

## Chapter 25

### THE GUISES.

On the evening of the same day on which Chicot set off for Navarre, we shall find again, in a large room at the Hotel Guise, the person who, disguised as a page, had entered Paris behind Carmainges, and who was also, as we know, the penitent of Gorenflot. On this occasion her sex was disclosed, and, elegantly dressed, with her hair glittering with precious stones, she was waiting impatiently for some one.

At last a horse's step was heard, and the usher almost immediately announced M. le Duc de Mayenne. Madame de Montpensier ran to her brother so hastily that she forgot to proceed on the point of the right foot, as was her habit, in order to conceal her lameness.

"Are you alone, brother?" asked she.

"Yes, my sister."

"But Henri; where is Henri? Do you know that every one expects him here?"

"Henri has nothing to do here, and plenty to do in Flanders and Picardy. We have work to do there, and why should we leave it to come

here, where our work is done?"

"But where it will be quickly undone, if you do not hasten."

"Bah!"

"Bah! if you like. I tell you the citizens will be put off no longer; they insist upon seeing their Duke Henri."

"They shall see him at the right time. And Salcede--?"

"Is dead."

"Without speaking?"

"Without uttering a word."

"Good! and the arming?"

"Finished."

"And Paris?"

"Is divided into sixteen quarters."

"And each quarter has the chief pointed out?"

"Yes."

"Then let us live in peace, and so I shall say to our good bourgeoisie."

"They will not listen to you."

"Bah!"

"I tell you they are furious."

"My sister, you judge others by your own impatience. What Henri says must be done; and he says we are to remain quiet."

"What is to be done, then?" asked the duchess impatiently.

"What do you wish to do?"

"Firstly, to take the king."

"That is your fixed idea; I do not say it is bad, if it could be done, but think how often we have failed already."

"Times are changed, the king has no longer defenders."

"No; except the Swiss, Scotch, and French guards."

"My brother, when you wish it, I will show you the king on the road with

only two lackeys."

"I have heard that a hundred times, and never seen it once."

"You will see it if you stay here only three days."

"Another project: tell me what it is."

"You will laugh at a woman's idea."

At this moment, M. de Mayneville was announced. "My accomplice," said she: "let him enter."

"One word, monseigneur," said he to M. de Mayenne as he entered; "they suspect your arrival at the Louvre."

"How so?"

"I was conversing with the captain of the guards at St. Germain l'Auxerrois, when two Gascons passed--"

"Do you know them?"

"No; they were quite newly dressed. 'Cap de Bioux!' said one, 'you have a magnificent doublet, but it will not render you so much service as your cuirass of yesterday.' 'Bah!' said the other; 'however heavy the sword of M. de Mayenne may be, it will do no more harm to this satin

than to my cuirass,' and then he went on in a series of bravadoes, which showed that they knew you were near."

"And to whom did these men belong?"

"I do not know; they talked so loudly that some passers-by approached, and asked if you were really coming. They were about to reply, when a man approached, whom I think was De Loignac, and touched them on the shoulder. He said some words in a low voice, and they looked submissive, and accompanied him, so that I know no more; but be on your guard."

"You did not follow them?"

"Yes, but from afar. They went toward the Louvre, and disappeared behind the Hotel des Meubles."

"I have a very simple method of reply," said the duke.

"What?"

"To go and pay my respects to the king to-night."

"To the king?"

"Certainly; I have come to Paris--he can have nothing to say against that."

"The idea is good," said Mayneville.

"It is imprudent," said the duchess.

"It is indispensable, sister, if they indeed suspect my arrival. Besides, it was the advice of Henri to go at once and present to the king the respects of the family; that once done, I am free, and can receive whom I please."

"The members of the committee, for example, who expect you."

"I will receive them at the Hotel St. Denis on my return from the Louvre. You will wait for us, if you please, my sister."--"Here?"

"No; at the Hotel St. Denis, where I have left my equipages. I shall be there in two hours."