Chapter 32

BROTHER BORROMÉE.

It was about ten o'clock in the evening when the deputies returned home. Nicholas Poulain remained behind the others, reflecting on the perplexing situation in which he found himself, and considering whether he should report all that he had heard to M. d'Epernon, when, in the middle of the Rue de la Pierre-au-Réal, he ran right against a Jacobin monk. They both began to swear, but, looking up, recognized each other.

"Brother Borromée!" cried Poulain.

"Nicholas Poulain!" exclaimed the monk.

"How are you?" asked Nicholas cautiously. "Where in the world were you running to in such a hurry at this time of night? Is the priory on fire?"

"No; I was going to the Duchesse de Montpensier's hotel, to speak to M. de Mayneville."

"And what for?"

"Oh! it is very simple," said Borromée, seeking for a specious answer;
"the reverend prior was solicited by the duchesse to become her

confessor; he accepted at the time, but since then he has had scruples, and has sent me to tell her not to rely upon him."

"Very good; but you are going away from the Hotel Guise."

"Exactly so; for I hear she is at the Hotel St. Denis, with her brother."

"Quite true; but why do you deceive me? It is not the treasurer who is sent with these sort of messages."

"But to a princess! Now do not detain me, or I shall miss her."

"She will return, you might have waited for her."

"True; but I shall not be sorry to see M. le Duc also."

"Oh! that is more like the truth, so go on. There is something new going on," thought Nicholas; "but why should I try to discover what it is?"

Meanwhile the brother and sister had been conversing together, and had settled that the king had no suspicions, and was therefore easy to attack. They also agreed that the first thing to be done was to organize the League more generally in the provinces, while the king abandoned his brother, who was the only enemy they had to fear, so long as Henri of Navarre occupied himself only with love affairs.

"Paris is all ready, but must wait," said Mayenne.

At this moment M. de Mayneville entered, and announced Borromée.

"Borromée! who is he?" cried the duke.

"The man whom you sent me from Nancy, when I asked for a man of action and mind."

"I remember; I told you he was both. But he was called Borroville."

"Yes, monseigneur; but now he is a monk, and Borromée."

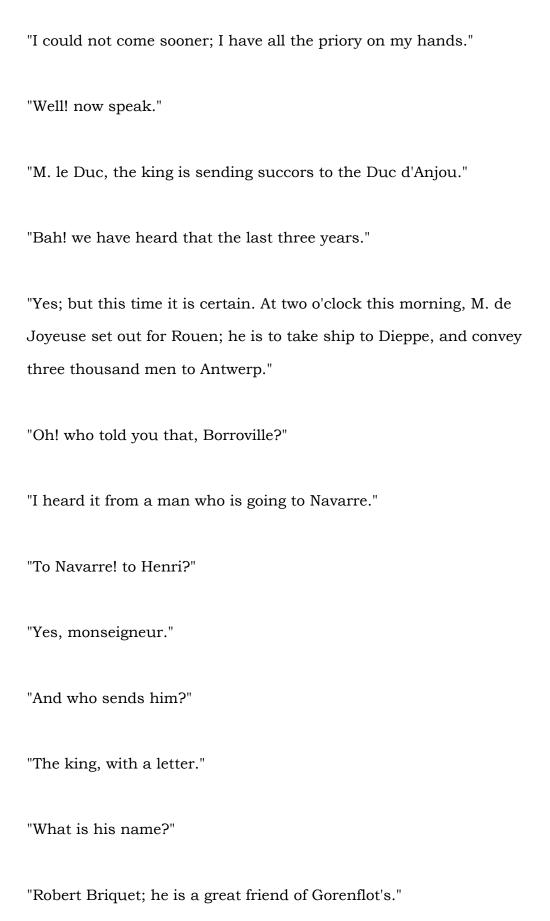
"Borroville a monk! and why so?"

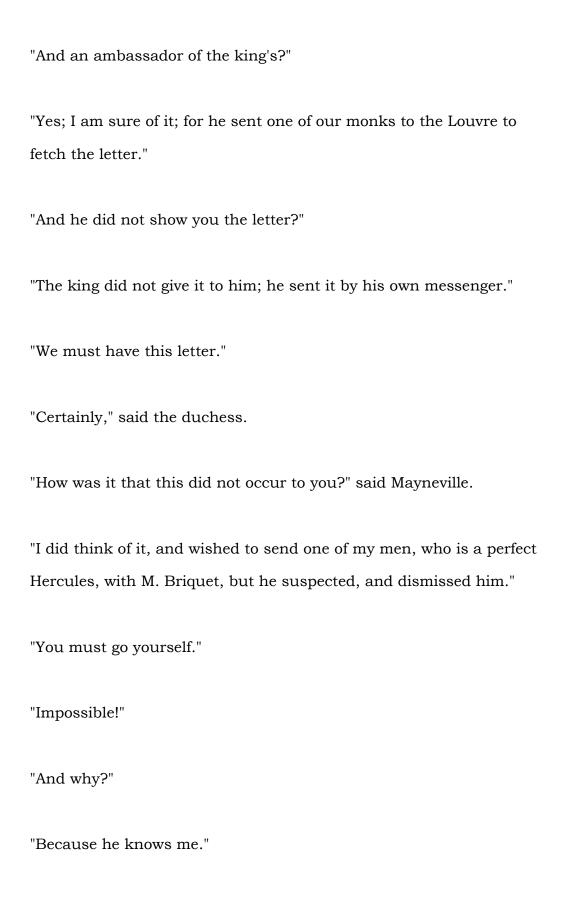
"That is our secret, monseigneur; you shall know hereafter, but now let us see him, for his visit disquiets me."

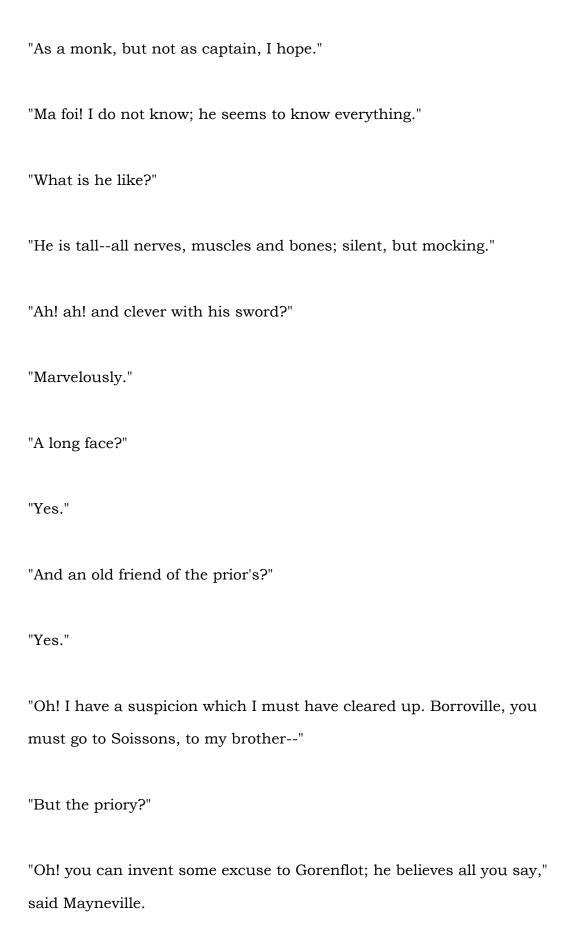
"Why, Borroville," cried the duke, laughing, as he entered; "what a disguise!"

"Yes, monseigneur, I am not much at my ease in this devil of a dress, I confess; but, as it is worn in the service of her highness, I do not complain."

"And what do you want so late?"







"You will tell my brother all you know about the mission of M. de Joyeuse."

"Yes, monseigneur."

"And Navarre--" said the duchess.

"Oh! I charge myself with that," said Mayenne. "Let them saddle me a fresh horse, Mayneville." Then he murmured to himself, "Can he be still alive?"