assisted in this search, walking about in every direction through the cold and the slush of the thawing snow. Suddenly they came upon the boy barefooted and in his shirt-sleeves, wading toward them through the mud and snow. He was alarmed and confused at this unexpected meeting, and confessed that a moment before, while he had been playing in front of the garden, a family had passed by so poor and ragged that it was painful to look at them. As he had no money to give them, he had put his shoes on one child, and his coat on another.*

The duchess did not have the courage to scold him;

* Cochelet, vol. iv., p. 303.



she stooped down and kissed her son; but when her ladies commenced to praise him, she motioned to them to be silent, and said in a loud voice that what her son had done was quite a matter of course, and therefore deserved no praise.

An ardent desire to gladden others and make them presents was characteristic of little Louis Napoleon. One day, Hortense had given him three beautiful studs for his shirt, and on the same day the prince transferred them to one of his friends who admired them.

When Hortense reproached her son for doing so, and threatened to make him no more presents, as he always gave them away again directly, Louis Napoleon replied, "Ah, mamma, this is why your presents give me double pleasure—once when you give them to me, and the second time when I make others happy with them." *

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## CHAPTER III.

### THE REVOLUTION OF 1830.

Fate seemed at last weary of persecuting the poor Duchess of St. Leu. It at least accorded her a few peaceful years of repose and comfort; it at least permitted her to rest from the weariness of the past on the bosom of Nature, and to forget her disappointments and sorrows. The Canton of Thurgau had had the courage to extend

* Cochelet, vol. i, p. 355.

permission to the duchess to take up her residence within its borders, at the very moment when the Grand-duke of Baden, who had been urged to the step by Germany and France, had peremptorily ordered Hortense to leave Constance and his grand-duchy without delay.

Hortense had thankfully accepted the offer of the Swiss canton, and had purchased, on the Swiss side of the Lake of Constance, an estate, whose beautiful situation on the summit of a mountain, immediately on the banks of the lake, with its magnificent view of the surrounding country, and its glittering glaciers on the distant horizon, made it a most delightful place of sojourn. Hortense now caused the furniture of her dwelling in Paris, that had been sold, to be sent to her. The sight of these evidences of her former grandeur awakened sweet and bitter emotions in her heart, as they were one after another taken out of the cases in which they had been packed—these sofas, chairs, divans, carpets, chandeliers, mirrors, and all the other ornaments of the parlors in which Hortense had been accustomed to receive kings and emperors, and which were now to adorn the Swiss villa that was outwardly so beautiful because of the vicinity, and inwardly so plain and simple.

But Hortense knew how to make an elegant and tasteful disposition of all these articles; she herself arranged every thing in her house, and took true feminine delight in her task. And when all was at last arranged—when she walked, with her son at her side, through the suite of rooms, in which every ornament and piece of furniture



reminded her of the past—when these things recalled the proud days of state when so many friends, relatives, and servants, had surrounded her—a feeling of unutterable loneliness, of painful desolation, came over her, and she sank down on a sofa and wept bitterly. But there was nevertheless a consolation in having these familiar articles in her possession once more; these mute friends often awakened in the solitary queen's heart memories that served to entertain and console her. Arenenberg was a perfect temple of memory; every chair, every table, every article of furniture, had its history, and this history spoke of Napoleon, of Josephine, and the great days of the empire.

In Arenenberg Hortense had at last found a permanent home, and there she passed the greater part of the year; and it was only when the autumnal storms began to howl through her open and lightly-constructed villa, that Hortense repaired to Rome, to pass the winter months in a more genial climate, while her son Louis Napoleon was pursuing his studies at the artillery school at Thun.

And thus the years passed on, quiet and peaceful, though sometimes interrupted by new losses and sorrows. In the year 1821 the hero, the emperor, to whose laurel-crown the halo of a martyr had now also been added, died on the island-rock, St. Helena.

In the year 1824 Hortense lost her only brother, Eugene, the Duke of Leuchtenberg.

The only objects of Hortense's love were now her

two sons, who were prospering in mind and body, and were the pride and joy of their mother, and an object of annoyance and suspicion to all the princes of Europe. For these children bore in their countenance, in their name, and in their disposition, too plain an impress of the great past, which they could never entirely ignore while Bonaparte still lived to testify to it.

And they lived and prospered in spite of the Bourbons; they lived and prospered, although banished from their country, and compelled to lead an inactive life.

But at last it seemed as though the hour of fortune and freedom had come for these Bonapartes—as though they, too, were to be permitted to have a country to which they might give their devotion and services.

The thundering voice of the revolution of 1830 resounded throughout trembling Europe. France, on whom the allies had imposed the Bourbons, arose and shook its mane; with its lion's paw it overthrew the Bourbon throne, drove out the Jesuits who had stood behind it, and whom Charles X. had advised to tear the charter to pieces, to destroy the freedom of the press, and to reintroduce the *autos da fé* of the olden time.

France had been treated as a child in 1815, and was now determined to assert its manhood; it resolved to break entirely with the past, and with its own strength to build up a future for itself.

The lilies of the Bourbons were to bloom no more; these last years of fanatical Jesuit tyranny had deprived them of life, and France tore the faded lily from her



bosom in order to replace it with a young and vigorous plant. The throne of the Bourbons was overthrown, but the people, shuddering at the recollection of the sanguinary republic, selected a king in preference. It stretched out its hand after him it held dearest; after him who in the past few years had succeeded in winning the sympathy of France. It selected the Duke of Orleans, the son of Philippe Égalité, for its king.

Louis Philippe, the enthusiastic republican of 1790, who at that time had caused the three words "*Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*," and the inscription "*Vive la République*," to be burnt on his arm, in order to prove his republicanism; the proscribed Louis Philippe, who had wandered through Europe a fugitive, earning his bread by teaching writing and languages—the same Louis Philippe now became King of France.

The people called him to the throne; they tore the white flag from the roof of the Tuileries, but they knew no other or better one with which to replace it than the *tricolore* of the empire.

Under the shadow of this *tricolore* Louis Philippe mounted the throne, and the people—to whom the three colors recalled the glorious era of the empire—the people shouted with delight, and in order to indulge their sympathies they demanded for France—not the son of Napoleon, not Napoleon II.—but the ashes of Napoleon, and the emperor's statue on the Palace Vendôme. Louis Philippe accorded them both, but with these concessions he thought he had done enough. He had accepted the

*tricolore* of the empire; he had promised that the emperor should watch over Paris from the summit of the Vendôme monument, and to cause his ashes to be brought to Paris—these were sufficient proofs of love.

They might be accorded the dead Napoleon without danger, but it would be worse to accord them to living Napoleons; such a course might easily shake the new throne, and recall the allies to Paris.

The hatred of the princes of Europe against Napoleon was still continued against his family, and it was with them, as Metternich said, "a principle never to tolerate another Napoleon on the throne."

The European powers had signified to the King of France, through their diplomatic agents, their readiness to acknowledge him, but they exacted one condition—the condition that Louis Philippe should confirm or renew the decree of exile fulminated by the Bourbons against the Bonapartes.

Louis Philippe had accepted this condition; and the Bonapartes, whose only crime was that they were the brothers and relatives of the deceased emperor, before whom not only France, but all the princes of Europe, had once bent the knee—the Bonapartes were once more declared strangers to their country, and condemned to exile!



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REVOLUTION IN ROME, AND THE SONS OF HORTENSE.

It was a terrible blow to the Bonapartes, this new decree of banishment! Like a stroke of lightning it entered their hearts, annihilating their holiest hopes and most ardent desires, and their joy over the glorious and heroic revolution of July gave place to a bitter sense of disappointment.

Nothing, therefore, remained for them but to continue the life to which they had become somewhat accustomed, and to console themselves, for their new disappointment, with the arts and sciences.

At the end of October, in the year 1830, Hortense determined to leave Arenenberg and go to Rome with her son, as she was in the habit of doing every year.

But this time she first went to Florence, where her elder son, Napoleon Louis, recently married to his cousin, the second daughter of King Joseph, was now living with his young wife. The heart of the tender mother was filled with anxiety and care; she felt and saw that this new French Revolution was likely to infect all Europe, and that Italy, above all, would be unable to avoid this infection. Italy was diseased to the core, and it was to be feared that it would grasp at desperate means in its agony, and proceed to the blood-letting of a revolution, in order to restore itself to health. Hortense felt this, and feared for her sons.