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Title: Secret Memoirs: The Story of Louise, Crown Princess

Author: Henry W. Fischer

Release Date: June 19, 2009 [EBook #29167]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Barbara Tozier, Jane Hyland, Bill Tozier and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net>

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LOUISE, CROWN PRINCESS ***

Secret Memoirs

THE COURT OF ROYAL SAXONY

1891-1902

This edition, printed on Japanese vellum paper, is limited to two hundred and fifty copies.

No. _____



LOUISE, EX-CROWN-PRINCESS OF SAXONY
Photo taken shortly before her flight from
Dresden

FROM THE PAGES OF HER DIARY, LOST AT THE TIME OF HER ELOPEMENT FROM
DRESDEN WITH M. ANDRÉ ("RICHARD") GIRON

BY

HENRY W. FISCHER

Author of "Private Lives of William II and His Consort," "Secret History of the Court of Berlin,"
etc., etc.

Illustrated from Photographs

BENSONHURST, NEW YORK FISCHER'S FOREIGN LETTERS, INC. PUBLISHERS

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EDITOR'S CARD

This is to certify that the Ex-Crown Princess of Saxony, now called Countess Montiguoso, Madame Toselli by her married name, is in no way, either directly or indirectly, interested in this publication.

There has been no communication of whatever nature, directly or through a third party, between this lady and the editor or publishers. In fact, the publication will be as much a surprise to her as to the general public.

The Royal Court of Saxony, therefore, has no right to claim, on the ground of this publication, that Princess Louise violated her agreement with that court as set forth in the chapter on the *Kith and Kin of the ex-Crown Princess of Saxony*, under the heads of "*Louise's Alimony and Conditions*" and "*Allowance Raised and a Further Threat*."

HENRY W. FISCHER, *Editor*.
Fischer's Foreign Letters, Publishers

THIS BOOK AND ITS PURPOSE

By Henry W. Fischer

Of Memoirs that are truly faithful records of royal lives, we have a few; the late Queen Victoria led the small number of crowned autobiographers only to discourage the reading of self-satisfied royal ego-portrayals forever, but in the Story of Louise of Saxony we have the main life epoch of a Cyprian Royal, who had no inducement to say anything false and is not afraid to say anything true.

For the Saxon Louise wrote not to guide the hand of future official historiographers, or to make virtue distasteful to some sixty odd grand-children, bored to death by the recital of the late "Mrs. John Brown's" sublime goodness:—Louise wrote for her own amusement, even as Pepys did when he diarized the peccadilloes of the Second Charles' English and French "hures" (which is the estimate these ladies put upon themselves).^[1]

The ex-Crown Princess of Saxony suffered much in her youth by a narrow-minded, bigoted mother, a Sadist like the monstrous Torquemada; marriage, she imagined, spelled a rich husband, more lover than master; freedom from tyranny, paltry surroundings, interference. To her untutored mind, life at the Saxon Court meant right royal splendor, liberty to do as one pleases, the companionship of agreeable, amusing and ready-to-serve friends.

The Sad Saxon Court

Her experience? Instead of the Imperial mother who took delight in cutting her children's faces with diamonds and exposing her daughters to the foul machinations of worthless teachers—she acquired a father-in-law (Prince, afterwards King George) whose pretended affection was but a share of his all-encompassing hatred, whose breath was a serpent's, whose veins were flowing with gall; the supposed chevaleresque husband turned out a walking dictionary of petty indecencies and gross vulgarities when in a favorable mood, a brawler at other times, a coward

always.

As to money—Louise wished for nothing better "than to be an American multi-millionaire's daughter for a week"! Amusements were few and frowned upon.

Liberty? None outside of a general permit to eat, drink and couple like animals in pasture, was recognized or tolerated. Nor could the royal young woman make friends. Her relatives-by-marriage were mostly freaks, and all were unbearable; her entourage a collection of spies and flunkeys.

If charity-bazaars, pious palaver, and orphaned babies' diapers had not been the sole topic of conversation at court; if there had been intellectual enjoyment of any kind, Louise might never have taken up her pen. As it was: "This Diary is intended to contain my innermost thoughts, my ambitions, my promises for the future, *Myself*. * * * These pages are my Father-Confessor. I confess to myself. * * * And as I start in writing letters to myself, it occurs to me that my worse self may be corresponding with my better self, or vice-versa."

At any rate she thinks "this Diary business will be quite amusing."

Louise's Amusing Writings

It is. The world always laughs at the—husband of a woman whose history isn't one long yawn.

Nor is Louise content with a bust picture.^[2] She gives full length portraits of herself, family, friends, enemies, and lovers, which latter she picks hap-hazard among commoners and the nobility. Only one of them was a prince of the blood, and he promptly proved the most false and dishonorable of the lot.

When Louise's pen-pictures do not deal with her *amorosos*, they focus invariably emperors and princes, kings and queens,—contemporary personages whose acquaintance, by way of the newspapers and magazines, we all enjoy to the full, as "stern rulers," "sacrificers to the public weal," "martyrs of duty," "indefatigable workers," "examples of abstinence," and "high-mindedness"—everything calculated to make life a burden to the ordinary mortal.

Kings in Fiction and in Reality

But kings and emperors, we are told by these *distant* observers, are built that way; they would not be happy unless they made themselves unhappy for their people's sake. And as to queens and empresses,—they simply couldn't live if they didn't inspect their linen closets daily, stand over a broiling cook-stove, or knit socks for the offspring of inebriated bricklayers "and sich."

Witness Louise, Imperial and Royal Highness, Archduchess of Austria, Princess of Hungary and Tuscany, Crown Princess of Saxony, etc., etc., smash these paper records of infallible royal rectitude, and superhuman, almost inhuman, royal probity!

Had she castigated her own kind *after* royalty unkenneled her, neck and crop, her story might admit of doubt, but she wrote these things while in the full enjoyment of her rank and station, before her title as future queen was ever questioned or menaced.

Her Diary finishes with her last night in the Dresden palace. We do not hear so much as the clatter of the carriage wheels that carried her and "Richard" to her unfrocking as princess of the blood,—in short, our narrator is not prejudiced, on the defensive, or soured by disfranchisement. She had no axes to grind while writing; for her all kings dropped out of the clouds; the lustre that surrounds a king never dimmed while her Diary was in progress, and before she ceases talking to us she never "ate of the fish that hath fed of that worm that hath eat of a king."

Yet this large folio edition of *obscénités royale*, chock full, at the same time, of intensely human and interesting facts, notable and amusing things, as enthralling as a novel by Balzac,—Louise's life record in sum and substance, since her carryings-on *after* she doffed her royal robes for the motley of the free woman are of no historical, and but scant human interest.

The prodigality of the mass of indictments Louise launches against royalty as every-day occurrences, reminds one of the great Catharine Sforza, Duchess of Milan's clever *mot*. When the enemy captured her children she merely said, "I retain the oven for more."

Royal Scandals

Such scandalmongering! Only Her Imperial Highness doesn't see the obloquy,—sarcasm, cynicism and disparagement being royalty's every-day diet.

Such gossiping! But what else was there to do at a court whose literature is tracts and whose theatre of action the drill grounds.

But for all that, Louise's Diary is history, because its minute things loom big in connection with social and political results, even as its horrors and abnormalities help paint court life and the lives of kings and princes as they *are*, not as royalties' sycophants and apologizers would have us view them.

There is a perfect downpour of books eulogizing monarchs and monarchy; royal governments spend millions of the people's money to uphold and aggrandize exalted kingship and seedy princesship alike; three-fourths of the press of Europe is swayed by king-worship, or subsidized to sing the praises of "God's Anointed," while in our own country the aping of monarchical

institutions, the admiration for court life, the idealization of kings, their sayings, doings and pretended superiority, as carried on by the multi-rich, are undermining love for the Republic and the institutions our fathers fought and bled for.

Un-American Folly

It's the purpose of the present volume to show the guilty folly of such un-American, un-republican, wholly unjustifiable, reprehensible and altogether ridiculous King-worship, not by argument, or a more or less fanciful story, but by the unbiased testimony of an "insider."

Let it be considered, above all, that a member of the proudest Imperial family in the wide, wide world demonstrates, by inference, the absurdity of King-worship!

Of course, whether or not you'll obey the impassioned appeal of the corner sermonizer, who, espying a number of very décolletée ladies passing by in a carriage, cried out: "*Quand vous voyez ces tetons rebondies, qui se montrent avec tant d'impudence, bandez! bandez! bandez! vous—les yeux!*" is a matter for you to decide.

Seek not for descriptions of ceremonials and festivities in these pages; only imbeciles among kings are interested in such wearying spectacles, intended to dazzle the multitude. The Czar Paul, who became insane and had his head knocked off by his own officers, appeared upon the scene vacated by his brilliant mother, Catharine the Great, with a valise full of petty regulations, ready drawn up, by which, every day, every hour, every minute, he announced some foolish change, punishment or favor, but I often saw Kaiser Wilhelm and other kings look intensely bored and disgusted when obliged to attend dull and superfluous court or government functions.

Royalty's Loose Talk

But for genuine expressions of the royal self consult Louise. Those who think that royalty shapes its language in accordance with the plural of the personal pronoun, sometimes used in state papers, will be shocked at the "négligé talk" of one royal highness and the "rag-time" expressions of others. Louise, herself, assures us over and over again that she "*feels like a dog*," a statement no self-respecting publisher's reader would allow to pass, yet I was told by a friend of King Frederick of Denmark that he loved to compare his "all-highest person" to a "*mut*," and I remember a letter from Victor Emanuel II to his great Minister, Count Cavour, solemnly protesting that he (the King) was "*no ass*."

When the same Danish ruler, the seventh of his name, was asked why, in thunder, he married a common street walker (the Rasmussen, afterwards created Countess Danner), he cried out with every indication of gusto: "You don't know how deliciously common that girl is."

Frederick's words explain the hostler marriages of several royal women mentioned by Louise, as well as her own and loving family's *broulleries* of the fish-wife order, repeatedly described in the Diary.

Royalty Threatens a Royal Woman

It is safe to say that few \$15 flats in all the United States witnessed more outrageous family jars than were fought out in the gilded halls of the Dresden palace between Louise and father-in-law and Louise and husband. Threats of violence are frequent; Prince George promises his daughter-in-law a sound beating at the hands of the Crown Prince and the Crown Princess confesses that she would rather go to bed with a drunken husband, booted and spurred, than risk a sword thrust.

At the coronation of the present Czar, at Moscow, I mistook the Duke of Edinburgh, brother of the late King Edward, for a policeman attached to the British Ambassador, so exceedingly commonplace a person in appearance, speech and manner he seemed; Louise has a telling chapter on the mean looks of royalty, but fails to see the connection between that and royalty's coarseness.

Perhaps it wasn't the "commonness" of Lady Emma Hamilton, child of the slums, impersonator of *risqué* stage pictures, and mistress of the greatest naval hero of all times, that appealed primarily to Louise's grand-aunt, Queen Caroline of Naples, but the abandon of the beautiful Englishwoman, her reckless exposure of person, her freedom of speech, certainly sealed the friendship between the adventuress and the despotic ruler who deserved the epithet of "bloody" no less than Mary of England.

Covetous Royalty

Royal covetousness is another subject dwelt on by Louise. We learn that in money matters the kings and princes of her acquaintance—and her acquaintance embraces all the monarchs of Europe—are "dirty," that royal girls are given in marriage to the highest bidder, and that poor princes have no more chance to marry a rich princess than a drayman an American multi-millionaire's daughter.

Louise gives us a curious insight into the Pappenheim-Wheeler marriage embroglio, and refers to some noble families that made their money in infamous trades; that the Kaiser adopted the title of one of these unspeakables ("Count of Henneberg") she doesn't seem to know.

We hear of imperial and royal highnesses, living at public expense and for whom honors and lucrative employment are exacted from the people, who at home figure as poor relations, obliged to submit to treatment that a self-respecting "boots" or "omnibus" would resent.

Here we have a royal prince of twenty-four or twenty-five subjected to kicks and cuffs by his uncle, who happens to be king—no indignity either to the slugged or the slugger in that—but when a pretty princess gets a few "*Hochs*" more than an ugly, mouse-colored majesty, she is all but flayed for "playing to the gallery."

"High-minded" royalty robs widows and despoils orphans; re-introduces into the family obsolete punishments forbidden by law; maintains in the household a despicable spy system! Its respect for womanhood is on a par with a Bushman's; of authors, "lickspittles" only count; literature, unless it kowtows to the "all-highest" person, is the "trade of Jew scribblers."

Right Royal Manners

As to manners, what do you think of kings and princes and grand-dukes who, at ceremonial dinners, pound the table to "show that they are boss"?

Louise tells of an emperor at a foreign court ignoring one of his hostesses absolutely, even refusing to acknowledge her salute by a nod. We hear of expectant royal heirs who engage in wild fandangoes of merriment while their father, brother or cousin lies dying.

"Personal matter," you say? "A typical case," I retort.

"Ask the *Duc du Maine* to wait till I am dead before he indulges in the full extent of his joy," said the dying Louis XIV, when the *De Profundis* in the death chamber was suddenly interrupted by the sound of violent laughter from the adjoining gallery. And the fact that almost every new king sets aside the testament of his predecessor,—is this not evidence of the general callowness of feeling prevailing in royal circles?

The Irish Famine and Royalty

In famine times, the kings and princes of old drove the starving out of town to die of hunger in the fields, and as late as 1772 one hundred and fifty thousand Saxons died of hunger under the "glorious reign" of Louise's grandfather-by-marriage, Frederick Augustus III. And the "Life of Queen Victoria," approved by the Court of St. James, unblushingly informs us that in 1847 "Her Most Gracious Majesty" was chiefly concerned about investing to good profit the revenues of the Prince of Wales, her infant son (about four hundred thousand dollars per annum).

Yet, while Victoria pinched the boy's tenants to extort an extra penny for him, and "succeeded in saving all but four thousand pounds sterling" of his imperial allowance, the population of Ireland was reduced two millions by the most dreadful famine the world remembers!

Before the famine Ireland had a population of 8,196,597, against a population of 15,914,148 in England and Wales, while Scotland's population was 2,620,184.

Six years after the famine Ireland's population was 6,574,278, Scotland's 2,888,742, England and Wales' 17,927,609. Today Ireland's population is less than Scotland's, the exact figures being: Scotland 4,759,445, Ireland 4,381,951, England and Wales 36,075,269.

Royalty Utterly Heartless

However, as the waste of two million human lives, the loss of four millions in population, subsequently enabled the Prince of Wales to tie the price of a dukedom^[3] in diamonds around a French dancer's neck and to support a hundred silly harlots in all parts of Europe, who cares?

According to Louise and—others, royalty is the meanest, the most heartless, the most faithless and the most unjust of the species—that in addition she herself disgraced its womanhood, after the famous Louise of Prussia rehabilitated queenship, is regrettable, but to call it altogether unexpected would be rank euphemism.

Louise's Character

If Louise had lived at the time of Phryne, the philosophers would have characterized her as "an animal with long hair"; if he had known her, the great Mirabeau might have coined his pet phrase, "a human that dresses, undresses and—talks" (or writes) for Louise; as a matter of fact, she is one of those "*Jansenists*" of love who believe in the utter helplessness of natural woman to turn down a good looking man.

Her great grand-uncle, Emperor Francis, recorded on a pane of glass overlooking the courtyard of the Vienna *Hofburg* his opinion of women in the brief observation: "*Chaque femme varie*" (Women always change).

This is true of Louise and also untrue of her. While occupying her high position at the Saxon court she was fixed in the determination to make a cuckold of her husband, though Frederick Augustus, while a pumpkin, wasn't fricasseed in snow by any means.

The process gave her palpitations, but, like Ninon, she was "*so* happy when she had palpitations."

Changed Lovers Frequently

As to lovers, she changed them as often as she had to, never hesitating to pepper her *steady* romances by playing "everybody's wife," chance permitting, as she intimates naïvely towards the close of the Diary.

Qualms of conscience she knows not, but of pride of ancestry, of insistence on royal prerogatives, she has plenty and to spare.

"My great grand-aunt, Marie Antoinette, did this"; "my good cousins d'Orleans" (three of them) "allowed themselves to be seduced"; "*ma cousine de Saxe-Coburg* laughs at conventionalities,"—there you have the foundation of the iniquitous philosophy of the royal Lais. And for the rest—when she is queen, all will be well.

Her Court—A Seraglio

Louise's fixed idea was that, as Queen of Saxony, she had but to say the word to establish a court à la Catharine II; time and again she refers to the great Empress's male seraglio, and to the enormous sums she squandered on her favorites. If the Diarist had known that Her Majesty of Russia, when in the flesh, never suffered to be longer than twenty-four hours without a lover, Louise, no doubt, would have made the most elaborate plans to prevent, in her own case, a possible *interregnum* of five minutes even.

She thought she held the whip hand because a king cannot produce princes without his wife, while the wife can produce princes without the king; besides Frederick Augustus was no paragon, and he who plants horns, must not grudge to wear them.

A wanton's calculations, it will be argued,—but Louise's records show that her husband, the king-to-be, fell in with her main idea,—that he forgave the unfaithful wife, the disgraced princess, because, as Queen, her popularity would be "a great asset."

And Americans, our women of whom we are so proud, are asked to bow down to such sorry majesties!

Sired and "Cousined" by Lunatics

And is there no excuse for so much baseness in high places? Our royal Diarist offers none, but her family history is a telling apology.

Be it remembered that Louise is not so much an Austrian as a Wittelsbacher of the royal house of Bavaria that gave to the world two mad kings, Louis II and Otho, the present incumbent of the throne, besides a number of eccentrics, among others Louise's aunts, the Empress Elizabeth and the Duchess d'Alencon, both dead; Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria, her cousin, was also undoubtedly insane, the result of breeding in and in, Austrian, Bourbon and Wittelsbach stock, all practically of the same parentage, in a mad mix-up, the insane Wittelsbachers predominating.

To cap the climax, Louise has eighteen or nineteen insane cousins on her mother's side!

Once upon a time Louise's prosaic and stupid great-uncle, as a young husband, felt dreadfully scandalized when his Queen, Marie Antoinette, bombarded him with spit-balls.

"What can I do with her?" he asked "Minister Sans-culotte" Dumouriez.

"I would spike the cannon, Sire," replied the courtier.

"*Enclouer le canon*," if performed in time, might have saved Louise, but I doubt it.

HENRY W. FISCHER.

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] "Be civil, good people, I am the English hure," said Nell Gwyn, addressing a London mob that threatened to storm her carriage, assuming that its occupant was the hated Frenchwoman.
- [2] "Your biography give a faithful portrait of self," said Fontenelle, the famous French Academician, to an 18th Century Marquise, "but I miss the record of your gallantries."
"Ah, Monsieur, c'est que je ne me suis peinte qu'en buste!" replied her ladyship.
- [3] The Prince of Wales' revenue is derived from the Duchy of Cornwall, amounting to about half a million dollars per year.

KITH AND KIN OF THE EX-CROWN PRINCESS OF SAXONY

Louise's Own Family

The royal woman whose life's history is recorded in this volume was born Louise Antoinette,

Daughter of the late Grand Duke Ferdinand IV of Tuscany (died January 17, 1908) and the Dowager Grand Duchess Alice, *née* Princess Bourbon of Parma.

Louise has four brothers, among them the present head of the Tuscany family, Joseph Ferdinand, who dropped the obsolete title of Grand Duke and is officially known as Archduke of Austria-Hungary.

He is a brigadier general, commanding the Fifth Austrian Infantry, and unmarried.

Better known is Louise's older brother, the former Archduke Leopold, who dropped his title and dignities, and, as a Swiss citizen, adopted the name of Leopold Wulfling. This Leopold is generally regarded as a black sheep.

Louise more often refers to him in the present volume than to any other member of her family.

He is now a commoner by his own, more or less enforced, abdication, as Louise is a commoner by decree of her chief-of-family, the Austrian Emperor, Francis Joseph, dated Vienna, January 27, 1903.

A month before above date the Saxon court had conferred on Louise the title of Countess Montiguoso, while, on her own part, she adopted the fanciful cognomen of Louise of Tuscany.

Of Louise's two remaining brothers, one, Archduke Peter, serves in the Austrian army as Colonel of the Thirty-second Infantry, while Archduke Henry is Master of Horse in the Sixth Bavarian Dragoons.

Only one of Louise's four sisters is married, the oldest, Anna, now Princess Johannes of Hohenlohe-Bartenstein.

The unmarried sisters are Archduchesses Margareta (31 years old), Germana (28 years old), Agnes (22 years old).

Mother Comes of Mentally Tainted Stock

Louise's mother, *née* Princess Alice of Parma, is the only surviving sister of the late Duke Robert, who left twenty children, all living, and of whom eighteen or nineteen are either imbeciles or raving lunatics, the present head of the house, Duke Henry, belonging to the first category of mentally unsound.

Louise's first cousin, Prince Elias of Parma, the seventh son, is accounted sound, but Elias's sister, Zita (the twelfth child), developed maniacal tendencies since her marriage to Archduke Karl Francis Joseph, heir-presumptive to the crown of Austria-Hungary.

Francis Joseph's Autocratic Rule

Louise Formerly in Line of Austrian Succession

Louise was in the line of the Austrian succession until, upon her marriage to the Crown Prince of Saxony (1891), she officially renounced her birthrights.

Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria-Hungary is Louise's grand-uncle as well as chief of the imperial family of Austria, the royal family of Hungary, the Grand-ducal family of Tuscany (now extinct as far as the title goes), and of the Estes, which is the Ducal Line of Modena, extinct in the male line. Finally he is recognized as chief by the ducal family of Parma, descendants of the Spanish Hapsburgs.

Emperor Francis Joseph rules all the Hapsburgs, Austrian, Hungarian, and those of Tuscany, of Este, of Modena and Parma, autocratically, his word being law in the family. Even titles conferred by birth can be taken away by him, as exemplified in the case of Louise and her brother Leopold.

Royal Saxons

As a member of the Austrian imperial family, the Hapsburgs, founded in 883, Louise ranked higher than her husband, the Crown Prince of the petty Kingdom of Saxony, whose claim to the royal title dates from 1806,—a gift of the Emperor Napoleon.

She married Frederick Augustus November 21, 1891, while the latter's uncle reigned as King Albert of Saxony (1873 to 1902).

Louise's father-in-law, up to then known as Prince George, succeeded his brother June 19, 1902.

He was then a widower and his family consisted of:

Princess Mathilde, unmarried,

The Crown Prince Frederick Augustus, husband of Louise,

Princess Marie-Josepha, wife of Archduke Otho of Austria,

Prince Johann George, at that time married to Isabelle of Württemberg, and

Prince Max. The latter subsequently shelved his title and entered the Church July 26, 1896. He is a professor of canonical law and slated for a German bishopric.

At the time of Prince George's ascension, there was also living the late King Albert's widow, Queen Caroline, *née* Princess of Wasa, since dead.

The Marchesa Rapallo, *née* Princess Elizabeth of Saxony, is a sister of the late King George.

Louise and Her Father-in-Law

During King George's short reign, Louise ran away from the Saxon court, end of November, 1902.

On February 11, 1903, divorce was pronounced against her by a special court assembled by King George.

Louise was adjudged the guilty party and deprived of the name and style of Crown Princess of Saxony. As previously (January 27) the Austrian Emperor had forbidden her to use the name and title of Austrian Archduchess and Imperial and royal Princess, Louise would have been nameless but for the rank and title of Countess Montiguoso, conferred upon her by King George.

Louise's Alimony Conditional

At the same time Louise accepted from the court of Saxony a considerable monthly allowance on condition that "she undertake nothing liable to compromise the reigning family, either by criticism or story, either by word, deed or in writing."

Frederick Augustus, King

Upon his father's death, Frederick Augustus succeeded King George October 15, 1904. He is now forty-seven years old, while Louise is forty-two.

The King of Saxony has six children by Louise, three boys and three girls, five born in wedlock, the youngest born without wedlock. The children born in wedlock are:

The present Crown Prince, born 1893.

Frederick Christian, likewise born in 1893.

Ernest, born 1896.

Margaret, born 1900.

And Marie Alix, born 1901.

The youngest Princess of Saxony, so called, Anna Monica, was born by Louise more than six months after she left her husband and nearly three months after her divorce.

Louise desired to retain Anna Monica in her own custody, but though the child's fatherhood is in doubt, to say the least, Frederick Augustus insisted upon the little one's transference to his care.

Allowance Raised and a Further Threat

King Frederick Augustus raised Louise's allowance to \$12,000 per year, "which alimony ceases if the said Countess Montiguoso shall commit, either personally, directly or indirectly, any act in writing or otherwise liable to injure the reputation of King Frederick Augustus or members of the royal family of Saxony, or if the said Countess Montiguoso contributes to any such libellous publication in any manner or form."

The Divorce of Royal Couple Illegal

After divorce was pronounced against her, Louise declined to accept the decree of the court, pronouncing the proceedings illegal on the ground that both she and husband are Catholics and that the Roman Catholic Church, under no circumstances, recognizes divorce. Her protest gained importance from the fact that her marriage to Frederick Augustus was solemnized by the rites of the Roman Catholic Church. The Saxon court, on the other hand, justified its own decision by basing same on a certain civil ceremony entered into by Louise and Frederick Augustus previous

to the church marriage.

Louise Marries a Second Time

When Louise realized in the course of years that Frederick Augustus would not take her back, she changed her mind as to the illegality of her divorce and married, September 25, 1907, Enrico Toselli, an Italian composer and pianist of small reputation.

This marriage was performed civilly. They have one child, a boy, about whose custody the now legally separated parents have instituted several actions in law. The boy has now been allotted to the care of Toselli's mother.

King Did Not Marry Again

King Frederick Augustus, though by the laws of Saxony and Germany allowed to contract a second marriage, has not availed himself of the license, probably in deference to the wishes of the Vatican. At the same time he spurned all of Louise's attempts at reconciliation, the most dramatic of which was her *coup de tête* of December, 1904, when she went to Dresden "to see her children," was arrested at the palace gate and conducted out of the kingdom by high police officials.

Other Royalties Mentioned in This Volume

Louise refers, in her Diary, to the Kaiser as "cousin." If there be any relationship between her and William, it is that imposed by the Saxon marriage, Saxon princes and princesses having frequently intermarried with the royal and princely Hohenzollerns, despite the differences of religion. There are four courts of Saxony despite that of Dresden: Weimar, Meiningen, Altenburg and Coburg and Gotha.

The latter duchy's ruler, Karl Eduard, is of English descent, a son of the late Duke of Albany. Hence, Louise's cousinship with Victoria Melita, sometime Grand Duchess of Hesse, now Grand Duchess Kyril of Russia.

Of course, Louise is closely related to all the Orleans and Bourbons.

Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, who died on the scaffold at Paris, October 16, 1793, she calls her great-grand-aunt and namesake, claiming, at the same time, most of the Kings and princes of France of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as relatives.

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FROM LOUISE'S
DIARY

THE STORY OF LOUISE, CROWN PRINCESS OF SAXONY

CHAPTER I

MOTHERHOOD

A sterile Royal Family once fruitful—Diary true record of self—Long legs of Countess Solms—A child only because he can't help it—Wet nurse to Socialist brat—Royal permit for nursing—Royal negligee talk—A Saxon failing.

1893.

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *February 17,*

I did my duty towards the Saxons. I gave them a Prince. The Royal House ought to be grateful to me:—I am helping to perpetuate it. Who would, if I didn't? My sister-in-law, Princess Mathilde, is an old maid. The other, Maria Josepha, as sterile as Sarah was before she reached the nineties. This applies also to Isabelle, the wife of brother-in-law, John-George. And Prince Max, tired of ballet girls, is about to take the soutane.

There is just one more royal Saxon princess, Elizabeth, and she succeeded in having children

neither with her husband *de jure*, the late Duke of Genoa, nor with her husband-lover, Marquis Rapallo.

Louise, then, is the sole living hope of the royal Saxons that, only 160 years ago, boasted of a sovereign having three hundred and fifty-two children to his credit, among them not a few subsequently accounted geniuses. Augustus, the Physical Strong (1670 to 1733), was the happy father, the *Maréchal de Saxe* one of his numerous gifted offspring.

Alas, since then the House of Wettin has declined not in numbers only.

Poor baby is burdened with ten names in honor of so many ancestors. Why, in addition, they want to call him "Maria" I cannot for the life of me understand, for there never was a Saxon princess or queen that amounted to a row of pins.

I wonder whether they will say the same of me after the crown of the Wettiners descended upon my brow. Those so inclined should consult these papers ere they begin throwing stones, for my Diary is intended to contain my innermost thoughts, my ambitions, my promises for the future, *Myself*, and let no one judge me by what I say other than what is recorded here.

These pages are my Father Confessor. I confess to myself,—what a woman in my position says to members of her family or official and semi-official persons—her servants, so to speak—doesn't signify, to borrow a phrase from my good cousin, the Kaiser Wilhelm.

Father-in-law George tells me to trust no one but him, my husband, and Frederick Augustus's sisters, cousins and aunts, and to rely on prayer only, yet, stubborn as nature made me, I prefer respectable white paper to my sweet relatives.

Up to now my most ambitious literary attempts were intimate letters to my brother Leopold, the "Black Sheep." As I now start in writing letters to myself, it occurs to me that my worse self may be corresponding with my better self, or vice versa. If I was only a poet like Countess Solms, but, dear, no. All real bluestockings are ugly and emaciated. Solms is both, and her legs are as long and as thin as those of Diana, my English hunter.

I think this Diary business will be quite amusing,—at any rate, it will be more so than the conversation of my ladies. Ah, those ladies of the court of Saxony! If they would only talk of anything else but orphans, sisters of charity and ballet girls. The latter always have one foot in Hades, while you can see the wings grow on the backs of the others.

When the von Schoenberg struts in, peacock fashion, and announces "his royal Highness did himself the honor to soil his bib," I sometimes stare at her, not comprehending at the moment, and the fact that she is talking of my baby only gradually comes to mind. Isn't it ridiculous that a little squalling bit of humanity, whom the accident of birth planted in a palace, is royalty first and all the time, and a child only because he can't help it?

As for me, I am a woman and mother first, and my child is an animated lump of flesh and blood—*my* flesh and blood—first and all the time. Of course, when baby came I wanted to nurse it. You should have seen Frederick Augustus's face. If I had proposed to become a wet-nurse to some "socialist brat" he couldn't have been more astonished. Yet my great ancestress, the Empress Maria Theresa, nursed her babies "before a parquet of proletarians," at the theatre and at reviews, and thought nothing of giving the breast to a poor foundling left in the park of Schoenbrunn.

Frederick Augustus recovered his speech after a while—though he never says anything that would seem to require reflection, he always acts the deep thinker. "Louise," he mumbled reproachfully,— "what will his Majesty say?"

"I thought you were the father of the child," I remarked innocently.

"No levity where the King is concerned," he corrected poor me. "You know very well that for an act of this kind a royal permit must be previously obtained."

Followed a long pause to give his mental apparatus time to think some more. Then: "And, besides, it will hurt your figure."

"Augusta Victoria" (the German Empress) "nursed half a dozen children, and her *décolleté* is still much admired," I insisted.

Frederick Augustus paid no attention to this argument. "Anyhow, I don't want the doctors to examine your breast daily," he said with an air of mixed sentimentality and brusqueness.

These were not his own words, though. My husband, not content with calling a spade a spade, invariably uses the nastiest terms in the dictionary of debauchery. When he tells me of his love adventures before marriage it's always "I bagged that girl," or "I made something tender out of her," just as a hunter talks of game or a leg of venison.

He doesn't want to be rude; he is so without knowing it. His indelicacy would be astounding in a man born on the steps of the throne, if the Princes of this royal house were not all inclined that way.

Two weeks after my accouchement George and Isabelle called. Though brother and sister-in-law, we are not at all on terms of intimacy. Frederick Augustus made some remarks of a personal nature that sent all the blood to my head; Isabelle seemed to enjoy my discomfort, but George

had the decency to go to the window and comment on the dirty boots of a guard lieutenant just entering the courtyard. Frederick Augustus thought he had made a hit with Isabelle and applauded his own effort with a loud guffaw, while pounding his thighs, which seems to give him particular satisfaction.

CHAPTER II

THE SWEET FAMILY

Husband loving, but family nasty—Money considerations—Brutal caresses in public—Pests in the family—Awful serenity—Meddle with angels' or devils' affairs—Father-in-law's gritty kiss.

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *February 24,*

1893.

I have been married some fifteen months and I love my husband. He is kind, not too inquisitive and passionate. I have better claims to domestic happiness than most of my royal sisters on or near the thrones of Europe. Of course when I married into the Saxon royal family I expected to be treated with ill-concealed enmity. Wasn't I young and handsome? Reason enough for the old maids and childless wives, my new sweet relatives, to detest me.

Wasn't I poor? I brought little with me and my presence entailed a perpetual expense. Now in royal families money is everything, or nearly so, and the newcomer that eats but doesn't increase the family fortune is regarded as an interloper.

If I hadn't "*made good*," that is if, in due time, I hadn't become a mother, my position among the purse-proud, rapacious and narrow-minded Wettiners would have become wellnigh intolerable. But I proved myself a *Holstein*. I rose superior to Queen Carola, who never had a child, and to Maria, Mathilda, Isabelle and Elizabeth, who either couldn't or didn't. But, to my mind, acting the *cow* for the benefit of the race did not invite stable manners.

I wasn't used to them. They hadn't figured in the dreams of my girlhood. I thought love less robust. I didn't expect to be squeezed before my ladies. Even the best beloved husband shouldn't take liberties with his wife's waist in the parlor.

And Frederick Augustus's negligee talk is no less offensive than his manner of laying loving hands on my person. As a rule, he treats me like a third-row dancing girl that goes to petition the manager for a place nearer the footlights. There is no limit to his familiarities or to the license of his conversation. "*Fine wench*" is a term of affection he likes to bestow on his future queen; indeed, one of the less gross. He has the weakness to like epithets that, I am told, gentlemen sometimes use in their clubs, but never towards a mistress they half-way respect.

My father-in-law, Prince George, is a pest of another kind. While Frederick Augustus is jovial and rude, George is rude and serene of a serenity that would make a Grand Inquisitor look gay.

One of my famous ancestresses, the Princess-Palatine, sister-in-law of Louis the Fourteenth, once boxed the Dauphin's ears for a trick he played on her, by putting his upright thumb in the centre of an armchair which her royal highness meant to sit on.

Whenever I behold George's funereal visage, I long to repeat the Dauphin's undignified offense. I would like to see this royal parcel of melancholy jump and dance; change that ever-frowning and mournful aspect of his. Indeed, I would like to treat him to one of the anecdotes that made the Duchess de Berri explode with laughter.

Frederick Augustus lives in deadly fear of him, and never gets his hair cut without first considering whether his father will approve or not. George isn't happy unless he renders other people unhappy. I actually believe he would rather meddle with the angels' or devils' affairs than say his prayers, though he is a bigot of the most advanced stripe.

Sometimes when the itch for meddling has hold of him, he cites all the married princes of the royal house and lectures them on the wickedness of having no children, winding up by commanding each one to explain, in detail, his failure to have offspring.

Of course, these gentlemen put the blame on their wives, whereupon the ladies are forthwith summoned to be threatened and cajoled.

Prince George had the great goodness to approve of my baby and to congratulate me, also to set me up as an example for Isabelle. When I return to Dresden I shall be made Colonel of Horse.

Twice has George kissed me,—upon my arrival in Saxony and five days after the birth of my child. It felt like a piece of gritty ice rubbing against my forehead.

CHAPTER III

WEeping WILLOW—EMBLEM ROYAL

A pious fraud—Theresa Mayer—Character of the Queen—Mopishness rampant.

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *March 1, 1893.*

Prince Max came unexpectedly. He is studying for the priesthood and looks more sour than his father even. I was in bed, nursing a sick headache, but presuming upon his future clerical dignity, he walked in without ceremony and sat down on a chair near my bed. Then he raised his hands in prayer and announced that he had come to assist in my devotions.

"Forget that I am your brother-in-law and cousin," he said; "tell me what's in your heart, Louise, and I will pray to the good God for thee."

"Don't trouble yourself," I replied, "I have a court chaplain charged with these affairs. Rather tell me about the latest comic opera."

"Comic opera!" he stammered. "You don't intend to go to such worldly amusements now that you are a mother?"

"Of course I do. The very day I return to Dresden I will take a look at your girl."

"My—what?" gasped Max.

"Your Theresa—Theresa Mayer. I understand she made a great hit in the *Geisha*, and everybody approves of your taste, Max."

Max turned red, then green, and I thought to myself what a fool I was. He's a favorite with the King and Queen, and my father-in-law believes every word he says.

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *March 10,*

1893.

Queen Carola is a good soul though she doesn't dare call her soul her own. I never heard her say "*peep*" in the presence of his Majesty. She looks forlorn and frightened when King Albert is around.

I like her better since I am a mother, for she loves baby. Yes, though she is a Queen, I saw her actually smile at the child once or twice.

Poor woman, the point of her nose is always red, and, like Father-in-law George, she believes weeping willow the only fit emblem for royalty. The look of the whipped dog is always in her weak eyes.

I am too young and—they *do* say—too frivolous to stand so much mopishness. These mustard-pots, sedate, grave, wan and long-faced, make me mad. I don't know what to say,—all I can do is try to hide my "un-princess-like" cheerfulness when they are around.

I wish I had an ounce or so of diplomacy in my composition. It might enable me to sympathize with the fancied troubles of the Queen and Prince George, but I am incorrigible.

CHAPTER IV

MY UNPLEASANT YOUTH

Father hard to get along with—Royal imaginations—Kings cursing other kings—Poverty and pretense—Piety that makes children suffer—Up at five to pray on cold stones—Chilblains and prayer.

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *March 11,*

1893.

It occurs to me that, if this is intended as a record of my life—somewhat after the fashion of the *Margravine* of Bayreuth's Memoirs—I ought to tell about my girlhood.

Let me admit at once that my marriage to the Crown Prince of Saxony was, politically speaking, a stroke of good luck. My father, the Grand-duke of Tuscany, had been deprived of land and crown ten years before I was born, and, though he likes to pose as a sovereign, he is, as a matter of fact, a mere private gentleman of limited resources, whom the head of the family, the Austrian Emperor, may coax or browbeat at his sweet pleasure. If papa had been able to save his thronelet, I have no doubt he would be a most agreeable man, open-handed and eager to enjoy life, but instead of making the best of a situation over which he has no control, he is forever

fretting about his lost dignities and about "his dear people" that don't care a snap for his love and affection. This makes him a trying person to get along with,—mention a king or prince in the full enjoyment of power, and father gets melancholy and calls Victor Emanuel, the second of his name, a brigand.

He seldom or never visits his *confrères* in the capitals of Europe, but when I was a girl our gloomy palace at Salzburg saw much of the ghosts of decaying royalty. The Dukes of Modena and Parma, the King of Hanover, the *Kurfurst* of Hesse, the King of Naples and other monarchs and toy-monarchs that were handed their walking papers by sovereigns mightier than themselves, visited us off and on, filling the air with lamentations and cursing their fate.

And, like papa, all these *ex'és* are ready to fly out of their very skins the moment they notice the smallest breach of etiquette concerning their august selves. If they had the power, the Imperial Highnesses would execute any man that called them "Royal Highness," while the Royal Highnesses would be pleased to send to the gallows persons addressing them as "Highness" only.

And papa has other troubles, and the greatest of them, lack of money. Poverty in private life must be hard enough, but a poor king, obliged to keep up the pretense of a court, is to be pitied indeed.

Add to what I have said, father's share of domestic unhappiness. Mother is a Bourbon of Parma, serious-minded and hard like my father-in-law, and almost as much of a religious fanatic.

Oh, how we children suffered by the piety of our mother. There were eight of us, myself the oldest of five girls, and seven years older than my sister Anna. Yet this baby, as soon as she could walk, was obliged to rise, like myself, at five o'clock summer and winter to go to the chapel and pray. The chapel was lighted only by a few wax candles and, of course, was unheated like the corridors of the palace. And like them it was paved with stones. Many a chilblain I carried away from kneeling on those granite flags.

And the stupidity of the thing! Instead of saying our prayers we murmured and protested, and as soon as we were old enough we slipped portions of novels in our prayer-books, which we read while mass was said. That trick was not unfraught with danger though, for mother's spies were always after us, and the bad light made reading difficult.

I am sure that if mother had found us out, she would have whipped us within an inch of our lives.

CHAPTER V

A FIERCE DISCIPLINARIAN

Diamonds used to punish children—Face object of attacks—Grunting and snorting at the royal table—Blood flowing at dinner—My brother jumps out of a window.

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *April 1, 1893.*

Nothing of consequence happened since my last entry, and I continue the story of my girlhood.

Her Imperial Highness, my pious mother, had a terrible way of punishing her children. The face of the culprit was invariably the object of her attacks. She hit us with the flat of her bony hand, rendered more terrible by innumerable rings. The sharp diamonds cut into the flesh and usually made the blood flow freely.

The court chaplain at Salzburg was a peasant's boy without manners or breeding of any kind. While the least violation of etiquette or politeness on the children's part was punished by a box on the ear, or by withholding the next meal, mother overlooked the swinishness of the chaplain simply because he wore a black coat.

One of the chaplain's most offensive habits was to grunt and snort when eating. On one occasion my brother Leopold gave a somewhat exaggerated imitation of these disgusting practices at table, whereupon mother, blind with fury, for she thought a priest could do no wrong, struck Leopold in the face, causing the blood to gush from his lacerated cheek.

Father immediately rose from table and savagely turning upon mother said, "Understand, Madame, that as a sovereign and head of the family I will have no one punished in my presence. If I think punishment necessary, I will inflict it myself in a dignified way."

Mother immediately began to cry. She always had a flood of tears ready when father offered the slightest reprimand. Afterwards she upbraided father and us, the children. If it were not for her incessant prayers, she said, and for the Christian life she was leading, God would have destroyed the Tuscans long ago, and she wasn't sure that either of us would attain Paradise except for her intercession with the Almighty.

This and similar scenes and incidents disgusted me with religion early in life. Myself and all my brothers and sisters hated the very sight of the court chaplain who licked our mother's boots, while heaping punishments and indignities upon us.

At one time my brother Leopold didn't know his catechism. "I will teach your Imperial Highness to skip your lessons," said the court chaplain. "Kneel before me and read the passage over ten times as a punishment."

Leopold promptly answered: "I won't."

"Yes, you will, Imperial Highness, for such are my orders," cried the court chaplain.

Leopold said doggedly, "I kneel before the altar and before the Emperor, if he demands it, not before such as you."

"Suppose I call on your Imperial Highness's mother and ask her to forbid you to mount a horse for a month or so?" queried our tormentor.

Horseback riding was Leopold's chief pleasure, and the chaplain had no sooner launched his threat, when Leopold opened the window and apparently jumped out. As the school-room was situated in the third story, the teacher thought his pupil dead on the pavement below, but Leopold was merely hanging on to the stone coping and shutters. That gave him the whip hand over the teacher. "I will let go if you don't promise not to inform mother," demanded the twelve-year-old boy.

"I promise, only come in," moaned the teacher.

"Promise furthermore there shall be no punishment whatever for what I did and said."

"None whatever, your Imperial Highness."

"Swear it on the cross."

The chaplain did as ordered and Leopold crawled back to safety.

Leopold is a good deal like me, and has been in hot water more or less all his life.

When I was a girl of fifteen, he defended my honor at the risk of the fearful punishments my mother had in store for those children that wouldn't buckle down to the chaplain, but that is so sad a chapter of my girlhood days I cannot bring myself to put it down today.

CHAPTER VI

LEOPOLD DEFENDS MY HONOR AT HIS PERIL

Punished for objecting to familiarities—Awful names I was called—Locked in the room with wicked teacher—Defend myself with burning lamp—My brother nearly kills my would-be assailant.

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *April 2, 1893.*

I want to finish with evil recollections. Maybe I will be able to forget them, when I have done with this narrative. My mother, as pointed out, had more confidence in our rascally court chaplain than in her own children, and was far more concerned about the chaplain's dignity than ours. She never hesitated to doubt her children's veracity, but regarded all the chaplain said as gospel truth.

About two weeks before Easter, 1885, the time when I was just budding into young womanhood, the chaplain began to pay me a great deal of attention. The lessons he gave me to learn were insignificant compared with those of my brothers and sisters, and it mattered not whether I came to school prepared or otherwise. The strict disciplinarian had all of a sudden turned lenient. He began to pat my hair, to give me friendly taps on the shoulder, and never took his eyes off me. I was too young and innocent to see the true significance of his strange behavior, but I woke up suddenly and ran crying to my mother, telling her what had happened.

"I won't take another lesson from that man, unless my lady-in-waiting is present," I sobbed.

"You are a malicious, lying, low-minded creature," hissed my mother, at the same time striking me in the face with her big diamonds. "It's mortal sin to throw suspicion on so holy a man, and I will not have him watched."

I ran out of mother's room crying, intending to go to papa, but met the boys in the corridor, who told me that father had just departed for the chase. Then I took Leopold aside and told him everything. He was half-mad with rage and was hardly able to articulate when he rushed to mother's room demanding protection for me.

"I will protect the holy man instead," answered my fanatic mother. "Louise shall be locked in the room with the chaplain while she has her lesson." And my mother actually carried out that wicked design inspired by fanaticism.

Locked in a room with me, the chaplain was sweetness itself, but for a while at least remained at a distance. When he attempted to approach me, I seized the burning kerosene lamp, as Leopold had advised.

"One step more," I cried excitedly, "and I will throw the lamp in your face."

The coward stood still in his tracks, and began whispering to me in a hoarse voice things I hardly understood, but that nevertheless wounded me to the quick. I kept my hand at the burning lamp during the whole hour and was ready to faint when the fiend at last left me.

As the door opened, I saw Leopold standing outside, an enormous dog whip in hand. Without a word he applied the whip to the chaplain's broad face, lashing him right and left. The scoundrel offered no resistance, but fled like the dog he was, Leopold after him through the long corridors, upstairs and downstairs, through the picture gallery and the state apartments, lashing him as he ran, the two of them filling the palace with cries of rage and pain. Only the fact that Leopold stumbled over a footstool, enabled the chaplain to reach his room alive, where he barricaded himself.

CHAPTER VII

PRINCES AND PRINCESSES DANCE TO THE TUNE OF THE WHIP

The result shows in the character of rulers—Why English kings and princes are superior to the Continental kind—Leopold's awful revenge—Mother acts the tigress—Her mailed fist—"I forbid Your Imperial Highness to see that dog."

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *April 21, 1893.*

If my Diary ever fell into plebeian hands, I suppose such stories as the above would be branded as rank exaggerations.

A Queen endangering life and health of her children by a form of punishment otherwise known only in the prize ring.

An Imperial Highness using her diamonds to graft scars on the cheeks of a little girl!

Royal children beaten worse than dogs, deprived of sleep, subjected to cold and damp and, withal, given over, bound hand and foot, so to speak, to the tender mercies of low-minded, unworthy, and even dangerous persons without manners or education.

And, to cap the climax, a Royal maid in the first blush of budding womanhood grossly repulsed and physically attacked when she appeals to her mother for protection; that child locked in a room with her would-be ravisher and obliged to defend her honor by a threat of murder.

Only the uninitiated—men and women living outside the pale of royal courts—will deem such things impossible. Let me tell these happy ignoramuses that all through the nineteenth century the princes and princesses of Europe were brought up to the tune of the whip and of physical and mental humiliation. It was the fashion.

The only eminent monarch of the immediate past—Frederick the Great—was all but flayed alive by his father when a boy and young man,—emulate the second King of Prussia's brutalities and your offspring will be destined for greatness, argued princes.

The first Emperor William of Germany had a gentle mother, my famous namesake; he was always a gentleman. The Russian Czars, Paul, Nicholas I, and Alexander III, were brought up with the knout, their preceptors used the boys at their sweet pleasure. The first turned out a madman; the second a brute; the third his people's executioner.

Czar Paul would run a mile to cane a soldier who had a speck of dust on his boots. My grand-uncle, Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria, sometimes travels tens of miles to box the ears of a member of his family.

Francis Joseph had a cruel bringing up.

At the Royal Library in Berlin I saw the manuscript of *Les Mémoires de ma vie: la princesse de Prusse, Frederice Sophie Wilhelmine, qui épousa le Margrave de Bayreuth*,—the original, unedited save by the corrections of the authoress. A good many passages of this "most terrible indictment of royalty" reminded me of home. There is even a parallel, or a near-parallel, of my own case just recorded. The Princess Wilhelmina's all-powerful governess was Madame Leti, who pummelled the child "as if she had been her mother." This Leti was undoubtedly a Sadist; to inflict torture, to practice refined cruelties was a joy to her. Not content with whipping the little girl, she added, shortly before her dismissal, some poisonous matter to Wilhelmina's wash water "that gnawed the skin and made my face all coppery and inflamed my eyes." This species of wickedness, at last, resulted in the discharge of Leti, "but she decided to leave me a few souvenirs in the shape of fisticuffs and kicks. She had told my mother that I was suffering from nose bleed and punched my nose whenever she was unobserved. During the last week of her stay at the palace I sometimes bled like an ox, and my arms and legs were blue, green and yellow from her kicks and cuffs. I am sure if she could have broken my legs with impunity, she would not have hesitated a moment to do so."

History and the court gossip of the day afford plenty of precedents for what happened to me and

my brothers and sisters in Salzburg. Indeed, Prince Albert, Consort of the late Queen Victoria, was the only royal father of the first half of the century that used the rod in moderation. To my mind that is one of the reasons why English kings and princes are so far superior to the Continental kind.

But to return to Salzburg.

Leopold had it all his own way for a quarter of an hour, as none of the servants would interfere in favor of the hated chaplain and mother was engaged in her oratory in a far away part of the castle. So my brother kicked in the door and went for the cowering brute again, raining stripes on every part of his bloated body, alternately using the whip and the whip-end. Undoubtedly Leopold would have killed him then and there if his boy's strength had not given out. He left him more dead than alive, bleeding and moaning.

I will never forget the spectacle when Leopold came down the stairs after leaving the chaplain's room. I and my brothers and sisters were huddled together behind our ladies in the blue ante-chamber. A dozen or more lackeys stood in the corridor, whispering.

Leopold's face was deathly pale as he descended the stairs, and blood was dripping from his whip, reddening the white linen runners protecting the carpet. He wore his army uniform, that should have saved him from violence at any rate. At that moment I prayed my sincerest that father would come home. I would have thrown myself on my knees and told everything, servants or no servants. But mother came instead.

She was fully informed and she sprang upon poor Leopold like a tigress, knocking him from one end of the corridor to the other with her diamond- mailed fist. It was terrible, and all of us children cried aloud with terror. But the more we cried and the more we begged for mercy, the harder were the blows mother rained upon poor Leopold's face and head. His blood spattered over the white enameled banisters and doors until finally he was dragged out of my mother's clutches by an old footman who placed his broad back between the Imperial Highness and her victim.

Now, it was the rule in our house that the whipped child had to ask our mother's forgiveness for putting her to the trouble of wielding the terrible back of her hand.

Six weeks Leopold stayed at Salzburg after the scene described, and daily my mother urged him to beg her forgiveness. The boy stood stockstill on these occasions, never twitching a muscle of his face and never saying a word in reply. During all these six weeks he waited on mother morning, noon and night, according to ceremony, but never a word escaped him, never did he look in her direction unless actually forced to do so. He played the deaf and dumb to perfection.

Father must have thought that Leopold got enough punishment, for he never mentioned the matter to him and forbade the servants to even allude to the court chaplain. Mother, on her part, placed the chaplain in charge of two skilled surgeons and sent every little while to inquire how he was doing.

On the third day she said to my father at table, that she was going to pay a visit to the court chaplain.

"I forbid your Imperial Highness to see that dog," said my father in an icy voice that brooked no reply. "I will have his carcass thrown out of here as soon as his condition permits."

That was the only time I heard father speak like a sovereign and man.

That Leopold nearly killed the scoundrel, as he promised to do, is evident from the fact that the court chaplain lay in the castle three weeks before he could be transported to a monastery. Some monks—for none of the servants would lend a helping hand—carried him away by night and none of the children ever saw or heard of our tormentor again.

The only sorry reminder of the episode is the estrangement of Leopold and our mother. Though mother tried her hardest to win back the boy's confidence and affection, he remained an iceberg towards her, ceremonious but cold, polite but wholly indifferent.

CHAPTER VIII

PLANNING TO GET A HUSBAND FOR ME

Dissecting possible wooers at Vienna—Royalty after money, not character—"He is a Cohen, not a Coburg"—Prince who looked like a Jew counter-jumper in his Sunday best—Balkan princes tabooed by Francis Joseph—A good time for the girls—Army men commanded to attend us.

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *April 25, 1893.*

A change of scene. I was eighteen and my parents were anxious to get a husband for me. Royalty marries off its princes at an early age to keep them out of mischief; its princesses as soon as a profitable suitor turns up or can be secured by politics, diplomacy, the exercise of parental wits

or the powerful influence of the head of the House.

Sister Anna, now Princess John of Hohenlohe, myself and mother were invited to Vienna. It was my introduction to royal pomp and circumstance. The *Hofburg*, our town lodging, seemed to me the first and also the last cry in sumptuousness—all that was beautiful and expensive in days gone by is there, and all that is new and desirable is there, too; Schoenbrunn, the Imperial summer residence, is a dream of loveliness wedded to grandeur. Between the Emperor and my mother and between her and the numerous archduchesses and archdukes every second word uttered referred to me as the possible wife of someone or another. And that someone was well dissected as to fortune, success in life and political exigencies.

Whether he was good-looking or a monkey in face and figure mattered not. Health, good character, uprightness didn't count.

Has he expectations for gaining a throne? Will he be wise enough to retain that throne? What kind of an establishment will he be able to set up? How long may his parents live, hanging on to the family fortune?—These were the only considerations deemed worthy of discussion.

Three or four of the archduchesses seemed to be acting as marriage brokers for Ferdinand, just elected hereditary prince of Bulgaria, whose mother, Princess Clementine, a daughter of the dethroned King Louis Philippe of France, was reputed to be rolling in gold.

Leopold irreverently called Ferdinand's partisans "*Fillons*" after famous "*La Fillon*," who supplied the harem of our jolly ancestor, the Regent of France, Duke of Orleans, and he insisted that Ferdinand was a *Cohen*, not a Coburg. As a matter of fact, Ferdinand's great fortune is derived from a Kohary, which is Hungarian for Cohen. The original Kohary was a cattle-dealer, who supplied the armies of the Allies during the Napoleonic wars. In this way he accumulated so much wealth that an impoverished Coburg prince fell in love with his daughter and made her his wife, after she exchanged the name of Rebecca for Antonie and the Mosaic faith for that of Rome.

Young and proud and flippant as I was, Leopold's talk filled me with hearty contempt for the "Coburger" long before we were introduced. And as to his ambassador, who was forever dancing attendance upon me, I hated him. Yet the Imperial "*Fillons*" kept up their clatter, and one fine morning Prince Ferdinand was announced.

He wasn't half bad looking, but struck me as too much of a mother's-boy. Princess Clementine seemed to decide everything for him. Anyhow, I wouldn't have him and he marched off again.

I next reviewed, as another Balkan matrimonial possibility, Prince Danilo of Montenegro, a small, thin person, looking like a Jew counter-jumper in holiday dress—Vienna "store-clothes."

Danilo spoke the worst *table d'hôte* French I ever heard in my life, and I told mother I would rather marry a rich banker than this crowned idiot. For once she agreed with me and said his father was only a "mutton-thief," anyhow.

Finally there was talk of King Alexander of Serbia, six years younger than I. Queen Natalie, who a few days ago celebrated one of her several reunions with ex-King Milan, spoke feelingly of her "Sasha" to mother, lauding him as the best of sons and the most promising of sovereigns, but the oft-divorced Majesty was less communicative when mother asked how many millions she would pass over to Alexander on his marriage day. That settled "Sasha's" ambitions as far as my hand was concerned. Marry a Balkan King and the *née* Keshko holding the purse-strings! Not for my father's daughter! I didn't want to marry into a Russian Colonel's family, anyhow. I believe Queen Natalie's father was a colonel, or was he only a lieutenant-colonel?

These marriage negotiations aside, Anna and myself had a mighty good time in Vienna (I forgot to say that Emperor Francis Joseph agreed with me that Danilo and Alexander were quite impossible and that henceforth Balkan marriages should be taboo).

"I have ordered a dozen young officers to report for tonight's dancing," said my Imperial uncle one evening. "Select from among them your tennis partners, girls." Baron Cambroy of the Guards was my choice, and a mighty handsome fellow he is. He seemed pleased when I commanded him to tennis duty every afternoon during our stay. He is tall and spare in appearance and I might have fallen in love with him sooner, but for his dark skin. I am an Italian and, by way of contrast, prefer blondes to any other sort of man.

Anna, myself and our ladies bicycled to the tennis court every afternoon, and on our way back to the castle were escorted by the Baron and the other officers.

Trust a girl with a dress reaching an inch below her knees to find out scandals! On the second day after our meeting with the Baron, Anna told me that he was the lover of Draga Maschin, lady-in-waiting to Queen Natalie of Serbia.^[4]

Draga was in attendance upon Queen Natalie when she called on us, a beautiful girl, somewhat too full-bosomed for an unmarried one, like my great-aunt, Catharine, who became the wife of that upstart, Jerome Napoleon. At home we have her picture, and mother, who was rather skinny as a girl, never failed to point out that it was painted before Queen Catharine's marriage, despite her voluptuous bust.

If my Baron was really Draga's beloved, that would more than half explain mother's puzzle.

FOOTNOTES:

- [4] The same who afterwards became the Queen of King Alexander of Servia and eventually the cause of his death and of the extinction of the Obrenovitsch dynasty. Alexander and Draga were both slaughtered in their beds May 29, 1903, ten years after the above was written.

CHAPTER IX

LOVE-MAKING

The fascinating Baron—The man's audacity—Putting the question boldly—Real love-making—*Risqué* stories for royalty.

CASTLE WACHWITZ, *May 1, 1893.*

I am in love but, like a prudent virgin, I admitted the fact to myself only shortly before we departed for Salzburg. After I put several hundred miles between me and my fascinating Baron, all's well again.

My first love, and it was the man's audacity that won the day!

Imagine an Imperial Highness, decidedly attractive, eighteen, and no tigress by any means, wheeling at the side of a mere lieutenant who has nothing but his pay to bless himself with and nothing but good looks to recommend him. And, as before stated, he wasn't even my style.

Anna pedalled ahead some twenty-five paces; our ladies wheezed and snorted that many behind. This devil of a lieutenant took a chance.

"Imperial Highness," he commenced, "I wager you don't know what love is."

It was the one theme I was aching for, scenting, as I did, the odor of forbidden things. Never before had I the opportunity.

"R-e-a-l love," he insisted.

"Do you blame me?" I asked, vixen-like. "Would be a poor specimen of Guard officer who didn't know more about real love than a mere girl of eighteen and a princess at that."

"Will your Imperial Highness allow me to explain?" This, oh so insinuatingly, from the gay seducer.

"Why not?" I asked, with the air of a *roué* and hating myself for blushing like a poppy—I felt it.

"Charmed to enlighten you—with your Imperial Highness's permission," whispered the Baron, his knee crowding mine as he drew nearer on his wheel.

"Explain away."

"Not until I have your Imperial Highness's express command and your promise not to get angry if I should offend."

Anna, always an *enfant terrible* and invariably in the way, was waiting for us in the shadow of a tree and now rode by the Baron's side. She had evidently heard part of our conversation.

"Permission and pardon granted beforehand," she cried. "Go ahead."

The Baron looked at me, and not to be outdone by the parcel of impudence in short petticoats, I said carelessly: "Oh, tell. I command."

The Baron began to stroke his moustache and then related a story of Napoleon and our ancestress Marie Louise, the Austrian Archduchess, not found in school books.

On the day before her entry into Paris, he said, and when they were destined to meet for the first time, Napoleon waylaid his bride-to-be at Courcelles and without ceremony entered her carriage. They rushed past villages, through towns *en fête* and at last, at nine o'clock in the evening, reached the palace of Compiègne. There the Emperor cut short the addresses of welcome, presentations and compliments, and taking Marie Louise by the hand conducted her to his private apartments. Next morning they had breakfast in bed. The marriage ceremony took place a few days later.

"That's love," said the Baron, shooting significant glances at me.

"Henry *Quatre* did the same to Marie de Medici—an Italian like you, Imperial Highness."

Anna didn't know what to make of it, and as for me, my tongue stuck to the roof of my mouth.

The impudent fellow seems to have misinterpreted our silence, for, brazen like the *Duc de*

Richelieu, who boasted of sleeping in the beds of queens, he continued:

"Catharine the Great, too, knew what love was. One fine afternoon when she wasn't a day older than you, Imperial Highness, she looked out of the window of her room at Castle Peterhof. In the garden below a sentinel, very handsome, very Herculean, very brave, was pacing up and down. Catharine, then Imperial Grand-duchess and only just married, made a sign to the soldier. The giant, abandoning his rifle, jumped below the window and Catharine jumped onto his shoulders from the second story.

"That's real love," concluded the Baron.

Anna got frightened and fled down the avenue, but I had the weakness to remain at the Baron's side until we reached the palace.

Alas, Frederick Augustus wasn't as good a talker as the Baron.



**FREDERICK AUGUSTUS, REIGNING KING OF
SAXONY**
Louise's Ex-Husband

CHAPTER X

MY POPULARITY RENDERS GEORGE DYSPEPTIC

The Cudgel-Majesty—Prince George's intrigues—No four-horse coach for Princess
—Popular demonstration in my favor—"All-highest" displeasure.

DRESDEN, *September 1,*

1893.

I haven't lived up to my promise to keep a daily record, or even a weekly one. Those tales of my girlhood days disgusted me with diary keeping as far as my early experiences at home went and I reflected that many of the subsequent happenings in my life might be safer in the shrine of memory, than spread over the pages of a blank-book, even though no one sees it and I carry its golden key on a chain around my neck.

We are back in the capital now and things are moving. Great doings had been planned for our reception, for the re-entry of the little prince, my baby, and his mother who is expected to give another child to Saxony at the end of the year. Two babies in one year! I am going to beat the German Empress, and if Wilhelm doesn't send me a medal I will cut him dead the next time I see him!

Well, about that reception. Flags, triumphal arches, speeches by the burgo-master, white-robed

virgins at the station and all that sort of thing!

But Father-in-law George said "no." Anything that gives joy to others goes against his royal grain, gives him politico-economic dyspepsia. He doesn't want me to be popular,—neither me, nor Frederick Augustus, nor the baby.

George will be the next king, and if the Dresdeners or the Saxons want to "*Hoch the King*," they must "*Hoch*" George. They MUST. "It's their damned duty," says George the Pious, who never blasphemes on his own account, but allows himself some license concerning his subjects. His attitude recalls the story told of Frederick William the First of Prussia, whose appearance on the streets of Berlin used to cause passers-by to run to save their back. Upon one occasion His Majesty caught one of these fugitives, and whacking him over the head with his Spanish reed, cried angrily: "What do you want to run away from me for?"

"Because I'm afraid of your Royal Majesty," stuttered the poor devil.

"Afraid?" thundered Frederick William, giving the fellow another whack with his cane. "Afraid?"—the beating continuing—"when I, your King, commanded you to love me. Love me, you miserable coward, love God's Anointed." And the loving Majesty broke his cane on the unloving subject's back.

Two days before our arrival Prince George sent his adjutant, Baron de Metsch-Reichenbeck, to the Mayor of Dresden, stopping all reception arrangements contemplated.

To have children was a mere picnic to Her Imperial Highness, lied George's messenger,—if the physicians hadn't used chloroform I would have perished with the torture. Ovations intended as a sort of reward or recognition of my services to the country, then, would be entirely out of place, and must not be thought of.

The municipality thereupon officially abandoned preparations. I was a little vexed when I first heard about George's meanness, yet again felt tickled that he went out of his way to intrigue against me, the despised little princess of a House that ceased to reign. And I had an idea that the Dresdeners would give us a good welcome anyhow.

I had contemplated ordering my special train to leave in the early morning or at noon, but the Ministry of Railways informed me that it was impossible to accommodate me at the hours mentioned.

"We will take the ordinary express, then, and will be in Dresden at four in the afternoon," I suggested.

"According to the new schedule, the express doesn't stop in Dresden," protested Frederick Augustus.

"We will command it to stop," I cried.

Frederick Augustus looked at me as if I had asked him to borrow twenty marks from the Kaiser. "For God's sake!" he cried, "don't you know what happened to John the other day?"

I confessed my ignorance.

"Well," said Frederick Augustus, "John ordered the Continental express to pick him up at his garrison, and he had no sooner arrived in Dresden than he was commanded by the King to appear before him. His Majesty walked all over John, accusing him of 'interfering with international traffic' and forbidding him to issue another order of that character."

"Pshaw!" I said, "John is merely a childless princeling. I am the mother of Saxony's future king. The regeneration, the perpetuation of your race depends on me."

It was a mere waste of breath, for at that moment came a telegram, announcing that our special was billed to leave at 3:30, getting us to Dresden at half-past five—King's orders.

"Did you command the *Daumont* coach-and-four to meet us at the station?" I asked.

"My dear child, you are dreaming," replied Frederick Augustus. "The State carriages are the property of the Crown and we don't own a four-horse team in Dresden. They will send the ordinary royal carriage, I suppose."

I was mad enough to wish my husband's family to Hades, the whole lot of them, but the people of Dresden took revenge in hand and dealt most liberally. Of course, having fixed our arrival at a late and unusual hour, George expected there would be no one to welcome us, but the great concourse of people that actually assembled at the station and in the adjacent streets, lining them up to the palace gates, was tremendous instead.

One more disappointment. George had sent an inconspicuous, narrow *coupé* to the station,—the Dresdeners shouldn't see more than the point of my nose. I saw through his scheme the moment I clapped eyes on that mouse-trap of a vehicle standing at the curb.

And then I remembered the brilliant stagecraft of August the Physical Strong—he of the three hundred and fifty-two—and how he always managed to focus everybody's eyes on himself. And I stood stockstill on the broad, red-carpeted terrace when I walked out of the waiting room and held up my baby in the face of the multitude. You could hear the "*Hochs*" and Hurrahs all over

town, they said. Hats flew in the air, handkerchiefs waved, flags were thrust out of the windows of the houses.

"What are you doing, Imperial Highness?" whispered *Fräulein von Schoenberg*, my lady-in-waiting.

"Never mind, I will carry the baby to the carriage," I answered curtly.

"But the King and Prince George will be angry,—everything will be reported to them."

"I sincerely hope it will," I said.

And before I entered that petty *souricière* of a royal coach, I danced the baby above my head time and again, giving everybody a chance to see him. And as I stood there in the midst of this tumult of applause, this waving sea of good-will, this thunder of jubilation, I felt proud and happy as I never did before. And when the thought struck me how mad George would feel about it all, I had to laugh outright.

I was still grinning to myself when I heard Frederick Augustus's troubled voice: "Get in, what are you standing around here for?"—These manifestations of popularity spelt "all-highest" displeasure to him, poor noodle. He anticipated the scene at the palace, George fuming and charging "play to the gallery," the Queen in tears, the King threatening to banish us from Dresden.

"Be it so," I said to myself, "we might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb." And I refused to enter the carriage until I had waved and smiled profound thanks to everybody in the square and in the windows and on the balconies of the surrounding houses.

I saw the Master of Horse address the coachman and immediately divined his purpose. So I pulled at the rope and commanded the coachman to drive slowly. I said it in my most imperious manner, and the Master of Horse dared not give the counter order with which Prince George had charged him. Poor man, his failure to subordinate my will to his, or George's, cost him his job.

And so we made our royal entry into Dresden amid popular rejoicings. I glued my face to the carriage window and smiled and smiled and showed the baby to everyone who asked for the boon.

Baby took it all in a most dignified fashion. He neither squalled nor kicked, but seemed to enjoy the homage paid him.

When we reached the palace there was another big crowd of well-wishers, who shouted themselves hoarse for Louise and the baby, and, malicious thing that I am, I noticed with pleasure that it all happened under George's windows.

"This will give father-in-law jaundice," said baby's nurse in Italian. She is a girl from Tuscany and very devoted to me.

"If he dies, I will be Queen the sooner," thought I,—but happily I didn't think aloud.

CHAPTER XI

SCOLDED FOR BEING POPULAR

Entourage spied upon by George's minions—My husband proves a weakling—I disavow the personal compliment—No more intelligent than a king should be.

DRESDEN, *September 5,*

1893.

I wrote the foregoing at one sitting, without interruption. It's not so easy a matter to put down the consequences of our triumph, or rather mine and baby's.

When I entered my apartments, I met a whole host of long faces. The Commander of the Palace, in great gala, offered a most stiff and icy welcome. The adjutants, the chamberlains, the *maitre d'Hôtel*, all looked ill at ease. They evidently felt the coming storm in their bones and didn't care to have it said of them, by George's spies, that they lent countenance, even in a most remote way, to my carryings-on. Even the Schoenberg—my own woman—shot reproachful glances at me when the Commander of the Palace happened to look her way.

Frederick Augustus looked and acted as if he was to be deprived of all his military honors.

"Your courage must have fallen into your *cuirassier* boots, look for it there," I said to him in an undertone when he seemed ready to go to pieces at the entrance of the King's grand marshal, Count Vitzthum.

With that I advanced towards His Excellency and, holding out my hand to be kissed, took care to say to him with my most winning smile,

"I trust His Majesty will be pleased with me, for of course our grand reception was but a reflex of

the love the people have for their King. I never for a moment took it as a personal compliment."

My smart little speech disconcerted the official completely. Maybe he had orders to say something disagreeable, but my remark disarmed him, forestalled any quarrel that might have been in the King's or Prince George's mind.

Frederick Augustus, who is no more intelligent than a future king should be, was so amazed, he had to think hard and long before he could even say "Good evening" to the Count. As for the latter, he hawed and coughed and stammered and cleared his throat until finally he succeeded in delivering himself of the following sublime effort:

"I will have the honor to report to His Majesty that during the time of your Imperial Highness's entry, your Imperial Highness thought of naught but the all-highest approval of His Majesty."

Whereupon I shook his hand again and dismissed him. "It will please me immensely, Count," I said, "immensely."

CHAPTER XII

ROYAL DISGRACE—LIGHTNING AND SHADOWS

Ordered around by the Queen—Give thanks to a bully—Jealous of the "mob's" applause—"The old monkey after '*Hochs*'"—Criticizing the "old man"—Royalty's plea for popularity—Proposed punishments for people refusing to love royalty.

DRESDEN, *September 8,*

1893.

Thrice twenty-four hours of royal disgrace and I am—alive. This morning: "All-highest order," signed by Her Majesty's Dame of the Palace, Countess von Minckwitz: "The Queen is graciously pleased to invite your Imperial Highness to audience."

Of course her pleasure is a command. I dressed in state and ordered all the ladies and gentlemen of my court to attend me to the royal chambers.

Queen Carola was very nice, giving the impression that she would be more lovely still if she dared.

"Prince George has just commanded your husband," she said,—"the King ordered this condescension on my brother-in-law's part. You will have to thank him for it."

Isn't it amusing to be an Imperial Highness and a Crown Princess to be ordered around like a "boots" and to be "commanded" like an orphan child to say thanks to one's betters!

I promised and the Queen, assuming that I intended to act the good little girl, took courage to say—for she is the biggest of cowards—"You are too popular, Louise. Such a reception as you had! All the papers, even the Jew-sheets, are full of it."

And before I could make any excuses for my popularity she added in sorrowful, half-accusing tones: "I lived here ever so many years and the mob never applauded *me*."

"It's so fickle," I quoted. I had to say something, you know.

"And contemptible," added the Queen heartily. "But how is baby?"

I begged permission to send for him. Her Majesty was pleased to play with the little one for a minute or two and that secured me a gracious exit. The Queen attended me to the door, opening it with her own royal hand, thereby rehabilitating me with my entourage waiting outside.

Meanwhile Frederick Augustus had a "critical quarter of an hour" with father-in-law, who assumed to speak on behalf of the King.

"The King," he said, "despised 'playing to the gallery' worse than the devil hated holy water." (This court is overrun with Jesuits, and we must needs adopt their vernacular.)

The King, he repeated, thought it very bad taste for anyone to take the centre of the stage in these "popularity-comedies," and he told a lot more lies of the same character. Then he bethought himself of his own grieved authority.

"Tell your wife," he said, "that I, her father-in-law, and next to the throne, do everything in my power to escape such turbulent scenes, and that I would rather ride about town in an ordinary *Droschke* (cab) of the second class, preserving my incognito, than in a state carriage and be the object of popular acclamation."

When Frederick Augustus repeated the above with the most solemn face in the world, I thought I would die with laughter and actually had to send for my tire-woman to let my corset out a few notches.

"The old monkey," I cried—"as if he wasn't after '*Hochs*' morning, noon and night; as if he

thought of anything else when he mounts a carriage or his horse."

"You forget yourself, Louise," warned Frederick Augustus in the voice of an undertaker, and I really think he meant it. But I wasn't in the mood to be silenced.

"And as if I didn't know that, like Kaiser Wilhelm, he keeps a record of towns and villages that were never honored by one of his visits, intending to make his ceremonial entry there at the first plausible opportunity."

"It isn't true," insisted Frederick Augustus.

Then I got angry. "It may be thought polite in the bosom of your family to call one another a liar," I retorted, "but don't you get into the habit of introducing those tap-room manners in the *ménage* of an Imperial Highness of Austria. I forbid it."

And then I gave rein to some of the bitterness that had accumulated in my heart against the old man. Didn't I know that George was mad enough to quarrel with his dinner when, on his drives about town, he observed a single person refusing to salute him? And wasn't it a fact that the Socialists had combined never more to raise their hats to him just because he insisted on it? And wasn't that one of the reasons why the government was more hard on them than happened to be politic?

"You mustn't say these things," pleaded Frederick Augustus.

I pretended to melt. "May I not quote your father's own words?"

"What my father says is always correct," replied the dutiful son.

"Well, then, this is what he told House Minister von Seydowitz a couple of weeks ago: 'When I see one of these intending destroyers of the state and social order staring at me, hat on head and cigar in face, I doubly regret the good old times when kings and princes were at liberty to yank a scoundrel of that ilk to jail and immure him for life, giving him twenty-five stripes daily to teach him the desirableness of rendering unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's.'"

Frederick Augustus was holding his hands to his ears when I finished. He ran out and slammed the door behind him.

CHAPTER XIII

UNSPEAKABLE LITTLENESSES OF PETTY COURTS

Another quarrel with my husband—Personal attendant to a corpse—Killing by pin pricks—The mythical three "*How art thou's?*"—Unwanted sympathy from my inferiors—Pride of the decapitated Queen of France is in me—Lovers not impossible—Court to blame for them—My husband acts cowardly—Brutalizes my household—I lock myself in.

DRESDEN, *December 1,*

1893.

I saved myself the trouble to record events for two or three months. I expect my child by the end of the year and, believing in prenatal influence, it would be a shame, I think, to poison the unborn baby's mind by dwelling on the unspeakable littlenesses that make up and burden life at this petty court.

But I may die in the attempt of presenting Saxony with another candidate for appanages and honors, and this threat, hanging over every expectant mother, makes me take up my pen again. If I perish, let there be a record of my sufferings and also of my defiance.

It turned out that the Queen's and George's apparent acquiescence to my sinful popularity marked the deceitful calm before the storm. Frederick Augustus has not succeeded in gaining the King's and his father's forgiveness even now. As a military officer he is shunted from pillar to post, and the generals and high officials of the court treat him like a recruit in disgrace. Of course he blames me, shouting that I wrecked his career.

As if a future king need care a rap whether, as prince, he got a regiment a few months earlier or later.

"When you are King," I sometimes say to him, "you may nominate yourself Field-Marshal-General and Great-Admiral above and below the sea—what do you care?"

"It isn't the same," he moans. "I would like to have my patents signed by uncle or father."

"Antedate your papers," I advised, "who dare dispute the king? Didn't the Kaiser nominate himself Adjutant-General to his grand-dad long after William I lay mouldering in Charlottenburg?"

But Frederick Augustus takes colonel-ships and his petty kingship of the future too seriously to

see even the humor of appointing oneself personal attendant to a corpse.

As for me, if I weren't *enceinte*, they would send me to some lost-in-the-woods country house to die of *ennui*. But respect for public opinion forbidding drastic measures, George relies on a Russian expedient to humble my proud self and force me to submit to his meddling.

In the Czar's country, when a village resolves on the death of some obnoxious individual, they take him, or her, and bind the body naked to a tree. Then several papers of pins are distributed among the inhabitants, and each man, woman and child is asked to put a pin in the lady or gentleman, whom they must approach blindfolded. They stick the pin wherever they touch the body and if the thing leaks out are able to swear by all the saints that they don't know where it struck. The pin pricking is continued until the obnoxious one expires amid awful tortures and, while all contributed to the murder, none can be hanged for it.

In like manner George and his minions are trying to reduce me to the position of social and political corpse.

Court festivities and public acts, attended by the court, seem to be specially arranged to pillorize me and husband. We are invited, of course. We are next in importance to Prince George. Our entourage is more numerous and more richly costumed than that of the other princes. Four horse coaches for us; Ministers of State waiting on us. I have train-bearers, pages, what-not.

But the King and Prince George cut me and Frederick Augustus in sight of the whole court, of the public in fact!

I don't mean to say that the "All-highest Lords," as they call themselves, treat us as air, or offer insult plain to the ear and eye—they couldn't afford to—nevertheless the stigma of royal disfavor is stamped on us. This is the mode of proceedings: Ceremony obliges the King to address each member of the royal family with the words: "How do you do?", in the German fashion, "*How art thou?*"

To princes and princesses that are in disgrace, this momentous question is put only once. Those in good standing are asked three times.

Ever since that September day when all Dresden did me honor, the King and Prince George have said "*How art thou's?*" to me and mine but once, whenever and wherever we met, and be sure there were always listeners to report the double omission.

At first it amused me; then enraged me; I don't care a fig now. But Frederick Augustus! Poor imbecile, he is eating his heart out about those two missing "*How art thou's?*" and though he looks splendid in gala uniform he acts in the royal, but ungracious, presence like a green recruit expecting to be kicked and cuffed by his noncommissioned officer on getting back to the barracks.

As to my entourage, it surrenders to royal disfavor even as Frederick Augustus: depressed faces, pitying glances. I could box their ears for their sympathy.

Am I not the great-granddaughter of that mighty Maria Theresa that ruled Austria and Hungary with an iron hand, lined with velvet. "*Moriamur pro rege nostro*" (We will die for our King), cried the Hungarians, when she appealed to their chivalry, her new-born babe at her breast. "*Rege*," not "*Regina*." They called her King. They forgot the woman in the monarch, yet I am treated like an insipid female always, never as the Crown Princess!

Let them beware. My full name is Louise Marie Antoinette. I was named after the Marie Antoinette of history—another ancestor of mine—and the pride of the decapitated Queen of France is in me! My namesake was satisfied when she read the Saint-Antoine placard of June 25, 1791: "Whosoever insults Marie Antoinette shall be caned, whosoever applauds her shall be hanged." Some day I will dismiss the cattle that now grudge me the people's applause and punish those that insult me.

Come to think of it, Marie Antoinette had not only pride and defiance, she had lovers too. Well, some day this Marie Antoinette may have lovers, and if it's wrong, let the recording angel debit my sins to the Saxon court.

Thank God, I am blessed with that truly royal attribute, ability to dissimulate. "*Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare*" was all the Latin Charles VIII knew, yet he made a pretty successful king for one who died at the age of twenty-seven.

I always act as if the King, and father-in-law George, had asked me not once, or three times, but a dozen times "*How art thou?*" I don't know anything about being in disgrace, I don't anticipate being snubbed and when I am snubbed I don't see it.

The "all-highest Lord" looks daggers at me—I curtsy and smile!

Father-in-law Prince George exhibits the visage of a poisoned pole-cat at my table—I congratulate him on his good digestion!

Majesty pays no more attention to my presence than if I was a pillar, or a lackey; I greet him with my most devoted genuflections, rise from the carpet smiling all over the face and begin a frivolous conversation with the nearest man at hand, who in his fright acts as if he had taken an overdose of physic.

If Frederick Augustus only had an inch of backbone, a pinch of ginger in his constitution! But he always stands around with a red face and the mien of a penitent. No dog, accustomed to daily beatings, follows his master's movements with more anxious looks than the Crown Prince of this realm bestows upon the goings and sayings of the King and Prince George.

Then, as recompense for his royal feast of toads, he plays the tyrant at home. Jellyfish in the state apartments, a brute in our own and—on the drill grounds, I am told! He is always finding fault with the servants, and cares not whether he calls his Court Marshal, or a groom, "*Lausbub*." Poor Chamberlain von Tumpling earned that scurvy epithet the other day and he prides himself on being a nobleman and an army officer! Only this morning the prince roared and bellowed at one of my ladies, I thought she would have a stroke from righteous anger and vexation.

When he attempted to address me in the same fashion, I simply turned my back on him, went into my boudoir and locked the door. I will keep him "guessing" for two days, sending for the court physician every little while.

When he has to eat his meals alone and sleep alone for twice twenty-four hours, it will occur even to him that Louise is not made of the stuff that stands for being bullied.

CHAPTER XIV

IMPERIAL RUSSIAN ETHICS TRANSFERRED TO DRESDEN

My husband's reported escapade—Did he give diamonds to a dancing girl?—His foolish excuses—"I am your pal"—A restaurant scene in St. Petersburg—The birthday suit.

DRESDEN, *December 3,*

1893.

After all, Frederick Augustus has more spirit than I gave him credit for. Isabelle just told me that he has a new love, and a very appetizing piece of femininity she is, *Fräulein* Dolores of the Municipal Theatre.

"She's as well made as you, Louise, and rather more graceful," she said, "only her expression is somewhat inert. She lacks animation. Of course, she hasn't your attractive bust."

That devilish Isabelle *sowed* her poisonous information rather than pronounced it. "She has been seen with a new diamond-studded *bandeau*," she added.

At that moment the Schoenberg came to say that baby wants me. Isabelle went along to the nursery, but I managed to take the Schoenberg aside.

"I must know, before dinner, who gave the Dolores woman the new jewelry she is displaying; likewise whether His Royal Highness is sweet on that hussy. No half-truths, if you please. I want to know the worst if there be any."

The Schoenberg has a cousin who is a Councillor in the office of the police president, and the police president keeps a detailed record of the love affairs of all the actresses and singers employed in Dresden,—a relic of the time when stage folks, in European capitals, classed as "the King's servants."

The Councillor came himself to report and, after listening to what he said, I raised the boycott on Frederick Augustus without further ado, inviting him to my bed and board once more.

"So you went slumming with Kyril," I said after we had retired for the night.

"Who told you?" stammered the big fellow, reddening to the roots of his hair.

"Never mind. I know all! About the Dolores woman, her brand new diamonds, the pirouettes she did on the table and the many lace petticoats she wore."

"My word, I didn't count them," vowed his Royal Highness.

"Neither would I advise you to do so," I warned sternly, though as a matter of fact I was near exploding with laughter. "Now make a clean breast of it."

"I swear I was only the elephant. The King himself would excuse me under the circumstances," whimpered my husband.

"You big booby," I interposed, "can't you see that I'm not angry? I blab about you to the King? What do you take me for? I am your pal, now and always, in affairs liable to prove inartistic to the King's, or Prince George's, stomach. To begin with, what has an elephant to do with supping with a dancing girl?"

Frederick Augustus explained that the name of the pachyderm applies to a third party, who attends a couple out for a lark until he proves a crowd. Our cousin, Grand-duke Kyril of Russia, visiting Dresden incognito, had prevailed on Frederick Augustus's good nature to serve him and

the Dolores.

"The Dolores is prettier than I?" I inquired.

"Not at all. She has a black mole under her left bosom."

"You saw that?"

"How could I help it? Russian Grand-dukes never allow a girl to wear corsets at supper. Kyril says it interferes with digestion."

How considerate of His Russian Imperial Highness!

Well, they had a good time and I guess the Dolores earned her diamonds. A fair exchange is no robbery. "But in St. Petersburg," said Frederick Augustus, "they do these things better." And he gave an elaborate description of a famous restaurant there, where the princes of the imperial family hold high carnival occasionally.

"The upper tier of dining rooms is reserved at night for any Grand-duke who promises his visit," quoted my husband, "and the broad marble stairs leading to them must not be used by others. Well, one fine evening Grand-duke Vladimir and a crowd of nobles and officers supped at the '*Ermitaj*' and when they were all good and drunk, one of Vladimir's guests, Prince Galitzin, bet the host the price of the supper and a champagne bath for all, that he could induce the famous *danseuse* Mshinskaya to descend the stairs stark naked and walk among the tables below without anyone offering her insult.

"The bet was accepted and the girl sent for. She was found in a near-by theatre and rushed to the '*Ermitaj*'. Of course, seeing that His Imperial Highness wished it, she consented to pull off the trick and—her clothes, but she made a condition."

"She demanded tights," I suggested.

"Pshaw, she is a sport, says Kyril." This in a tone of disgust from Frederick Augustus. He continued: "She merely begged his Imperial Highness to have it announced that she, Mshinskaya, was acting under the Grand-duke's orders. Done. 'By His Imperial Highness's leave,' shouted the *Maitre d'Hôtel* from the top of the stairs, as *Mademoiselle* descended in her birthday suit. And the Mshinskaya made the tour of the restaurant as unconcernedly and as little subject to protests, or remarks, as if she had been muffled up to her ears.

"That's what I call freedom—discipline," concluded Frederick Augustus. "Think of doing anything like that in a Dresden restaurant."

"I would gladly give a year's allowance to the poor if you could manage it here while Prince George was masticating a Hamburg steak at a table opposite the grand staircase," said I.

CHAPTER XV

ROYALTY NOT PRETTY, AND WHY

Fecundity royal women's greatest charm—How to have beautiful children.

DRESDEN, *February 25,*

1894.

Behold the mother of two boys in a twelve-month! Frederick came just in the nick of time, Sylvester Eve (December 31, 1893), to gain me a little brief renown, for royalty likes its women to be rabbits and, in the reigning houses at least, we are esteemed in proportion to our fecundity.

"January 15—December 31," not half bad! Even Prince George had to admit that. And the Kaiser remarked: "Louise, if she keeps it up, bids fair to break de Villeneuve's record. Let me see, Sophie's first child was born January 9—a girl" (with a sneer); "her next, the Hereditary Count, on December 28th of the same year."

The "de Villeneuve" is Sophie, Countess of Schlitz. Wilhelm made her celebrated by his gallantries and Lenbach by the great portrait he painted of her wondrous loveliness. If I ever have a daughter, I will have a copy of the Lenbach canvas placed in baby's room. Come to think of it, I will have one made right away to hang in my own boudoir.

As stated, I believe in prenatal influence, and am more than convinced that the portraits of Saxon and Prussian princesses frowning from the walls of our palaces are calculated neither to promote beauty nor gentleness.

If I had my way, I would send the whole lot to the store-room and fill the space they occupy with the present store-room treasures, old time portraits of August the Physical Strong's favorites, Aurora von Königsmark, Countess Cosel, Princess Lubomirska, Fatime, the Circassian, the Orselska and—who can remember their names?

As a rule, queens and princesses are conspicuous for lack of beauty, while kings and princes cut

most ordinary figures in *mufti*. Only their uniforms, the ribands and decorations, the *mise-en-scène* render them tolerable imitations of the average military man.

Why?

Because their mothers and fathers, their sisters, cousins and aunts see nothing but painted and photographed and sculptured frights and grotesques. So much ugliness of the past must needs cause ugliness of the present and future.

In a century the thrones of Europe have known but two beauties, both plebeians, the Empress Josephine and the Empress Eugenie. My aunt, the Empress Elizabeth, is only good-looking, the German Empress was just an ordinary German *Frau* even in her salad-days.

Well, my little girls, if I have any, shall profit by the lessons of the past. As expectant mothers in ancient Greece were wont to walk in the temple of *Athene Parthenos*, filled with the greatest sculptures the world has ever seen (ruins of them I admired in the British Museum), so I intend to have a gallery of my own for beauty's sake, even if every female figure be a harlot's likeness.

CHAPTER XVI

MORE JEALOUSIES OF THE GREAT

Men and women caress me with their eyes—Some disrespectful sayings and doings of mine—First decided quarrel with Frederick Augustus—I go to the theatre in spite of him.

DRESDEN, *April 1, 1894.*

I am afraid I wrote down some wicked things—wicked from the standpoint of the Saxon court—and though Queen Carola and father-in-law George know naught of my scribblings, punishment was meted out to me in full measure.

Of course, it's my "damned popularity," as the King calls it, that got me into trouble again. My carriage happened to follow one occupied by the Queen at a distance of some hundred or more paces along the avenues of the *Grosser Garten*. I had no idea that Her Majesty was out at the time, and certainly was dressed to please the eye. I can't help it. It's a habit with me.

Well, the optics of a good many of my future subjects grew long and cozening, like gipsies', when they beheld their queen-to-be; there was many a "flatteringly protracted, but never a wiltingly disapproving gaze," and those who liked me—and they all seemed to—shouted "Our Louise," and Hurrah. They shouted so loud that poor Queen Carola got plenty of auricular evidence of how her successor-to-be was loved by the people, by *her*, Carola's, people. And the poor old girl got so "peevied," she ordered her coachman to turn back and proceed to the palace by the shortest route, through the least frequented streets.

Frederick Augustus knew all about it before I reached home and was in a terribly dejected state.

"This has to stop," he said with a fine effort at imitating authority. "On Sunday, when we drove home from High Mass, you got an ovation while the King's carriage passed almost unnoticed. And now this affront to the Queen."

"Bother the old girl," I replied, stamping my foot.

Frederick Augustus got as white as a sheet. "That's the language of a—a—" He knew enough not to finish.

"It's the title by which Queen Victoria is known to many of her subjects."

"Who told you that?"

"I often run across it in the English newspapers."

"Jew-sheets!" roared Frederick Augustus.

"Since you don't understand a word of English, you couldn't distinguish the London Times from the Hebrew At Work." After this sally, I added maliciously: "I'm going to the Opéra Comique tonight. Come along?"

"You are *not* going to the Opéra Comique," shouted Frederick Augustus.

"You don't want me to go, papa don't want me to go, uncle and aunt and cousins don't? So many reasons more why I *shall* go. I announced my coming and I will go, if I have to tear the ropes, by which you might bind me hand and foot, with my teeth."

I rang the bell and ordered dinner served half an hour earlier than usual. Then I went to my dressing room to inspect the new gown that I intended to wear at the theatre.

Girardi night! Girardi, the famous Vienna comedian! I never saw him. His humor will act as a tonic. Just what I need. I will die if I breathe none other but the air of this palace, that reeks with

cheap pretensions, Jesuitical puritanism, envy and hatred, where every second person is a spy of either the King or George.

I must escape the polluted atmosphere for a few hours, at least, and laugh, laugh, LAUGH.

11:30 P.M.

I have seen Girardi. I have laughed. I saw the Dolores. And I don't blame Kyril a bit.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ROYAL PRINCE, WHO BEHAVES LIKE A DRUNKEN BRICKLAYER

I face the music, but my husband runs away—Prince George can't look me in the eye—He roars and bellows—Advocates wife-beating—I defy him—German classics—"Jew literature" *Auto da fé* ordered.

DRESDEN, April 2, 1894.

Chamberlain Baron Haugk, of the service of Prince George, called at nine A.M. and insisted upon seeing me. I sent out my Grand-Mistress, Baroness von Tisch, to tell him that "Her Imperial Highness would graciously permit him to wait upon her at half past ten."

"But my all-highest master commands."

I was listening in my boudoir and I went out to him only half-dressed, a powder-mantle over my shoulders.

"Her Imperial Highness will not have her commands questioned by servants," I said in my most haughty style. The *Kammerherr* knocked his heels together, bowed to the ground and retired. That's my way of dealing with royal flunkeys, no matter what their title of courtesy.

He was back at the stroke of the clock to announce his "sublime master" for one in the afternoon.

"I will be ready to receive his Royal Highness. My household shall be instructed," I answered coldly, though I dread that old man.

"You are not wanted," I told Frederick Augustus. "Better make yourself scarce." He didn't need to be told twice. "Undress-uniform," he shouted to his valet. "And send somebody for a cab."

"Why a cab?" I inquired.

He looked at me in a pitying way. "Women are such geese," he made answer. "Don't you see, if I left the palace in one of our own carriages, the King, or father, might notice and call me back."

"Oh, very well. And don't 'celebrate' too much while you are out."

I had the lackeys line the staircase and corridors. My military household stood in the first ante-chamber, my courtiers in the second, my ladies in the third when Prince George walked into my parlor. At first he acted in no unfriendly manner. He kissed me on the forehead and asked after the babies, and if he hadn't riveted his eyes all the time into some corner of the room—his stratagem when in an ugly mood—I might have persuaded myself that he wasn't on mischief bent.

But he soon began pouring out his bile. With a face like a wooden martyr he announced that he was not pleased with me.

"You are too much of a light-weight, too vivacious, too attractive to the mob," he said in his bitterest tones. "You are forever seeking the public eye like—an actress."

"I beg your Royal Highness to take notice that Imperial Princesses of Austria"—I put some emphasis on the Imperial—"while popular, never descend to jugglery," I answered politely, but firmly.

"No offence to your Imperial Highness," said George, "but you must understand once and for all that Saxon princes and princesses are bound by our house laws to the strictest observance of precedence. The love of the people naturally goes out to the King and Queen. Junior members of the Royal House must not seek to divert to themselves the popularity that is the King's own."

"I have always been taught to respond to popular greetings offered me. My aunt, the Empress Elizabeth, in particular instructed me to that effect," I submitted with great deference.

"Her Majesty didn't instruct you to make a show of yourself every hour of the day," hissed George, his eyes devouring the stove.

"I drive out twice, in the morning to go shopping, in the afternoon to air my babies."

George, unable to dispute me, abandoned pretensions of politeness or manners. He fairly roared at me: "You are travelling the streets all the time. It has to stop."

Whereupon I said in as sharp a voice as I could manage: "And Your Royal Highness has to stop bellowing at me. I'm not used to it. In Salzburg and Vienna gentlemen don't use that tone of voice and that sort of language to gentlewomen."

"Salzburg," cried George, "in Salzburg you got your ears boxed, but it didn't do much good to all appearances."

"Your Royal Highness," I answered, "my mother has her faults, but it's no one's business outside of her immediate family. And no one at this court has a mother's authority over me."

I saw that George was beside himself with rage. "If your husband," he snarled, "was as free with his hand as your mother, there would be an end to your frivolities."

"Your Royal Highness forgets what you admitted yourself, namely, that the indignities offered me while I was a child were bereft of beneficial results. And please take notice," I added, raising my voice, "I won't stand violence from anyone, neither from my husband—as you kindly suggest—nor from you, or the King."

George was too surprised to even attempt a reply. He evidently didn't know what to say or do. To avoid my eyes that were seeking his, he turned his back on me and stepped up to a little table laden with books. He studied the titles for a while, then, turning suddenly, held a small volume towards me. His arm was out-stretched as if he feared to contaminate his uniform.

"What have we got here?" he cried.

It was my turn to be astonished. "Why, according to the binding, it must be Heine's *Atta Troll*."

"*Atta Troll*," cried George, and opening the book at random he read half to himself:

"This bear-leader six Madonnas
Wears upon his pointed hat,
To protect his head from bullets
Or from lice, perchance, it may be."

He fired the volume on the floor and grabbed another. "What's this?"

"As the title will indicate to your Royal Highness, Nietzsche's Zarathustra." For the life of me I couldn't see any harm in this portion of my library.

George continued to rummage among the books. He acted like a madman. "What's this, what's this?" he kept on saying, turning them over and over. I thought it beneath my dignity to answer. I just stared at the fanatic.

After he finished his hurried examination, he took one book after the other and tossed it violently at my feet.

"Heine, the Jew-scribbler," he cried, aiming a kick at *Atta Troll*.

"Don't you dare," I said, "that book was given me by Her Majesty, the Empress of Austria."

"I can't believe it," shouted George, "that Jew-scribbler, the reviler of kinship."

"He never lampooned the kings of Saxony," I calmly remarked, picking up the volume. "Here is Her Majesty's dedication to me."

"Everybody knows the eccentricities of Her Majesty of Austria," shouted George. "Anyhow, who gave you permission to read such rotten stuff as this at our court?"

"Prince George," I answered, taking two steps towards him, "Duke of Saxony, the Archduchess of Austria takes pleasure to inform you that in her house she asks no one's permission what to read or do."

At this he turned drill-ground bully. "You are in the King's house," rang out his voice in cutting tones, "and at this moment I represent the King. And in the King's name I forbid you to read these obscenities, and in the King's name I hereby command that these books be destroyed at once."

Well, since he talked in the King's name I had no leg to stand on. I merely bowed acquiescence and he strutted out, turning his back on me as he went without salutation of any sort. I ran into my room, locked the door and had a good cry.

CHAPTER XVIII

I DEFY THEM

Laughter and pleasant faces for me—Frederick Augustus refuses to back me, but I

don't care—We quarrel about my reading—He professes to gross ignorance.

DRESDEN, *May 1, 1894.*

What's the use keeping a diary that is nothing but a record of quarrels and humiliations? After I finished the entry about my scene with Prince George, I felt considerably relieved. I had held my own, anyhow. But fighting is one thing and writing another. I am always ready for a fight, but "war-reporting" comes less easy.

The unpleasantness with George brought in its wake, as a natural consequence so to speak, a whole lot of other squabbles and altercations, family jars and general rumpuses, which I cared not to embalm in these pages at the time. However, as they are part and parcel of my narrative, incomplete as it may be, I will insert them by and by according to their sequence.

After George was gone I made up my mind that, his commands and threats notwithstanding, I must continue to live as I always did: joyful, free within certain limits and careless of puritan standards. If the rest of the royal ladies, and the women of the service, want to mope and look sour, that's their affair. Let them wear out their lives between confessional, knitting socks for orphan children, *Kaffe-klatsches*, spying and tale-bearing and prayer-meetings,—it isn't my style. I'm young, I'm pretty, I'm full of red blood, life means something to me. I want to live it my own way.

I want to laugh; I have opinions of my own; I want to read books that open and improve the mind. I want to promote my education by attending lectures, by going to the theatre—in short, I don't want to become a dunce and a bell-jingling fool like the others.

If that spells royal disgrace—be it so. Louise won't purchase two "*How art thou's?*" at the price their Majesties and Royal Highnesses ask.

Of course, it would come easier with Frederick Augustus's help and support, but since he chooses to be bully-ragged and sat upon and, moreover, finds pleasure in licking the hand that strikes at his and his wife's dignity, I will go it alone.

I defy them.

DRESDEN, *June 16,*

1894.

I had another tiff with Frederick Augustus, but the cause is too insignificant to deserve record. I will rather tell about our grand quarrel following Prince George's visit. We dined alone that day, as he was eager to hear the news. The preliminaries didn't excite him much, but when I mentioned the book episode, he bristled up.

"You won't allow the King, or Prince George, to dictate what I shall read or not read?" I demanded. "My house is my castle and I won't brook interference in my *ménage*."

"Do you really suppose," replied Frederick Augustus, "that I'll court royal displeasure for the sake of those Jew-scribblers? I never read a book since I left school and can't make out what interest books can have to you or anyone else. Where did you get them, anyhow?"

I told him that Leopold supplied my book wants. "My brother is a very intelligent man," I said, "and the books he gives me are all classics in their way."

"Go to with your book-talk!" he mocked in his most contemptuous voice. "I asked the director of the royal library and was told that each of the books, to which father objects, was written by a Jew. Let Jews read them. It isn't decent for a royal princess to do so."

"My brother isn't a Jew."

"But in utter disgrace in Vienna. No one at court speaks to him. He is head over heels in debt and the next we know he will be borrowing from us. As to those books, don't bring any more into the house. Royal princes and princesses have better things to do than waste time on Jew-scribblers."

With that he violently pushed back his chair and left me, a very much enraged woman. He didn't give me the chance to have the last word.

CHAPTER XIX

ATTEMPTED VIOLENCE DEFEATED BY FIRMNESS

Frederick Augustus seeks to carry out his father's brutal threats—Orders and threats before servants—I positively refuse to be ordered about—Frederick Augustus plays Mrs. Lot—Enjoying myself at the theatre.

DRESDEN, *June 17,*

The chance came later and with it the conviction that His Royal Highness, Prince George, didn't quite believe me when I told him that I wouldn't stand for violence, for tonight Frederick Augustus attempted something of the sort.

I had ordered my carriage for seven o'clock to drive to the theatre, and had just finished dressing when he stormed into my boudoir and demanded to know if I had taken leave of my senses.

"Not that I am aware of."

"But I hear you intend to go to the theatre—a princess in disgrace going to the theatre!"

"Aren't you coming along, Frederick Augustus?" I asked naïvely.

"I have no desire to lose my regiment."

"And I have no desire to sit at home and talk nothingnesses with the fools His Majesty appoints for my service."

"Take a care," cried Frederick Augustus.

"Don't be a noodle and a coward," I answered hotly.

"Louise, remember that I am an army officer."

"What has that to do with my going to the theatre?"

"It's the height of audacity to defy the King."

"It would be the depth of cowardice to stay at home."

"Take back that word, or——"

"I wish Your Royal Highness a very pleasant evening," I said, indulging in a low genuflection.

Frederick Augustus got blue with rage. I saw him clench his fists as I swept out of the room, making as much noise with my train as I could manage.

"An out-rider," I commanded the Master of Horse who stood in the ante-chamber awaiting me.

"At your Imperial Highness' commands," bowed the Baron with the most astonished face in the world. We use out-riders, that is grooms in livery, to ride ahead of the royal carriage, only on state occasions in Dresden. But, of course, my orders would be obeyed even if I had demanded twelve grooms to attend me.

I was just going out, preceded by my Chamberlain and followed by my ladies, Baroness Tisch and *Fräulein* von Schoenberg; there were two lackeys at the door and in the corridor stood the groom-in-waiting, holding several lap-ropes for me to decide which to take, when the Prince caught up with me.

"I forbid you to go to the theatre," he bawled in the presence of my titled entourage and three servants.

I realized at once that this was the supreme moment of my life at the court of Saxony. Either bend or break. If I allowed myself to be roared at and ordered about like a servant-wench—goodbye the Imperial Highness! Enter the Jenny-Sneak German housewife, greedy for her master's smile and willing to accept an occasional kick. The Prince had begun this family brawl in public. I would finish.

"I won't take orders," I held forth. "No commands, understand, princely, royal or otherwise. And be advised, now and for all time, that I will answer any attempt to brutalize me by immediate departure, or by seeking refuge with the Austrian Ambassador."

If Frederick Augustus had suddenly become Mrs. Lot he wouldn't have been more conspicuous for utter petrification and silence. He stared at me with wide-open, bleary eyes and if I had taken him by the neck and feet and dropped him out of the window, as his ancestor Augustus of the three-hundred and fifty-two took the "spook" sent into his bedroom by Joseph the First, he wouldn't have offered the ghost of resistance, I dare say.

"Your arm, Mr. Chamberlain, since His Royal Highness doesn't wish to accompany us." And I swept out of the ante-chamber and through the corridor, triumphant.

"Gipsy Baron" was the bill of the play. I knew only a few of its waltzes and I drank in the comedy and the pretty music like one desperately athirst. Kyril's girl, the Dolores, was very chic and looked ravishingly pretty, and brother-in-law Max isn't the dunce I took him for.

His Theresa is a droll dog, fair to look upon, dark and fat. It will take a lot of holy water to save her from purgatory.

Girardi made me screech with laughter. He is as funny as my father-in-law is mournful—a higher compliment to his art I cannot pay. Of course, actor-like, he appreciated an Imperial Highness' applause and looked up to my box every little while. I wish, though, he hadn't acknowledged my plaudits by bowing to me. It attracted general attention and soon the whole house was staring and smiling. The people seemed to be glad that their Crown Princess was enjoying herself.

CHAPTER XX

TITLED SERVANTS LOW AND CUNNING

George tries to rob me of my confidante—Enter the King's spy, Baroness Tisch in her true character—Punishment of one royal spy.

DRESDEN, *August 1,*

1894.

Prince George is planning a devilish revenge. He threatens to separate me from my Secretary and confidante, little Baranello, whom I brought with me from Salzburg. She is an Italian, and, unlike most of them, as faithful as a dog. A connection of the Ruffo family, princes and dukes that gave the world more than one pope, the small fry Saxon nobility hate her, and George knows that he can't corrupt Lucretia by his paltry presents and ridiculous condescension.

They would send her back to Salzburg, if they dared,—anyhow, Baroness von Tisch is to be both Chief Mistress and confidential secretary. If she died of the first confidence I make her, she wouldn't live five minutes.

The King's House Marshal, Baron von Carlowitz, came to announce the change to me, but I knew, of course, that it was George's doings.

"Tell Prince George," I said icily, "that I appreciate the fact of being deprived of the services of an honest woman in favor of a spy."

I will "show" this Tisch woman, as my American friends say. Some three years ago Emperor Francis Joseph appointed a spy as attendant to my brother Leopold. Schoenstein, Baron or Count, was his name, I think. Schoenstein would rather bear evil tales of his young master to his old master than eat, and nothing would please him better than to meddle with Leopold's correspondence.

He stole as many letters as he could lay his hands on. Fished them even from slop-pails, or pieced together such as Leopold tore up and dropped in the cuspidors. When brother observed this, he used to tear up bills and the most innocent writings of his own and other people into little bits and planted them in Schoenstein's hunting-grounds. Appropriate work for a *lick-spittle* to pull them out. But Leopold got tired of playing with this vermin, and it tickled him to make an example of the scamp. Hence, he allowed it to be observed by Schoenstein when he, Leopold, locked a parcel of letters from his girl in the cash-box.

The toad-eating Schoenstein burned with desire to copy these letters and send the transcript on to Emperor Francis Joseph. They would have made interesting reading to my old uncle who has given up cracking nuts since his teeth fell out. There is Kati Schrott, you say. Pshaw, Kati is as old, or nearly as old, as his Majesty and she isn't a Ninon de l'Enclos by any means.

To cut a long story short, Schoenstein could see but one way for getting those compromising letters: steal the keys and borrow the parcel for a short while. That's what Leopold was waiting for. Not half an hour after the keys had been abstracted, he raised the alarm. He had been "robbed." The archducal safe had been rifled. And he managed to catch Schoenstein red-handed.

"Send for the police," thundered my brother, "and meanwhile watch the thief well." Schoenstein was given no chance to explain and deemed himself lucky to escape arrest. My brother suspended him from service and made him go to a hotel while he telegraphed the story of the attempted theft to Vienna, asking the Count's immediate dismissal.

Of course, Vienna disavowed the dunderhead—royalty has no use for persons that allow themselves to be compromised—and he has been in disgrace ever since. Nor can he get another courtly office, for Leopold threatened the moment he sees him with a Highness to warn everybody: "Look to your watch and purse, we have a thief with us."

I jotted this down to remind me that Prince George's spy deserves no better than the Emperor's.

CHAPTER XXI

BANISHMENT

I am ordered to repair to a country house with the hated spy as my Grand Mistress—My first impulse to go home, but afraid parents won't have me.

DRESDEN, *August 10,*

1894.

Order from the King that myself and children spend the rest of the summer at Villa Loschwitz, to remain until I get royal permission to return to Dresden,—the Tisch to act as chief of my household.

Banished! I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Smile, because I escaped the *ennui* of attending court at the summer residence of Pillnitz; weep, because my absence from court would be interpreted as a disciplinary measure.

I know Pillnitz is about as gay as a Trappist feast of carrion and ant's milk, but this princess doesn't want to be disciplined.

I shall tell them that I want to go home, but will they have me in Salzburg? Papa, of course, but if mother hears of my acquaintance with Heine, "who doesn't love Jesus,"—her own words,—she will undoubtedly side with Prince George against her daughter. It was Heine who wrote of one of her ancestors, King Louis of Bavaria: "As soon as the monkeys and kangaroos are converted to Christianity, they'll make King Louis their guardian saint, in proof of their perfect sanity." And you don't suppose for a moment that mamma forgets a thing like that. As to Nietzsche, he will give her no conscientious qualms, for I'm sure she never heard of the gentleman, but my going to the Gipsy Baron "where two princely mistresses are gyrating"—horrible!

I hear her say: "I think Prince George is most considerate sending our daughter to Loschwitz. She deserved to be put in a nunnery and made to kneel on unboiled peas three times a day." And when it comes to an *éclat*, even papa may have to abandon me. Emperor Francis Joseph holds the purse-strings; and papa always lives beyond his means and Francis Joseph, King Albert and Prince George are fast friends. If papa quarrelled with the two latter gentlemen, they would immediately denounce him to the Emperor. The rest can easily be guessed.

Sorry, but papa is no hero in his daughter's eyes.

CHAPTER XXII

"POOR RELATIONS" IN ROYAL HOUSES

Myself and Frederick Augustus quarrel and pound table—The Countess Cosel's golden vessel—Off to Brighton—Threat of a beating—I provoke shadows of divorce—King threatens force—More defiance on my part—I humble the King and am allowed to invite my brother Leopold.

VILLA LOSCHWITZ, *September 1,*

1894.

Father had to give in. He is the poor relation, and a poor relation in royal circles doesn't amount to more than one among well-to-do merchants and farmers. He has no rights that others need respect and if he shows backbone he is given to understand that the head of the family has other uses for the palace or hunting grounds lent him.

"I would love to have you with me in Salzburg," he wrote, "but, dear child, it's for your best to learn to obey. Do it for your old father's sake."

Still I wouldn't give in at once. "I won't go to Loschwitz," I declared. And gave a dozen reasons besides the paramount one that I wouldn't go, because Prince George wanted me.

"I'm no trunk to be shipped hither and thither at someone's behest," I said.

Frederick Augustus took umbrage at the "someone," which he pronounced *lèse majesté*, and to emphasise the fact hit the table with a bang, whereupon I pounded the table twice: bang-bang!

It hurt my hand, and didn't do Frederick Augustus any good. Nor was the discussion advanced thereby. For the rest: an exchange of names and epithets that smacked of the kitchen rather than the *salon*.

"Too bad you exhaust all your energy with me," I said among other things, "while in the royal presence you act the docile lamb's tail."

He began prating about his character as an army officer again, and I reminded him that I wasn't the Countess Cosel.

"Who's that?" asked the big ignoramus.

"Never heard of the lady that refused to accompany Augustus to the Camp of Mühlberg unless he brought her a certain intimate golden vessel costing five thousand *Thalers*?"

"A loving cup?" asked my husband.

"If you like to call it so."

"But why did you say you are no Cosel?"

"I meant to imply that I am not a prisoner of state and don't want to be treated like one. Hence,

since a visit to my parents would greatly embarrass them, I decided to go to Brighton for the season."

"Brighton," he repeated, "and where will you get the spondulicks?"

"I saved up quite a bit of money. Guess I can manage the expense alright."

"Lip-music," cried Frederick Augustus in his polite way. "You have no idea what such a trip costs."

I assured him that I had made every inquiry and was able to meet all expenses. "We will go incog.," I added, "the babies and nurse and Lucretia. The Tisch woman shall have a furlough even before she asks for it."

"Is that so?" Frederick Augustus laughed brutally. "You seem to forget that you are subject to our house laws."

"And you seem to forget that I have a will of my own," I almost shouted.

Frederick Augustus jumped up. "Not another word on the subject," he commanded. "The incident is closed."

It suddenly occurred to me that Prince George had been talking once more to Frederick Augustus about the pugilistic performances of my mother. Perhaps he was trying to pluck up courage to beat me, a diversion not altogether unknown in the House of Saxony, according to the Memoirs of the famous Baron Schweinichen, Court Marshal and *Chroniqueur*.

His diaries, covering a number of years, have many such entries as this: "His Royal Highness hit the Princess a good one on the 'snout' by way of silencing her tongue." Doubtless George would be delighted to have me "shut up" by some such process, but Frederick Augustus lacks the sand.

When he was gone, I indicted a letter to the King, advising him in oily, malicious, yet eminently respectful language that, not wishing to figure as a prisoner of state, I had decided to spend the rest of the summer abroad with my children. At the same time I intimated that I was well aware of being in disgrace and being regarded with ill favor by the several members of the royal family.

"If it pleases your Majesty," I added, "I will relieve a most unhappy situation by giving back his liberty to Frederick Augustus. I'll promise not to oppose divorce, or allow my family to interfere."

This letter I sent to the King, sealing it with my personal arms, of which there is no duplicate at court. After that I sent three telegrams. One to papa, announcing that I was going to Brighton; another to the Palace Hotel in Brighton; a third to the Minister of Railways, commanding that my saloon carriage be coupled to the Continental express night after next. I knew, of course, that the King would be informed of these messages in a twinkling.

I waited an hour for the Powers to move; as a rule it takes them a week or ten days. Exactly sixty-five minutes after sending my letter to the King, Frederick Augustus rode into the courtyard like a madman. He had been hurriedly summoned from the drill-grounds, I heard afterwards. He dismounted at the stairs leading to the King's apartments. Half an hour later, he slunk into my room, as serious as a corpse. There wasn't a trace of brutality in his voice as he said:

"A fine row you kicked up."

I didn't favor him by questions, but kept looking out of the window. He walked up and down for five or six minutes, boring his eyes into the corners of the room. Suddenly, at a safe distance, he delivered himself of the following:

"His Majesty interdicts your plans *in toto*. You will be conducted to Loschwitz tonight. Don't put yourself to the humiliation of trying to disobey. You are being watched."

"His Majesty's own words?"

"He refused to see me," answered Frederick Augustus, dejectedly. He acted as if pronouncing his own death warrant. "Baumann told me." (This is the King's Secretary.)

I almost pitied the poor fellow, but I had to hold my own.

"My dear Frederick Augustus," I said, "you can tell Baumann from me that I won't go to Loschwitz tonight; that for the present I intend to stay here and that, if they force me, they'll need plenty of rope, for I will holler and kick and do all I can to attract attention."

Maybe Frederick Augustus wanted to say something in reply, but open his mouth was all he could manage. Seeing him so bamboozled, I continued: "It is decided, then, that I stay, but I give you fair warning that I will skip to England sooner or later. I don't want you to get into trouble, Frederick Augustus, therefore inform Baumann without delay."

Frederick Augustus got blue in the face. He seemed ready to jump on me, crush me between his cuirassier fists. I held up my hand.

"Did Baumann tell you that I offered to accept divorce if it pleases the King?"

Frederick Augustus changed color. White as a ghost, he fixed his eyes upon mine, momentarily, and murmured: "Have we got to that point?"

He ran out of the room and a minute later was tearing up the stairs leading to the King's apartments. Lucretia says he returned within a quarter of an hour and tried my door. But I had locked myself in and refused to open. We didn't meet until dinner. Neither of us ate a bite, or said a word. Baumann was announced with the ice. He was all smiles, all devotion.

"His Majesty will be pleased to see your Imperial Highness in a quarter of an hour," he said sweetly.

Frederick Augustus was a painted sepulchre when I coolly replied: "Pray inform His Majesty that I am not well and about to retire for the night."

At this Baumann looked like a whipped dog. He probably thought it impossible for anyone to refuse to answer the summons of His Majesty. With the most downcast mien in the world, he seemed singularly anxious to render himself ridiculous. "Maybe the Crown Prince will do in my stead," I suggested maliciously.

Baumann grabbed at the straw and withdrew. A little while later a lackey came, summoning Frederick Augustus to Prince George. When he came back, he was all undone.

"Father treated me very well," he said. "He says the King regrets that your uncontrollable temper causes so many misunderstandings, and both His Majesty and father have no objection to your staying in Dresden if you like. Loschwitz was suggested because you and the children seem to need country air.

"As to your proposed visit to England, the King begs you to consider that such a journey at this time is liable to provoke a scandal which would reflect not only on you, on us, but on your poor parents."

The old story of the penurious relations, I thought bitterly, but on the whole I was well pleased. I had beaten and out-generaled them all.

"If Loschwitz isn't meant for punishment, I accept with pleasure," I said. "It's a very pretty place." Poor Frederick Augustus' face lit up. "But there must be an end to the talk about I being in disgrace. If the King is as friendly to me as he makes out, let him come and see me and the babies. As to summonses by Baumann or others, I won't accept them."

"Very well," said Frederick Augustus, and I saw that I had risen mile-high in his estimation, "when will it be your pleasure to leave for Loschwitz?"

"Tonight, if I have permission to invite Leopold for a week or so."

"Are you stark, staring mad?" shouted my husband,— "Impose conditions after the King moderated?"

"Go and tell Baumann I'll have Leopold or all is off," I said.

Next morning: Ceremonial visit from the Queen. The tip of her nose was redder than ever and she seemed prepared to weep at the flicking of an eye-lash. She gave me a list of her troubles, mental, physical, political, matrimonial and otherwise, since the day she was born, but said: "Obedience to my father, the King, and obedience to my husband, the King, has enabled me to weather all storms. You, too, must learn obedience, Louise. It's women's only salvation and especially a princess's."

I answered that I fully recognized my obligations to the King. "I only object to being buffeted around like a piece of furniture."

"I know, I know," said the Queen, "and hope all is arranged satisfactorily. The King will be glad if you invite your parents to Loschwitz."

"I asked permission to invite Leopold."

"But, no doubt, your parents would take more interest in the children than your brother."

"I don't dispute that, Your Majesty. But if my parents joined me at the present time, people might think they came to condole with me or else to scold me. I want Leopold."

The Queen said she wouldn't dare mention Leopold to His Majesty.

"Well, then," I concluded, "I shall stay in Dresden, regarding Baumann's fine promises as mere talk."

The Queen went away with the air of a martyr, but three days later Baumann came and said His Imperial Highness was welcome.

A triumph all along the line. I left Dresden without seeing the King.

Frederick Augustus is at the manoeuvres.

The Baroness is acting as my Grand Mistress.

I expect Leopold in a fortnight.

CHAPTER XXIII

A SERVANT-TYRANT

My correspondence is not safe from the malicious woman appointed Grand Mistress—Lovers at a distance and by correspondence—Fell in love with a leg.

LOSCHWITZ, *September 8,*

1894.

Baroness Tisch, now that she attained the height of her ambition, is beginning to show her claws. She is an infernal cat. Her skinniness makes her repulsive to me and her face gives everyone the impression that she just sucked an enormous lemon. She lisps and that makes me nervous. I feel like aping her when she isn't around.

She's after me like the devil chasing a poor soul and as I never address her except to command or reprimand, she tries to find out any secret doings, or thinkings, I may be guilty of by way of letters I write or receive.

According to the laws of most countries private correspondence is sacred, legally and morally. The late Field-Marshal, Count Blumenthal, wrote to his wife of the Crown Prince, afterwards Emperor Frederick, that he was a "d— fool," but "as communications between husband and wife are privileged," no official cognizance was taken.

Otherwise in this petty kingdom and, as already told, in Austria, whose monarch, in family matters at least, holds to the "*L'Etat c'est moi*" maxim.

The King's spy, the Tisch, constituted herself post-office of Villa Loschwitz—a duty appertaining to her rank—and I wager she works the "*Black Cabinet*" to perfection. Of course, I am now careful in all I write and advise my friends to be, but I sometimes get letters from Unknowns, people that sympathize with me or have fallen in love with me. All women in high station have lovers among the lowly. I recall the Cardinal Dubois' yarn about Salvatico, envoy of the Prince of Modena, my kinsman of yore. The Italian was sent to Paris to conduct home his master's lovely intended, *Mademoiselle* de Valois, daughter of the Regent. It happened that the emissary was introduced to *Mademoiselle's* room an hour before the time set, when she was lying on a lounge "with one leg, almost naked, hanging down." Salvatico fell in love with the leg and exhausted himself in so many "Ah, ah's" of admiration and other love-sick stunts that the Duke of Richelieu, having older rights, said to him: "Rogue, if you had your deserts I would cut off your two ears!"

No man, except my husband, has seen my legs, which is a pity, perhaps, but the extreme *décolleté* demanded at certain court functions, especially in Berlin, gained me many epistolary lovers, whose homage I accept gracefully, but in silence, of course.

Still, a malicious thing like the Tisch, if one gives her enough rope, might arrange, on paper at least, to get me with child by a Lothario a hundred miles off, even as the children of Madame de Montespan and Louis XIV were credited to the Marquis, her husband, residing a hundred leagues away, at Guienne. Let me find her red-handed and she will fare even worse than Schoenstein.

CHAPTER XXIV

MORE TYRANNY OF A TITLED SERVANT

My daily papers seized, and only milk-and-water clippings are submitted—"King's orders"—Grand Mistress's veracity doubted—My threats of suspension cow her.

LOSCHWITZ, *September 10,*

1894.

This morning there were no newspapers at the usual hour. Instead, the Tisch furnished a heap of clippings carefully pasted up—the veriest milk-and-water slush "ever." Instanter I sent for my tormentor.

"What's this?" I demanded.

"Today's papers, Your Imperial Highness."

"You made these clippings?"

"At Your Imperial Highness's commands."

"And you think me ninny enough to be satisfied with reading no more than what you consider proper for me to see?"

The Tisch wavered not a bit. "His Majesty the King is served the same fashion."

"No matter. I want my papers whole, and don't you dare to mutilate them." By way of letting her down easier I added: "Don't give yourself the trouble."

"No trouble, I assure your Imperial Highness. With your permission, then, I will continue to clip for Your Imperial Highness."

I rose and, measuring her from head to toe with flaming eyes, I said: "You will do nothing of the kind, do you understand?"

The impertinent cat insisted: "But I think it proper——"

"Have you heard what I said or not, Baroness?"

She tried to save her face by asserting, "I am acting by command of His Majesty."

"I will ask His Majesty whether you spoke the truth," I said quick as a flash; "meanwhile you are suspended and will return to Dresden until recalled. Ring the bell and I will give orders to the Master of Horse to send you away."

Of course Tisch couldn't afford such an inquiry to be made, which would have exposed her clumsy hand and, as remarked, royalty doesn't care to be found out. Defeat staring her in the face, Tisch wavered: "Of course, if your Imperial Highness chooses to take the responsibility, I will be most happy to submit the papers as they arrive."

"In their wrappers," I commanded, as I dismissed her.

By distributing a hundred marks in silver, I found out that the Tisch examines my body-servants daily and that, night after night, she sits up hours writing long-winded reports. She is the King's tool, but she let the cat out of the bag when cornered. That gives me the whip hand for the time being.

CHAPTER XXV

THE TWO BLACK SHEEP OF THE FAMILY UNITED

Leopold upon my troubles and his own—Imperial Hapsburgs that, though Catholics, got divorces or married divorced women—Books that are full of guilty knowledge, according to royalty—A mud-hole lodging for one Imperial Highness—Leopold's girl—What I think of army officers' wives—Their anonymous letters—Leopold's money troubles—We will fool our enemies by feigning obedience.

LOSCHWITZ, *September 15,*

1894.

Leopold is with me, the brother two years older than I. They just made him a Major—a twelve-month later than his patent calls for.

Like myself, he is almost permanently in disgrace with the head of the family, even as I am with the King and Prince George. We had no sooner embraced and kissed, than I asked him for the latest gossip concerning the Crown Princess of Saxony.

"You are a tough one," he said, shaking his finger with amused mockery. According to Vienna court gossip, "I threw Prince George out of doors," when he "raised his hand against me," Frederick Augustus and myself haven't been on speaking terms for six months; and the Saxe family was actually considering the advisability of divorce.

Of course I told Leopold how things really are.

"Then there will be no divorce?" he asked.

"If the King and Prince George leave me alone,—no."

"Too bad," he said with a laugh, "that knocks me out of the pleasure of maintaining my *thesis* that the founder of the Christian religion didn't believe in indissoluble marriage, but, on the contrary, in divorce if such couldn't be avoided."

"Who told you that?"

"Professor Wärmund is preparing a paper on the subject," said Leopold, who, as remarked, is a very well-read chap and a student. He named five or six emperors and kings, Catholics, some of them members of the Austrian Imperial family, who obtained divorces, or married divorced women. I jotted down the list.

Lothair II divorced his wife Theutberga and married his love, Waldrade.

Emperor Frederick I divorced the Empress Anna on the plea that she was sterile. She married a Count, with whom she had a dozen children.

Margaret, a daughter of Leopold VI of Austria, was divorced by King Ottokar of Bohemia.

John Henry, Prince of Bohemia, divorced his wife Margareta, who afterwards married an ancestor of the Kaiser, Ludwig of Brandenburg.

King Ladislaus of Sicily divorced Queen Constance and forced his vassal, Andrea di Capua, to marry her against his will. Ten years later Ladislaus married Maria de Lusignan.

But a little knowledge is a terrible thing, if it happens to be acquired by a prince. Princes are supposed to know nothing but the art and the *finesses* of destruction—war. Upbuilding is not in their line.

"I hear you are exercising a bad influence on Louise," roared our uncle, the Emperor, at Leopold when the latter took leave from him. "You furnished to her those infernal books, sowing the seed of guilty knowledge?"

Leopold so far forgot himself as to address a question to the "All-Highest": "What infernal books?"

"Books full of indecencies and obscenities, in short pornographic literature," shouted the head of the family, turned his horse and rode away in high dudgeon. Royal arguments are nothing if not one-sided!

Then Leopold told of himself. His garrison: a filthy mud-hole in Poland. One-story houses and everybody peeping into everybody else's windows. The few notables of the town and neighborhood tickled to death because they have an Imperial Highness with them, and the fool of an Imperial Highness goes and "besots himself with a mere country lass." He showed me her photograph. I like her looks. A pretty face, blonde hair and soft eyes. He was her first lover. On his account she left her family. She dotes on him as a dog dotes on his master.

Leopold is eccentric enough to jeopardize his career for this poor thing. He rented a small house for her and spends much of his time there when not on the drill-grounds.

Hence intense indignation among the "respectable ladies." An Imperial Highness within reach and he "doesn't come to our dances, he doesn't visit and sends his regrets when invited!"

Poor Marja suffers especially from the venom of the officers' wives,—cattle I detest. No royal or imperial prince is safe from them except in his mother's womb.

"From morn till night and half the night they do nothing but gossip about me and my girl," said Leopold,—"If the cats were only satisfied with that! But every little while I get an anonymous letter from one of them, denouncing her; Marja is favored in a similar way; so is my general and our uncle, the Emperor."

And needless to say Leopold can't get along on his salary and appanage. Father can't give him much. The Emperor won't, because the clergy intrigues against him as a free-thinker and non-church-goer.

We thought long and deep whether it wouldn't be possible to improve our position and we decided on this:

We will keep up each other's spirits by clandestine correspondence, carried on with the aid of a mutual friend. At the same time we will, apparently, fall in with the ideas of "our masters" and endure a few pin-pricks rather than waste our strength in useless opposition.

Let no one chide us for hypocrites, because our gentleness will be a mask, our submission a snare, our obedience a lie. It's all on the outside. Inwardly Leopold and Louise will remain true to themselves.

CHAPTER XXVI

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS CONTINUES VERY RAW

Manners *à la* barracks natural to royal princes—Names I am called—My ladies scandalized—Leopold turned over a new leaf, according to agreement, and is well treated—The King grateful to me for having "influenced Leopold to be good."

LOSCHWITZ, *October 1,*

1894.

I have tried it a fortnight during Frederick Augustus' sojourn here, and, like the French Countess who fell in love with the strong man of the circus, I am disappointed. Frederick Augustus considers my tractability *carte blanche* to carry into the boudoir of an Imperial Princess the license of the brothel. He treats me like a kept-woman—all with the utmost good-nature. I am called names such as the other Augustus bestowed on the mothers of his three hundred and fifty-two, and I daren't remind him that some day I'll be Queen of these realms.

This prince, like the majority of them, hasn't the ghost of an idea of a sensitive woman's nature. He paws me over like a prize cow, and as the fourteenth Louis esteemed his mistress's chamber-women no more worthy of notice than her lap-dogs, so Frederick Augustus makes love *à la*

barracks before the Schoenberg, Countess von Minckwitz, or whatever other lady is in attendance.

Only when he does it before the Tisch I am inclined to be amused rather than incensed. Tisch, cadaverous beanpole, never felt a loving touch on her shoulder. The place where her bosom should be never experienced a friendly squeeze. No one ever cared whether she wore silk stockings or rubber boots—be amorous, Frederick Augustus, when the Tisch is 'round! Indulge your coarseness! Put twenty-mark pieces in my stockings for a kiss. Tell gay stories and don't forget playing with my corsage. It will make the old woman mad. It will remind her of what she missed—of what she will miss all her life!

LOSCHWITZ, *October 10,*

1894.

Letter from Leopold. He is going to church and—they leave his mistress in peace.

He is paying banal compliments to the noble-women of his garrison and pinches the officers' wives when he finds one in a corner—and they seem to live in corners when His Imperial Highness is around—hence, no more anonymous letters!

The spy planted in his household by the Emperor is allowed to see much of the "innocent" correspondence passing between me and Leopold. He has reported to Francis Joseph that the Prince turned over a new leaf.

Result: Leopold's debts have been paid and he got about two thousand marks over and above his wants.

Further results: A gracious letter from the King's House Marshal, Baron Carlowitz, praising me for "the good influence I am exercising on Leopold."

Truly the world wants to be deceived.

CHAPTER XXVII

PRINCE MAX MAKES LOVE TO ME

Wants me to consult him on all spiritual matters—Warns me against the Kaiser, the heretic bishop—Princes as ill-mannered as Russian-Jew up-starts.

DRESDEN, *November 15,*

1894.

Prince Max called on me the day of my arrival and promised me an armchair in Paradise for "reforming" Leopold. "I understand that your family life is ideal now," he added. "What bliss!"

"Oh, Louise," he continued, with the face of a donkey withdrawing his nozzle from a syrup barrel, "whenever doubtful of the right way, of the Lord's way, come to me."

It would have been un-politic to repulse the grotesque ape, and I said: "I will. I will even give you the preference over the Kaiser, who asked me the same thing—as *summus episcopus*, of course."

Max looked about the room. We were alone, yet he lowered his voice to a faint whisper. "William is a heretic. Don't trust him in religious matters," he breathed stealthily. And this devilish Max began to stroke my hands and admire a bracelet I wore above the elbow.

The Kaiser wouldn't have gone much further under the circumstances. Maybe he would have kissed my arm, though, from wrist to pit.

Tonight family tea in the Queen's *salon*. The King an icicle, but polite as a French marquis. He gave me the three "*How art thou's*" in the space of five minutes, asked after the babies and promised to come and look them over.

Frederick Augustus, half insane with delight, pinched my arm and squeezed my leg under the table. I felt like boxing his ears.

My father-in-law had to behave in the presence of the King and said a few commonplaces to me.

Johann George and Isabella talked automobiles, not to let us forget they are millionaires.

"How much did you pay for my blue car?" asked Isabella.

"Not much," replied Johann George; "sixty thousand francs, if I recollect rightly."

"My allowance for a whole year." I smiled my sweetest, and the King looked disapprovingly at the braggarts.

For ill manners recommend me to a Russian-Jew upstart or to a Royal Highness.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SHAH OF PERSIA FALLS IN LOVE WITH ME

The "animal" and his show of diamonds and rubies—Overcome by love he treats me like a lady of the harem—On the defensive—The King of kings an ill-behaved brute—Eats like a pig and affronts Queen—Wiped off greasy hands on my state robe—When ten thousand gouged-out eyes carpeted his throne—Offers of jewels—"Does he take me for a ballet girl?"—The Shah almost compromises me—King, alarmed, abruptly ends dinner—I receive presents from him.

DRESDEN, *November 20,*

1894.

Lover No. two. Very much in earnest, like the first, but I—extremely distant this time, though I accepted some emeralds and sapphires as big as dove's eggs. The Shah of Persia is the happy-unhappy man.

The King and all the Princes went to the railway station to receive him. The Queen and Princesses, our entourage behind us, assembled in the throne room to do honor to the "animal." To designate him otherwise would be callow flattery.

But his diamonds and rubies fairly dazzled us. Nothing like it in Europe, and our gala uniforms, compared with his, like stage tiaras to the Russian Crown jewels!

Though he had eyes for me only, I didn't like him a bit. He is a little fellow, unsecure on his pins. And like the Balkan princeling I met in Vienna, looks as though there was a strain of Jewish blood in his veins.

Like a true Oriental potentate, he wasted not a minute's time on the Queen and my sisters-in-law, but began making love to me as soon as he entered. The King had to take him by the arm to remind him that his first greetings were due to her Majesty. Poor Carola! Her face looked like parchment, much interlined, and the point of her nose was as conspicuous as usual.

There's nothing elegant about this "King of kings," and his French, like his manners, is atrocious. He addressed a few set phrases to the Queen, then attacked me—"attacked" is the right word. If I hadn't been on the defensive, I think he would have handled my charms as unceremoniously as Frederick Augustus when in his cups. As it was I escaped but by the length of an eye-lash.

State dinner at five. I never saw such an ill-behaved brute, yet he intended to be most agreeable. We are very pious at this court, but on occasions like this even an old woman like the Queen is obliged to denude herself like a wet-nurse on duty.

His Majesty had the Queen on one side; me on the left. The King of Saxony was opposite.

After we sat down the Shah examined Queen Carola from the point of her chin to the edge of her desolate corsage and had the effrontery to express disapproval in all but words. Then he turned to me. His gaze became admiring. He was evidently delighted with his discoveries and, true despot that he is, turned his back on the Queen, while paying extravagant court to my charms.

The King, the whole vast assembly, the surrounding splendor were lost on this mutton-eater of a barbarian. He saw only me, *m-e*, ME, and I'm sure would have consigned all the rest to some unspeakable Oriental death for five minutes' *tête-à-tête* with Louise.

"You are neglecting Her Majesty," I whispered to him over and over again. This seemed to enrage him, but at last he turned to the Queen, expecting her to begin a conversation with him. Of course, Her Majesty thought he would take the initiative, which led to mutual staring, the Shah's eyes growing wickeder every second. Then he began to devote himself to the food and, be sure, there was small pleasure in watching him. He fed more like a dog than a human being and actually had the effrontery to wipe his sauce-spattered hands in the lap of my state robe.

Then, before his mouth was empty, he began talking again.

"Which of the princes is your husband?"

I singled out Frederick Augustus. "He isn't a beauty by any means," he said, after examining him like a horse for sale.

The next second his eyes were wandering over my body; I felt as if I was being disrobed.

"You will attend the opera?"

"I'll have the honor."

"I will send you a little present after dinner," he said. "If you wear it tonight, I will regard that as a sign of hope." The beast affected a sentimentality to which he must be a stranger.

I recalled that he was the monster who carpeted the steps of his throne with the gouged-out eyes of ten thousand enemies of his régime when he was crowned. On twenty-thousand human eyes he trod with naked feet as he acclaimed himself "King of kings" and the "true son of God." And Juggernaut was in love with me!

I was speechless. Did he take me for a dancing girl? I narrowed my shoulders and gave him a look of disdain. House Marshal Baron Carlowitz, standing behind the King's chair, took in the situation and whispered to King Albert.

The King immediately rose from table and the state dinner came to an abrupt end.

An hour later, while I was dressing for the theatre, a big jewel box was handed in. "From the Shah."

Despite my disgust with the fellow, I opened it in feverish haste. There was a bracelet set with rubies, sapphires and emeralds of fabulous size.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE SHAH COMPROMISES ME IN PUBLIC

Has only eyes for me at the grand manœuvres, and I can't drive him from my carriage—Ignores the King and the military spectacle—Calls me his adored one—Court in despair—Shah ruins priceless carpets to make himself a lamb stew.

DRESDEN, *December 1,*

1894.

I am in disgrace again and that uncouth animal, the Shah, is responsible.

The dinner episode was bad enough, but he carried on worse at the grand parade next day.

Six or eight regiments, Horse, Foot and Artillery, had been moved to do him honor, but he flatly refused to accept a mount for the occasion. Like the ladies of the royal family, he drove to the parade field in a coach and four, and no sooner did he clap eyes on me at the rendezvous in another vehicle than he left his and shambled over to me. He stood at the carriage door, chanting love and devotion, and if I hadn't been all ice, I have no doubt he would have jumped in and ordered the coachman to drive to a hotel.

Meanwhile the King trotted around the manœuvre field in honor of his "sublime guest." Evolutions, *Parade-marsch*, attacks, saluting the colors, Persian and Saxon, what not? Imagine the feelings of the old King when he rode up to the Shah's gala coach and found it empty.

The marching past had begun, and still the "King of kings" turned his back on it all, while trying to persuade me to be Queen of his seraglio.

Our courtiers, the princes, the Queen, the generals were in despair. They took counsel with each other, disputed, advised, got red in the face. The Shah's gentlemen alone kept cool. They probably argued: If our master prefers the company of a pretty woman to looking at ten thousand men, he shows his good taste.

I tried to shake him off. He stood his ground and smiled.

"The Grand March has begun, Your Majesty."

"Bother the Grand March."

The King began to bombard me with ungracious, glances, and of course everybody stared. Three times I asked the big booby to return to his carriage to oblige his host. "Not while I may look at you, adored one."

His love-making became desperate. The Crown Princess of Saxony, the Imperial Highness of Austria, the "adored one" of this butcher, who was ruining twenty-five thousand marks' worth of carpets in his apartments at our palace by using them as a shambles to prepare his breakfast of lamb stew. It was contemptible,—nay, ridiculous. Surely there was nothing to do but laugh. And I laughed and laughed again.

Only when the last battalion had marched by and the music ceased, the "King of kings" returned to his carriage and drove back to Dresden with the most bored looking visage of the world.

CHAPTER XXX

MY LIFE AT COURT BECOMES UNBEARABLE

Laughter a crime—Disappointed Queen lays down the law for my behavior—
Frederick Augustus sometimes fighting drunk—Draws sword on me—Prince
George would have me beaten—To bed with his boots on.

DRESDEN, *January 5,*

1895.

Ever since the Shah left I have been the object of criticism, suspicions and down-right attacks by the pretty family I married into. These pages witness that I tried to conform to the absurd notions and comply with the narrow-minded idiosyncrasies of the Royal Wettiners. I give it up. It can't be done, and I won't make another effort at pleasing my relatives-in-law, who adjudge laughter a crime and the desire to make friends a bid of lewdness.

Prince George invented the phrase, "Louise is over-desirous to please," and Queen Carola paid me a state visit to acquaint me with the new indictment.

"Good gracious," I said to Her Majesty, "is that all? I thought of being accused of 'sassing' the Archangel Gabriel. As to desire to please, that's exactly what ails me. I love to please. I love to see people happy. I love to make friends."

"My dear child," said the Queen, "you haven't the slightest notion of royal dignity. You talk like a *cocotte*. It's a Princess's place to be honored, to be held in supreme esteem."

Poor old woman! She was never pretty, never was made love to, never had admirers, legitimate or otherwise; she thus became impregnated with the fixed idea that to be fair and to be loved for one's fairness is frivolous, if not altogether reprehensible.

March 10, 1895.

Frederick Augustus drinks. He says I drive him to drink by my attitude towards his beloved family. What the beloved family does to me doesn't count, of course.

Drinking was one of the vices of his youth. Love for me cured him of the dreadful habit. As this love wanes, the itch for alcohol increases.

I can't do anything with him when he is drunk, and at such times I am afraid of him. He both nauseates me and frightens me. Sometimes he comes home "fighting drunk." The fumes of wine, beer and *Schnapps*, mixed with tobacco, upset my stomach and I try to avoid his coarse embrace as any decent woman would.

What does this royal drill-ground bully do? He unsheathes his sword and threatens to cut my liver out, unless I instantly doff my clothes and go to bed with him.

Prince George's evil counsel wasn't powerful enough to procure me beatings, but my husband's military education, his love of discipline, backed by alcohol, thrusts a sword into his hand, and, if I refuse to comply with his atrocious demands, I am liable to be treated like so many "mere" civilians that are sabred in the public streets for refusing to do some spurred and epauletted blackguard's bidding, or entertain his insults.

If the Socialists, who are forever railing against these self-same army poltroons, only knew it! An Imperial Highness threatened like a small "cit" with a four-foot sword in the hand of a drunken Royal Highness and dragged to a couch with no more ceremony than a street-walker passing a Cossack barracks!

The howl that would go up in the Diet, or the *Reichstag*, the fulminant denials by prince and king and government! And if I really did get hurt in one of these fracasés, Frederick Augustus would be sure of a "severe reprimand" by father and uncle, and perhaps by the Kaiser, too, but would that heal my wounds, would it save me from death? Would it even prevent Prince George from saying that I myself was to blame?

No, no, I like a whole skin and prefer an embrace to a sword-thrust any day, like my ancestress, the Queen of Naples, who consummated the marriage forced upon her on the spot and in sight of the army rather than have her head cut off. Too bad she was hanged in the end despite her complacency.^[5]

Indeed, if Frederick Augustus shows the mailed fist, I don't stand on ceremony, but I do wish he would take his boots off.

FOOTNOTES:

- [5] Joanna I, Queen of Naples, a pupil of Petrarca and in many respects an enlightened ruler. She issued the first laws and regulations regarding prostitutes. Hanged by order of King Louis of Hungary, after her defeat in battle, July, 1381.

CHAPTER XXXI

PRISON FOR PRINCES THAT OPPOSE THE KING

Duke of Saxony banished—Cut off from good literature even—Anecdote concerning the Grand Dauphin and his "kettledrums"—A royal prince's garrison life—His association with lewd women.

DRESDEN, *September 1,*

1895.

I have once more come to the conclusion that the agreement I made with Leopold, to dissimulate my real feelings, was the sanest decision I ever formed, for, while *lettres de cachet* are a dead measure as far as ordinary mortals go, kings still wield that awful and mysterious abuse of power in the family circle.

There is a distant connection of our "sublime master," the King, lingering, without process of law, in a state prison. Duke of Saxony is his title, and he is quite rich in his own right. Some six or eight years ago he raised his hand against the King after the latter struck him.

It was suggested that he had better make away with himself, and a revolver and poison were conspicuously displayed in the room where he was held captive.

The Duke said "nay." He thought he could "brass" it out. But the assembled family council taught him that, while the world at large was *fin-de-siècle*, royalty still lived in the traditions of the eighteenth century. It empowered the King to banish his kinsman to a lonely country house, styled castle by courtesy, and he is confined there even today, with the proviso, though, that he may use the surrounding hunting-grounds. Otherwise he lives in complete seclusion, separated not only from all his friends, but from the very classes of society to which he belongs by birth and education. And he is still a young man.

I believe they are trying to drive him mad, once as a punishment, and again to secure his fortune the quicker. To the latter end, he is denied all books that give him pleasure and are liable to improve his mind. Bibles, Christian Heralds, the Lives of the Martyrs, or the Popes, galore, but never a Carlyle, Shakespeare or Taine, which he demands regularly.

The Duke is dying of *ennui*, they say, and to kill time engages in all sorts of manual labor. When he gets tired of that he blows the trombone.

"Of course he would prefer a pair of kettledrums," said my cousin Bernhardt of Weimar, to whom I am indebted for the above.

"Kettledrums?" I asked.

"I mean those the Grand Dauphin, called 'Son of a king, father of a king, never a king,' was so fond of, and which he finally married in secret."

I looked bewildered.

"You are a very ignorant girl," said Bernhardt. "Never heard of the prodigious bosoms of *Mademoiselle Chouin*?"

"They won't let the Duke marry?" I queried.

"Not even temporarily," said Bernhardt. "And they are trying the same game on me. My garrison—a dung-heap. The people there, males and females, entirely unacquainted with soap and water. Nothing in the world to do but drink and gamble."

"That reminds me. What are you doing in Dresden?"

"With Your Imperial Highness's permission, I came to see my girl."

"Who is the lady?"

"No lady at all. Just an ordinary servant-wench, but prettier and more devilish than a hundred of them."

"Bernhardt!"

"What would you have me do, Louise? I haven't money enough to keep a mistress, and King and Queen certainly won't keep one for me. I wish I had lived a hundred and fifty years ago, when every lady of the court was expected to entertain the royal princes, the Palace footing the bill."

CHAPTER XXXII

PRINCE GEORGE SHOWN THE DOOR BY GRAND-DUCHESS MELITA

A royal lady who walks her garden attired in a single diaphanous garment—Won't stand for any meddling—Called impertinent—My virtuous indignation assumed—A flirtation at a distance—An audacious lover—The Grand Mistress hoodwinked—Matrimonial horns for Kaiser—The banished Duke dies—Princes scolded like school-boys.

DRESDEN, *February 5,*

1896.

At last Prince George got his deserts, and got 'em good and heavy. There had been rumors for some time that Grand-duke Ernest Ludwig and his bride, Victoria Melita of Saxe-Coburg, the English branch, didn't get along together. Ernest Ludwig is a serious-minded, modest and intelligent man, but a good deal of a sissy. Victoria Melita is a spit-fire, very good-looking and anxious to let people know about it. She rides horseback and fences to show off her figure, and someone called her a Centaur.

"Be in the palace gardens tomorrow at eleven," answered Melita, "and you will be convinced that I am not half-horse, even if my husband is a ninny."

She kept the *rendezvous*, attired in a single garment of diaphanous texture.

When Prince George heard that she had a lover, he went to Darmstadt to "correct her," as he expressed himself with much self-satisfaction.

But Victoria Melita proved to him that English princesses are made of sterner stuff than the German variety.

"I will have none of your meddling," said the bride of two years.

"I came here to make peace between you people."

"Play the dove to your daughter-in-law," quoth the Grand-duchess. "I hear you are fighting like Kilkenny cats."

"You are impertinent, Madame," cried George furiously.

"You will oblige me by showing this man the door," demanded Victoria Melita, addressing her husband.

"Not until I have explained the situation," answered Ernest Ludwig quietly. "Listen, then, cousin! While I am by principle opposed to divorce, I won't force my wife to live with me."

"And now be so kind as to withdraw," said Victoria Melita, opening the door for Prince George. Poor as I am, I would have given five thousand marks to have seen the meddling pest exit in that fashion, and I love Victoria Melita for the spirit she displayed, even if I don't approve of her *liaisons*.

DRESDEN, *February 10,*

1896.

A mighty virtuous remark escaped me on the last page, and I almost feel like asking the Grand-duchess's pardon, for, whatever I am, I'm no hypocrite. Melita is said to have a lover; I have an admirer. Up to now I don't care a rap for him, but who knows?

It's Count Bielsk of the Roumanian Embassy. I can't remember whether he was ever introduced to me. Most probably he was, but I forgot.

An elegant fellow—always looks as if he stepped out of a tailor's shop in Piccadilly.

Every single night I go to the theatre the Count occupies an orchestra chair that affords the best possible view of the royal box. It happened too often and too persistently to be accidental. Moreover, I observe that he pays no attention to the play. He has eyes for me only.

Impertinence? Decidedly, but I can't be angry with the fellow. On the contrary, I am flattered, and the kind face and the fine eyes he's got!

Poor stupid Tisch doesn't approve of the theatre, of course, and usually begs to be excused on the plea of religious duties. "What a sinner you must be," I sometimes say, "when you are obliged to forever bother God with prayers."

The Schoenberg I send into the next box, for she is no spy and never watches me. But if I must take Tisch, I always command her to sit behind me. Etiquette forbids her the front of the box and from the rear she can see only the stage.

What fun to carry on a flirtation right under the nose of that acrid-hearted, snivelling bigot, who would mortgage part of the eternal bliss she promises herself for a chance to catch me at it!

Am I flirting, then?

To spite the Tisch I would plant horns on the very Kaiser.

April 1,
1896.

The Duke of Saxony is dead—the man who at one time offered violence to His Majesty. Bernhardt was mistaken; he left a wife and three children. Of course, no recognized wife. Just the woman he married. Unless you are of the blood-royal, you won't see the difference, but that is no concern of mine.

Novels and story books have a good deal to say on the subject of inheritance-fights among the lowly. Greed, hard-heartedness, close-fistedness, treachery, cheating all around! See what will happen to the Duke's widow and her little ones.

According to the house laws, a regular pirate's code, his late Highness's fortune reverts to the family treasury. Prince Johann George will derive the revenues from the real estate the Duke owned privately. He is already rich,—sufficient reason for his wanting more. I shudder when I think what they will do to the woman the Duke married.

The most notable thing about the funeral was the "calling down" Prince Bernhardt got.

"You will go to my valet and ask him to lend you one of my helmets. Yours is not the regulation form, I see," said the King to him in the voice of a drill-sergeant. And Bernhardt had to take to his heels like a school-boy caught stealing apples.

I had to laugh when I observed the meeting between my erstwhile admirer, the Prince of Bulgaria, and His Majesty.

Ferdinand's broad chest was ablaze with orders and decorations, but his valet had forgotten to pin onto him the Cross of the *Rautenkron*e, the Royal Saxe House decoration. There were plenty of others, but the King had eyes only for the one not dangling from a green ribbon. Consequently, Ferdinand, though a sovereign Prince, got only one "*How art thou?*" If we were living in the eighteenth, instead of the nineteenth, century, his valet's neglect would constitute a prime cause for war between the two countries.

CHAPTER XXXIII

MELITA'S LOVE AFFAIRS AND MINE

The Grand Duchess tells me how she cudgeled George—Living dictaphone employed—Shows him who is mistress of the house—Snaps fingers in Prince George's face—Debate about titles—"A sexless thing of a husband"—Conference between lover and husband—Grand Duke doesn't object to his wife's lover, but lover objects to "his paramour being married."

DRESDEN, April 15,

1896.

Melita conducted herself at the funeral and in our palace as unconcernedly as if she and George were fast friends. She smiled every time she saw him, and he cut her dead to his heart's content. During the three days' stay of the Hesses, I had many a good talk and many a good laugh with Melita, and now I got a true and unabridged record of what happened at Darmstadt during George's meddling visit there.

The Grand-duchess, who can be as catty as they make 'em, had her secretary sit behind a screen to take stenographic notes.

Saxon kings and princes always roar and bellow when, in conversation or otherwise, things go against their "all-highest" grain. As soon as George felt that he was losing ground, he began to bark and yell, whereupon Melita interrupted him by saying, "I beg you to take notice that you are in *my* house."

George grew so red in the face, Melita hoped for an apoplectic fit. But after a few seconds he managed to blurt out: "It's your husband's house."

"While I am Grand-duchess of Hesse it's my house, too. Moreover, this is my room and I forbid you to play the ruffian here."

Prince George looked at the Grand-duke, but Ernest Ludwig said nothing.

"I am here as the King's representative. I represent the chief of the Royal House of Saxony."

"A fig for your Royal House of Saxony," said Melita, snapping her fingers in George's face. "Queen Victoria is my chief of family, and, that aside, Ludwig and I are sovereigns in Hesse and have no intention whatever to allow anyone——"

"Anyone?" repeated George aghast. "You refer to me as anyone?"

"In things matrimonial," said Melita, "only husband and wife count; all others are 'anyone.' You, too."

"She calls me 'you,'" cried George, white with rage, looking helplessly at Ernest Ludwig. When the latter kept his tongue and temper, George addressed himself to Melita once more.

"I want you to understand that my title is Royal Highness."

"And I want you to understand that I am Her Royal Highness the Grand-duchess of Hesse, Royal Princess of Great Britain and Ireland, Duchess of Saxony," cried Melita, stamping her foot.

With that she went to the door, opened it and said, "I request Your Royal Highness to leave my house this very second."

And George went.

DRESDEN, *June 1, 1896.*

Poor virtuous me, to chide myself, and call myself names for flirting with Count Bielsk—at a distance of twenty feet or more! "I could kick my back," as the Duc de Richelieu—not the Cardinal, but the lover of the Regent's daughters and "every wife's husband"—used to say (only a bit more grossly) when I think what I miss in this dead-alive Dresden.

Darmstadt isn't half as big a town, and the Hesse establishment doesn't compare with ours in magnitude, but what fun Melita is having!

Of course, it isn't *all* fun, for her husband is a "sexless" thing, and, like the Grand-duchess Serge of Russia, she would be a virgin, though married for years, if it wasn't for the other.

"The other" is none other but Kyril, the lover of our Dolores,—Kyril isn't exactly pining away when separated from Melita.

Well, Melita wants him all to herself. She wants a divorce. The complacent husband, who is no husband at all, doesn't suit her. Exit Ernest Ludwig—officially. Enter Kyril—legitimately.

She made me reams of confidences, indulged in whole *brochures* of dissertations on the question of sex. What an ignoramus I am! I didn't understand half she said and was ashamed to ask.

Ernest Ludwig is the most accommodating of husbands. Knows all about Kyril and would gladly shut both eyes if they let him. Melita might, if pressed very hard, for adultery has no terrors for her, but Kyril affects the idealist. Sure sign that he really loves her. If he was mine, I would be afraid of this Kyril. No doubt he is jealous as a Turk.

Last week the three of them had a conference. Lovely to see husband, wife and paramour "in peaceful meeting assembled" and talk over the situation as if it concerned the Royal stud or something of the sort.

No recriminations, no threats, no heroics; only when Ernest Ludwig submitted that divorce be avoided to save his face as a sovereign, Kyril got a bit excited.

"This is not a question of politics," he said, "or what the dear public thinks. Your wife don't want you; as a matter of fact, she isn't your wife, and since we are in love with each other, we ought to marry."

"Marry, marry, why always marry?" demanded the Grand-duke. "I acknowledge that I haven't the right to interfere in my wife's pleasure—I am not built that way. Well, I *don't* interfere. What more do you want? You don't deny that I am the chief person to be considered."

"You?" mocked Kyril. "You with your sovereignty are not in it at all. If it wasn't for you, Melita and I could marry and say no more about it."

"But I don't prevent your enjoyment of each other," pleaded the ruler of the Hessians.

Now the idealistic Kyril got on his high horse. "Grand-duke," he said, "if you don't object to your wife having a lover, that's your business. For my part, I object to my paramour having a husband."

And so on *ad infinitum*, and a goose like me abuses herself for a bit of goo-goo-eyeing.

CHAPTER XXXIV

MORE ABOUT THE SWEET ROYAL FAMILY LIFE

"Closed season" for petty meannesses—A prince who enjoys himself like a pig—Why princes learn trades—A family dinner to the accompaniment of threats and smashing of table—The Duke's widow and children robbed of their inheritance by

LOSCHWITZ, *September 13,*

1896.

They are treating me like a laying hen. Expect another golden egg in December. Hence, "closed season" for imperious commands, "all-highest" orders and petty meannesses.

When I learned that Bernhardt was in Dresden, I phoned him to come out and see me—without asking either royal, princely, or the Tisch's permission.

A junior prince, without fortune or high protector, is really to be pitied. His title, the vague possibility that some day he may be called to the throne, stand between him and enjoyment of life as a man. Nothing left, but to enjoy himself like a pig.

Bernhardt admits it. "They planted me in the God-forsakenest hole in the kingdom. If I saw a pretty woman in my garrison from one year's end to the other, I would die of joy. And the newspaper scribblers wonder why we are all Oscar Wildes.

"Just to kill time, I am learning the carpenter's trade—this Royal Highness, you must know, lives in a carpenter's house, as innocent of sanitary arrangements as a Bushman's hut. Of course, I run away every little while to Dresden, incog. to pay my respects to Venus.

"Louise," he cried with comic emphasis, "may the three hours you steal from my girl, by way of this visit, be deducted from your eternal beatitude."

I lent the poor fellow five hundred marks and he rushed back to Dresden.

Tonight I told Frederick Augustus of my interview with Bernhardt, not mentioning the five hundred, of course.

He laughed. "He's no worse than the rest of us used to be," he said. "I did exactly like him, and father and uncle and brothers and cousins, ditto. Behold—your husband-locksmith! Max spent all his time reading the Lives of the Popes. That made him the dried-up mummy he is. But, believe me, I gave the girls many a treat. All the money I could beg, borrow or steal went for girls."

Which explains Frederick Augustus's bedroom manners—sometime transplanted to the parlor.

DRESDEN, *January 1,*

1897.

I gave Saxony a third prince on December 9, and really I wasn't quite in condition to be scolded at today's family dinner. But since, with three boys growing up, the succession is more than guaranteed, the season for insults is again open.

His Majesty, our most gracious, sublime, etc., sovereign, sulks. Consequently the family looks glum, down in the mouth, utterly unhappy.

Max gets up to make a speech and one could fairly see the lies wriggle out of his mouth full of defective teeth: exemplary family life; traditional friendship of all members for each other; perfect unity; the King and all the princes brave as lions; the Queen and all the princesses paragons of virtue. And the fatherly love with which the King embraces us all; his more than royal generosity; his mildness, his Christian virtues!

The Queen is a goose. Max's lying commonplaces make her forget her many years of misery spent at this court, and she grows as sentimental as a kitten. Fat Mathilda, Isabelle and Johann George applaud Max despite their better understanding, and now the King rises to make his usual New Year's address.

The gist of his long-winded remarks is this: "I am the lord, your master, and I will see to it that you—wife, brother, nephews and nieces—will dance as I whistle.

"For obedience to the King is the highest law," he paraphrases Wilhelm,—"strictest, unconditional obedience" (and he gave me a poisoned look) "and let no one forget it, no one." With that he beat the table with his clenched fist, and the whole assemblage turns an accusing eye on me.

DRESDEN, *April 6, 1897.*

They have driven the late Duke of Saxony's wife and children from house and home—put her on the high-road, piling her personal belongings, trunks, wardrobe and knick-knacks outside, too.

She arrived in Dresden and sought refuge with her widowed mother. Her father, a Court-Councillor, dismissed because of the relations between the Duke and his daughter, died of grief and mortification, almost penniless. And the Ducal widow is as poor as the mother—and three children to bring up! Children of the royal blood of Saxony, children sanctioned by the Church of which they prate so much, for there is no doubt that the pair married in secret.

The late Highness kept all his papers in a strong-box, and it's said the King's representative, who searched the safe by Royal orders, found neither acknowledgment of the marriage, nor a last will in favor of the widow and children. Hence, all the Duke's belongings revert to the royal family, and the estate he lived on goes to his next of kin, Johann George.

Johann George, who has more money than he knows what to do with, promptly sent the bailiff after his cousin's wife and children.

"*Noblesse oblige*,—the way you interpret the old saying, will advance the cause of monarchy immensely," I said to the official heir.

"Is it any business of mine to support my relatives' mistresses?" I saw he was mad clean through.

"You know very well that she was his wife."

"There is apparently no official record of the marriage."

"Maybe not in Dresden, as the nuptials were solemnized abroad. But what about the testament?"

Johann George grew very red in the face. "If there is one, the King must have confiscated it. That often happens in royal houses."

"And you mean to say that, with all your riches, you are heartless enough and contemptible enough——"

"Take a care, Your Imperial Highness. The Duke's strumpet was today indicted for *lèse majesté* in connection with the testament matter." This junior prince dared to speak thus to me, the Crown Princess.

"Johann George," I cried, "forget not that sooner or later I will be at the head of the royal family of Saxony. I forbid you to introduce your mess-room jargon into my parlor; at the same time I am sincerely sorry that a Prince of Saxony should stoop to buy cigarettes and gasoline with the pittance stolen from his cousin's widow and her three little children."

I went to the door and told the lackey on duty to fetch his Royal Highness's carriage.

CHAPTER XXXV

FLIRTATION DEVELOPS INTO LOVE

At the theatre—My adorer must have felt my presence—Forgot his diplomacy—The mute salute—His good looks—His mouth a promise of a thousand sweet kisses—Our love won't be any painted business.

DRESDEN, *April 6, Night,*

1897.

The talk with Johann George had excited me so, I wanted a diversion. Frederick Augustus sent word that he wouldn't be home for dinner. Hence, I decided to go to the theatre after an absence of months. It was after six when I telephoned that I would occupy my box at the Royal Opera. If I should see Him there, in the absence of announcements in the newspapers!

He was there. In his usual seat. I won't rest until I find out how he manages to get wind of my theatrical ventures at such short notice. The Opera, Faust, had been in progress for ten minutes when I arrived. I espied him at once, but kept well behind the curtains of the box for a second or two. Then, suddenly, I dropped into the gilded armchair and the very same moment our eyes met.

I am sure he expected me; he must have known I was near when I entered the house. To his ears the hundred and one melodies of Gounod's masterpiece were naught compared with the music of my silken skirts.

He was so overcome, he forgot his diplomacy. Twice he pressed his right hand to his heart, then bowed his head in a mute salute.

Fortunately the house was dark at the time and the audience, unacquainted with my visit, paid strict attention to the stage. No one but him saw my heart leap within me and the blood mount to my cheeks. Presently his diplomatic tact got the upper hand again, and he fixed his eyes on the score. That afforded me the chance to take a pictorial inventory of my lover-at-a-distance. I used my opera-glasses unmercifully.

He's a fine looking man—if he were a woman he would be hailed a beauty. His forehead is a dream of loveliness; his mouth a promise of a thousand sweet kisses.

If this man wants me, I mean if he wants me badly, our love won't be any painted business, I assure you.

1897.

Ball at the Roumanian Embassy. Royal command to attend.

As if it needed a command to throw me into the arms of Bielsk.

CHAPTER XXXVI

COUNT BIELSK MAKES LOVE TO THE CROWN PRINCESS

Fearless to indiscretion—He "thou's" me—Puts all his chances on one card—Proposes a rendezvous—Shall I go or shall I not go?—Peril if I go and peril if I don't.

DRESDEN, April 26, 1897,

Night.

We went to the ball as His Majesty's representatives, Frederick Augustus and I, and were obliged to say a few nothingnesses to a hundred paltry persons or more. When the Ambassador introduced Count Bielsk, I said in the most careless voice of the world, "I hear you love the theatre, Count."

"I don't care a rap for the theatre," he replied. "I go to opera and operetta simply to see you, Imperial Highness."

Such audacity! And he spoke quite loud.

Frightened, I turned to the next person presented, saying something imbecile, no doubt.

Later I withdrew upon the dais to watch the dancing, and at a moment when I was quite alone, he came up to me, making it appear as if I had commanded his attendance.

"I have much to say to Your Imperial Highness."

I didn't have my wits about me and didn't know how to act. He repeated twice or oftener: "Pray, Your Imperial Highness, I have something to say to you," until, at last, I threw etiquette to the winds and asked:

"Why should you wish to talk to me in private, Count?" No royal woman indulging in lovers ever encouraged a rogue more carelessly.

"Because my life and happiness depend on what I have to say to you."

And, weaker still, I assented by the tone of my voice rather than words: "You make me curious, Count. Whatever you have to say, say it now."

He raised his eyes to me, with a soul and reputation-destroying look. "Thanks!" Then wildly, clamorously: "Louise, I love you."

Instinctively I thought of flight, but his eyes wouldn't let me rise. From that moment on he dropped my title.

"Stay," he whispered, "I beseech you, stay. Don't you see that I love you to distraction? I have kept silent these many months. Now I must talk. I love thee, Louise."

I tried in vain to collect my thoughts while his love talk fanned my blood. Finally I managed to say: "Can't you see that you are playing *va banque*?"

"I know, but it doesn't interest me. Let my career be wrecked, I care not; I've got only one thought in the world—thee, only one wish—thee. And I must either love thee or die."

I turned my eyes away and rose abruptly. As he bowed to kiss my hand, he whispered, still "*thou'ing*" me: "I expect you tomorrow at the end of the Grand Boulevard. Come when you please. I will wait all day."

And here I am thinking, thinking, thinking.

"The end of the Boulevard" is the beginning of Dresden's *Bois*. Does this madman really suppose that Her Imperial Highness, the Crown Princess of this kingdom, will lower herself and respond to his demand for a rendezvous?

Yet, how he must love me to risk saying what he did say to me. He is no ill-balanced youth; he is a man of ripe judgment. His passion got the better of him.

I adore passion.

I must go no more to the theatre. Impossible for me to see him nightly.

But it's a fine thing to be loved as I am. The most beautiful thing in the wide, wide world!

DRESDEN, *April 27, 1897. In the*

Morning.

He is waiting. Doubtless he expects me. What a persuasive thing love is, to be sure! Because he loves me, he argues that the Crown Princess, the wife and mother, will rush to meet him, fall into his arms.

Of course, he will be most unhappy if I don't go, for I am sure he is not your ordinary "petticoat-chaser." He will suffer, he is suffering now while I sit here quietly.

Am I quiet? If I weren't determined to stay at home, I would half-admit to myself that my soul is obsessed with longing for this man.

A diplomat, who has seen much of court life, assumes that a woman in my position is at liberty to keep rendezvous! Let's reason it out.

To begin with, Lucretia has to be won over. That's easy enough, but the coachman and lackey! They must be told that Her Imperial Highness is graciously pleased to *walk* in the *Bois*, the carriage waiting at the end of the Grand Boulevard.

After Luncheon.

I ought to have said to him, I won't come. It's cruel to let him wait on a street corner and not even send notice, and to tip him off is impossible.

And come to think of it, if Lucretia and I were promenading in the *Bois* and met the Count by accident, where's the harm? And if I don't go—Good Lord, he might kill himself. He is desperate enough for that. And he might leave letters compromising me.

I will go to give him a piece of my mind. I will be very harsh with him, very adamant.

And I will try to find out how he manages to select always the same theatre as I.

CHAPTER XXXVII

RAPID LOVE MAKING IN THE BOIS

A discreet maid—"Remove thy glove"—Kisses of passion, pure kisses, powerful kisses—I see my lover daily—Countess Baranello offers "doves' nest"—Driving to rendezvous in state—"Naughty Louise," who makes fun of George.

DRESDEN, *June 1, 1897.*

A month of untold happiness. I went to the *Bois* and I am going there every afternoon.

He was splendid; he was modest, quiet. He seemed to exude happiness.

Lucretia is discretion itself. She kept behind us, but out of ear-shot.

"I came to tell you that you acted like a madman last night, and that the offense must not be repeated," I said sternly to Bielsk.

"I *am* a madman—in love," he replied, looking at me with big, soulful eyes.

I chattered a lot of nonsense, prohibitions, commands, entreaties.

"Remove thy glove," he begged.

"You mustn't 'thou' me."

"Remove thy glove," he repeated.

Why I complied, I don't know, but I ripped off my glove, and he held my hand in both his hands and kissed it and kissed it.

"What right have you got to treat me like a woman unmindful of her duties?"

"I know that thou art lonesome, forlorn, Louise."

He struck at my heart as he spoke these words, and my eyes filled with tears. He pressed his

warm, pulsating lips on the palm of my hand, covering it from wrist to finger-tips with wild kisses.

We were standing among the trees, and Lucretia, at a little distance, was plucking flowers. The remnant of common sense I mustered told me: "He is dishonoring you, repulse him," but his "I love thee, Louise," rang like music in my ears. However, I tore myself free at last. "Farewell, we must never meet again."

And then I lay in his arms, on his broad chest, and he covered my face with kisses, not passionate or insulting kisses. His lips touched lightly my eyes, my cheeks, my own lips—recompense for the long fast he had endured during all the months he had loved me at a distance.

Marvelous kisses kissed this man, pure kisses, lovely kisses, powerful kisses. And I thought the whole world was falling to pieces around me and I didn't care as long as only he and I were living. He himself freed me.

"Tomorrow," he whispered.

I awoke confused, ashamed of my weakness, trembling.

"I'll never see you again. Never," I said as if I meant it.

"Tomorrow, love," he repeated. And I ran and joined Lucretia.

When we were riding home I told Lucretia to draw the curtains, and fell upon her neck and told her all.

The good soul was nearly frightened to death and we cried a good deal.

1898.

DRESDEN, *January 5,*

I neglected my diary, I neglect everything, for I'm in love. What care I for the King, Prince George and the rest who are trying to make life miserable for me? I laugh their pettinesses to scorn, for I have no other thought now but Romano Bielsk, no other interests. He is my all, my happiness.

Of course, his "*Tomorrow, love,*" prevailed and it has been "*Tomorrow, love,*" ever since. On the day after our first meeting I actually thought I was warring against nature if I resisted his entreaties. It seemed to me that I had always known him, that we were predestined for each other. I still think so.

Lucretia has a relative here, an aunt, member of the court set. Old Countess Baranello delights in intrigue and hates Prince George. When I told her of my affair, she placed her palace at our disposal, saying:

"Bielsk shall have a key to the garden gate and to the pavilion inside the walls, which connects, through a subterranean passage, with my sun-parlor. You can meet your love there any time. I will see to it that none of the servants or workmen disturb you."

A capital arrangement, worthy of an old lady who has seen many gallant days! There can be no possible objection to my visits at her palace, and the grounds to which Romano has the *entrée* fronts on a street unfrequented by society or carriages.

I descend from my carriage at the palace gate; a knot of people, a small crowd, perhaps, collects to salute me and gape at the horses and livery. I sweep up the stoop, lined by my own, and the Countess's, servants. The bronze doors open. The Countess advances with stately curtsy; a few words *sub rosa*, and I—fly into the arms of love, while faithful Lucretia mounts guard at the street side, and Her Ladyship's spy glasses cover the garden;—needless precautions, but—

It's rare fun, and, after all, where's the harm?

I made good as propagatrix of the royal race, and a union of soul such as exists between me and Romano never entered into my relations with Frederick Augustus.

Romano is very intelligent. I can learn from him; Frederick Augustus taught me only coarseness, and if it came high, *double entendres*. Yet my lover is only a Councillor of Legation! Because his superiors, fearing his adroitness, keep him down.

My children! Have I ever been allowed to be a real mother to them? The King, the nation, owns my little ones. I see them at stated intervals for half an hour or so, and romp with them as I do with my dogs.

Still, I don't altogether approve of Louise, malicious girl! When I am at the top-gallant of my happiness I sometimes say to myself: "Oh, if only George could see me now!"

Naughty Louise—it's unworthy of thee. What do I care for George, what do I care for the world?

CHAPTER XXXVIII

"IN LOVE THERE ARE NO PRINCESSES, ONLY WOMEN"

A diplomatic trick—Jealous of Romano's past—The pact for life and the talisman—If there were a theatre fire the talisman would discover our love to the King—Some ill-natured reflections—Bernhardt's escapades cover up my tracks—The "black sheep" jumps his horse over a coffin—King gives him a beating—Bernhardt's mess-room lingo—Anecdotes of royal voluptuaries—Forces animals to devour each other—Naked ballet-girls as horses—Abnormals rule the world.

DRESDEN, *May 20, 1898.*

Romano learned about my theatre going by a diplomatic trick. He told one of the minor attaches of the Embassy that he had orders to watch me—"all-highest command." The official, consequently, negotiated with the box offices of all the theatres to phone him the moment Her Imperial Highness ordered seats.

I am crazy to know how many women Romano loved in the twenty or more years since he grew to man's estate, and how many he seduced. It agitates and pains me to think of it, but all my questions are barren of results.

Yesterday I asked him whether he ever knew a Princess of the Blood before me—"knew" in the biblical sense.

"In love," he said, "there are no princesses, there are women only."

He saw that I was hurt and added quickly: "Now don't be unreasonable, Louise—no prejudices. With the thought in my mind that you are an Imperial Highness, or that you consider yourself of better clay than I, I couldn't love you as I do."

DRESDEN, *July 1, 1898.*

We made a life-pact. Romano cut a gold piece in two and bored a hole in each half. He drew thin gold chains through the holes, gave me one of the amulets, and kept the other. Our combined monograms were already engraved on the bits of gold *en miniature*. Each swore to wear the talisman on the naked body for life, but we exchange amulets daily, or as often as we meet.

When I am enthroned in the royal box and look down upon my lover below, I think all the time of this, our secret understanding, and it sometimes occurs to me, that the opera house might get on fire and both of us perish.

Next day our bodies would be found. In or near the royal box, that of a woman, burned so as to be unrecognizable at first. ("We are all of the same clay," says Romano.)

And down in the orchestra floor they would find Romano's body, likewise unrecognizable.

And on my charred breast they would find the half of a twenty-mark piece. And on his charred chest they would find the half of a twenty-mark piece.

And they would put the two together and discover that they match.

Consternation, speculation!

Someone suggests that the mysterious gold pieces be photographed for publication and the engraver who made the monogram, and the jeweler who sold the two chains come forward as witnesses.

Meanwhile the identity of my body is established. That of Romano's follows. *Scandalum magnatum!* But what are you going to do about it, *Messieurs?*

If you had only known it a week ago! A prison *à la* Princess Ahlden, or the Danish Queen Caroline Matilda, for me, disgraceful dismissal for Romano, for times are happily past when comely gentlemen, who have the wit to amuse royal ladies, durst be murdered in cold blood like Koenigsmarck, or be-headed, be-headed and cut into ninety-nine pieces as Struensee was in Copenhagen market-square.

What are you going to do about it, King, George, Frederick Augustus?

I'll tell you. You will bury me with the pomp of kings; and your sycophants will print beautiful stories about me, asserting that I died trying to rescue others, or did something of the sort; and your Court Chaplains will weep and pray and lie for me. And the tip of Queen Carola's nose will be redder than ever.

DRESDEN, *September 1,*

My young friend Bernhardt is doing me a great service and himself a lot of harm.

A good-natured, tractable boy *au fond*, they made him a poltroon and worse by their persecutions, their meanness, their petty tyranny. He is proud, and they sent him to reside on a village manure heap; he is ambitious, and must drill raw recruits from morn till night; he is eager to learn and they try to embalm his intellect with tracts and kill his initiative by the endless, watery *ennui* of tu-penny environment.

Of course, he gets desperate and kicks over the traces, and while attracting the dear family's disapproving attention, I am more free than ever to devote myself to my Romano.

Bernhardt's "latest" is really inexcusable. "I wonder we don't turn tigers with the education we receive," said one of the brothers of Louis XVI when upbraided for thoughtlessness and lack of consideration for the feelings of others—but Bernhardt seems to qualify for a vulture, and no original one at that, for a like offense as he is charged with was, several years ago, laid at the door of my cousin, Archduke Otho of Austria.

Observe half a dozen young officers riding horseback in the neighborhood of their garrison town, Bernhardt at the head. At a bend in the road, a rural funeral *cortège* hoves into sight: coffin borne on the shoulders of half a dozen peasants; weeping relatives; friends promising themselves a good time at the widow's expense on returning home. A black cross lifted high; priest and choir-boys in their robes.

"Halt," thunders Bernhardt, blocking the way.

The priest tries to expostulate with the half-drunken fellow.

"Shut up, black-coat. I am His Royal Highness, Prince Bernhardt."

Then—the devil must be riding him—he orders the coffin put down on the ground.

"Out of the way, yokels."

And he leaps his horse three or four times across the coffin.

The outrage is duly reported in the newspapers and Bernhardt is summoned before the King. "Don't you dare to appear in uniform," Albert added in his own hand.

"What has happened?" I asked the ne'er-do-well, when he begged for an audience after meeting the King.

He pointed to a swollen cheek.

"He hit me three times in *the eats*." (I beg the Diary's pardon for the language; I report literally.) "Three times," repeated Bernhardt, "that's the reason he wanted me to appear in mufti. As I went out one of the lackeys said: 'I never heard His Majesty rave so.'"

"But why did you make a beast of yourself?" I asked.

"To force the King to transfer me to another garrison, of course. I can't remain where I am, for the people are terribly incensed against me."

"Did you tell His Majesty?"

"Not on your life," answered Bernhardt. "If I did, I would have to stay there until my last tooth falls out. As things are, the Colonel will insist upon my speedy transference, and that's worth the three slams on the face I got in addition to the various *Lausbubs*."

"He called you, an army officer, a '*Lausbub*.' Where is his vaunted respect for the uniform?"

"Didn't he hit me in *the eats*?" lamented Bernhardt tragically in his terrible lingo. "I responded both to insult and injury by knocking my heels together and saying: 'At Your Majesty's commands.'"

Of course, I told Romano. "Royalty," he said, "has only, on the face of it, advanced beyond the pirate and robber-baron period. *Au fond* all princes and kings would be criminals if they happened not to be crowned heads."



THE LATE KING ALBERT OF SAXONY
Louise's Uncle by Marriage

He told me of a Balkan prince—young Alexander of Servia, the same mamma Natalie intended for my consort—whose chief amusement consists in having mice and rats chased by ferocious tom-cats in a big cage made for that purpose. Once, growing tired of that sport, he incarcerated ten tom-cats in the same cage without food many days in succession, visiting the prison hourly to see whether they wouldn't take to devouring each other.

When, in the end, they did, tearing one another to pieces, His Majesty danced around the cage in high glee, pronouncing the battle of the poor beasts a bully spectacle.

"You visited Castle Sibyllenort a week ago," continued Romano—"a most proper place, this royal residence, is it not? You ought to have seen it before your puritan King inherited it, ten years ago, upon the death of the last Duke of Brunswick. At that time it was a veritable museum of pornography, the apotheosis of Paphian voluptuousness. The palace, which has over four hundred rooms and halls—not one which a decent woman might enter without a blush—acquired its equipment as a *lupanar* and its reputation for debauchery under the famous, or notorious, 'Diamond Duke,' a brother of the Highness who left the estate to King Albert. Both Dukes held high carnival in its gilded halls, but he of the diamonds rather outdid William in outraging decency.

"One of his chief amusements was to hire a drove of ballet girls for parlor horses. He had a carriage constructed no bigger or heavier than a Japanese jinrickshaw, and to this hitched ten or twenty ballet girls in their birthday suits, walking on all fours, himself rider and driver.

"Gracious—how he lashed his treble and quadruple teams of human flesh as they pulled him from room to room, and his was no make-belief ferocity, either. He was a niggardly rake, but in order to indulge his Sadist tendencies, agreed to pay one *Thaler* (Seventy-five cents) for every drop of blood shed by the girls.

"To make the count easier, white linen sheets were spread over the carpets, and the sum total was paid over to the two-legged horses after each entertainment, the girls showing the sorest stripes or wounds getting the larger share."

Romano, who lived at half a dozen courts and is primed with the scandalous gossip of them all, could certainly write an entertaining book on the fallacies and vices of the world's Great.

It's most indelicate, to be sure, but I laughed long and hard over the sexual specialty of my uncle, Archduke Karl Ludwig, who is bad, anyhow, as everybody knows.

One morning His Highness rose at an unusually early hour, even before the scrub-women made their exit. In the corridors, in the parlors, everywhere blonde and dark percherons, cleaning away for dear life and courting housemaid's knee!

Karl Ludwig has no more use for women than the late Chevalier de Lorraine, the President of the

Mignons, but the exaggerated protuberances he met so unexpectedly on all sides, appealed to his sense of humor, or some other sense which I would hate to name. Anyhow, he ran into the garden and cut himself a switch. And ever since then his chief amusement is to switch scrubbing percherons. If he succeeds in dealing one a blow unforeseen by lying in wait for her, or coming upon her all of a sudden, he is particularly satisfied with his day's work and is liable to give a beggar a copper instead of the usual demi-copper.

And of such abnormals the rulers of the world are recruited.

CHAPTER XXXIX

MY PUNISHMENT

I lose my lover—Quarrels with me because I did my duty as a mother—Royalty extols me for the same reason—My pride of kingship aroused by Socialist scribblers—Change my opinion as to Duke's widow—Parents arrive—Father and his alleged astrolatry—His finances disarranged by alimony payments—My uncle, the Emperor, rebukes mother harshly for complaining of *roué* father.

DRESDEN, *Christmas,*

1898.

God punished me for my sins. My children, one after the other, were ill with scarlet fever, and the youngest is only now out of danger. Of course, I abandoned all my frivolities. I can say without boasting that the mother atoned for the short-comings of the wife and princess.

Hence I thought justified to arrange for a right royal Christmas present: Romano.

Lucretia went to see him. He received her coldly, hardly vouchsafed a word. From a secret drawer of his desk he took a letter, ready written, dated and gave it to Lucretia. "It explains," he said curtly, as he opened the door for her.

He has abandoned me. Because I loved my children better than him, because I am a mother first, *Lais* second, he throws away his Imperial *fille de joie* like a lemon sucked dry and prates of tenderesses and heavenly fancies that he alone feels, that are outside the pale of my understanding.

He even refuses to thank me, this proud wooer of the royal bed. He "has given me the best that is in man to give to a woman," etc., etc.

Be it so! God desired to punish me and, because I loved much, he meted out to me mild chastisement.

He stole my lover, but I have my children.

DRESDEN, *January 15,*

1899.

The King, Prince George, my brothers-in-law, my cousins and aunts are trying to make a hero of me. Because I followed the inclinations of my heart and helped to save my children, there's no end of their praise and admiration. Did they take me for a raven? I am disgusted with so much unctuousness.

Nevertheless I changed my mind about the Duke's widow. When I felt friendly towards her and quarrelled with Johann George for taking her money and with the King for embezzling the testament and offering accommodation at the poor-house for his kin's children, I thought it a family affair, but now that the Socialist papers meddle with the case, which concerns the royal house and the royal house alone, it's time for the Crown Princess to stand by her colors.

Those Jews have actually the audacity to reprimand the King and the royal princes, to impute ignoble motives to us all! They talk of us as if we were *Messieurs* and *Mesdames* Jones or Browns, trying to enrich ourselves at the expense of a corpse!

They call us "inheritance-chasers," "purloiners of pupillary funds," "starvers of innocent children."

The Duke's kept-woman is "a lady of the highest character" and we are not; her children are of the blood royal—only better for the dash of plebeian.

It makes me boil to read such things; to see the reverence due the throne set aside, the royal banner dragged into the mire, and of course it's the kept-woman to whom we are indebted for this pretty kettle of fish. It is she who set the press against us, and it's me, Louise, who protests with all her might that her demands and petitions be denied.

Let her starve with her brats. If she was sent to the poor-house she might make anarchists out of

loyal paupers.

DRESDEN, *April 1, 1899.*

My parents came to see the children and make merry because I am basking in the sun of royal grace. Mother has a new maid of honor, as ugly as the Tisch, and when we are *entre nous* every second word is: "when Louise is Queen." They know to a penny what our inheritance from the King, the Queen and Prince George will amount to and are forever making plans and specifications how to spend the money for the glory of Saxony and of our own family.^[6]

Mother's scare-crow of a maid of honor had at least sense enough to tell Lucretia of a few scandals that happened at home, which mother never intended for my ears.

It seems that papa, some few months ago, suddenly became possessed of the ambition to become an astronomer. Nothing would do, but he must buy a heap of instruments and set them up in a distant tower of Salzburg Castle. And there he spent all his evenings—star-gazing, he gave out.

He seldom reached the nuptial couch before one or two in the morning,—utterly exhausted by the night's work.

Well, mamma thought he labored too hard, and one forenoon when he had gone hunting, climbed up many stairs to investigate. Imagine her surprise when she found, in the astrolatry, a young lady in the act of getting out of bed, a girl, by the way, whom I used to know.

Mamma had the *mauvais genre* to report the case to Emperor Francis Joseph, while papa sought another climate, remaining away until mother begged him on her bended knees, so to speak, to come home. Nor did she get satisfaction from Vienna. That great moral teacher, the Emperor, told her not to make a scare-crow of herself, but on the contrary make herself pretty and agreeable for, and to, her lord and master. I understand now why mamma says: "All men stick together like gypsies."

As a matter of fact father's limited resources are considerably affected by the various alimonies he has to pay to his own mistresses and those of my brothers. The third born of our boys, only a week ago, made too free with the *fiancée* of the pastry-cook, who threatened to kill him. It cost father several thousand florins to appease the ruffian and Heinrich Ferdinand renewed acquaintance with mother's boxing proclivities.

FOOTNOTES:

- [6] The fortune of the present King of Saxony (Louise's ex-husband) amounts to 25 million marks (\$6,225,000)—no more than many an American parent paid for his daughter's seedy coronet. It will be remembered that Gladys Vanderbilt and Anna Gould brought to their husbands fifteen million dollars each, and the Castellanes and Szechenys are only nobles of the second class, their ancestors never having possessed ever so small a territory as sovereign lords. The bigger half of the Saxon King's fortune comes from the Brunswick inheritance already mentioned.

CHAPTER XL

A PLEBEIAN LOVER

In need of a friend—My physician offers his friendship—I discover that he loves me, but he will never confess—I give him encouragement—We manage to persuade the King to further our intrigue—Not a bit repentant of my peccadilloes—Very submissive—Introduced to my lover's wife.

DRESDEN, *in May, 1899.*

Privy Councillor von Barthels, my body physician, is a very agreeable man. I have no use for his services, *professional* services at present, yet insist upon receiving him daily. Still I love him not. Only esteem him as a friend, I need a friend. Physicians can keep secrets, and I have many of them. I look upon Barthels as my Father-confessor.

The tears came into his eyes when I told him, and he said: "Imperial Highness, this is the most beautiful hour of my life."

He spoke with enthusiasm; there was fire in his eyes and in his voice, yet a moment later he was again the most reserved of men and conversation lagged.

It happened three days ago. He has paid me four visits since and I notice with astonishment, with curiosity and with alarm, that this man is in love with me.

How long has he loved me?

His love is like a warm mantle 'round my shoulders on a chilly night. It exudes warmth, strength, beatitude, yet there is none of the animal.

He is a good talker on a thousand and one subjects, a thinker and psychologist. Psychology is his strong point. He argues brilliantly on the subject, yet I need only look at him to upset his *thesis*, to make him stammer and redden.

He's no Count Bielsk and will never tell me of his own accord that he loves me. Is his admiration greater than his love? Perhaps so. It gives me a feeling of security.

Lucretia knows, but in the presence of the Tisch, he plays the servant, deeming himself thrice honored by being allowed to breathe the same air as her Imperial Highness.

1899.

DRESDEN, *June 15,*

I frequently drive to the *Bois* nowadays with the children, the *Bois*, where I was so happy with Him.

Romano was right, a thousand times right, that he abandoned me when our love was at its zenith.

At Midnight.

It's done.

Barthels came tonight. He was so feverish, so passionate, there was so much humble solicitation in his looks and manners, I was moved to pity.

This man is too over-awed by my rank to ever permit himself to express his feelings by word of mouth. He talked of everything but love and was in the midst of a learned dissertation when I sunk my eyes in his and said:

"Why do you try to hide things from me? Don't I know what's in your heart?"

Like a little criminal—as my oldest boy does occasionally—he turned red, then white, then red again. He buried his face in his hands. He trembled. He seemed to be crying. I arose, and lightly laid my hand upon his blonde head.

He's got the finest, silkiest hair in the world, shimmering like beaten gold.

And then he lay at my feet, covering them with kisses. And instantly all his force, his courage, his eloquence returned.

He went away like a man a-dreaming.

I long for him; I confess I long for him. Whether I love him or not I don't know. But that I know, I *will* love him.

And if I cannot, what matters it? I don't have to love to be happy. To *be* loved is enough. I want to be his Queen, his life.

DRESDEN, *July 1, 1899.*

Privy Councillor von Barthels told the King that my delicate condition needs constant watching. I go to his clinic every second day, while he visits me once or twice daily at the palace.

Like Melita I am never a bit repentant of my peccadilloes.

If I don't want to do a thing, neither Kaiser, King, George, Frederick Augustus, my parents, the Pope, nor the whole world, can make me. But if I resolve to follow my sweet inclinations, rueling and pining are out of question.

Ferdinand is the most devoted of lovers. He has unlimited tendernesses—a new experience for me.

The lover of my girlhood days overwhelmed me by audacity. The Shah used me like a show-girl. Romano was imperious, super-mannish. For him I was only the female of the species.

Sometimes, in the midst of an embrace, Ferdinand suddenly seems to recollect that a Queen trembles in his arms; the master turns *âme damnée*. I am Sultana, Louise-Catherine.

Like Catherine the Great, I would throw millions to my favorites and millions more when I

dismissed one. At any rate, I would give each a hundred thousand marks "to furnish himself with linen and silks,"—a *mot* invented by the Semiramis of the North.

DRESDEN, July 5, 1899.

No more clinic for me. Ferdinand begged so hard, that I allowed him to introduce his wife. She came in after we finished our "consultation," a little heap of misfortune, execrably dressed, frightened, almost dead with submissiveness.

And I am robbing this poor creature; it's like stealing pennies from a child. And under her own roof.

It must not be. I am going to the country.

CHAPTER XLI

AN ATROCIOUS ROYAL SCANDAL

A royal couple that shall be nameless—The voluptuous Duchess—Her husband the worst of degenerates—"What monsters these royalties be"—Nameless outrages—A Duchess forced to have lovers—Ferdinand and I live like married folk—Duchess feared for her life—Her husband murdered her—I scold and humiliate my overbearing Grand Mistress—The medical report too horrible to contemplate.

—R, July 15,

1899.

I am afraid to date this entry. Another terrible indictment of royalty. And, as usual, things criminal are at the bottom of the abuse of sovereign power.

The Duchess had a baby and asked me to be godmother to the little girl. The King, eager to oblige his rich cousin, favored the journey. I insisted that Ferdinand accompany me. "Marie," I said, "hates Tisch, and she must, under no circumstances, be commanded to attend me." Lucretia would do. It would be cheaper.

The King first wouldn't hear of Dr. von Barthels going. People might think I had some chronic disease. But he finally gave in for the sake of the child I expect. "We need a few princes more from you," said His Majesty benignly. "When you got about a dozen boys, you can rest." Pleasant job, that of a Crown Princess.

—R, July 16,

1899.

The Duchess is a pretty woman, her face a lovely oval. She has small eyes, the color of amethysts. Her complexion is as white and harmonious as if she washed in sow's milk, like the late Ninon.

Her mouth is sweet, but certain lines indicate that it can bite as well as smile. She has abundant hair, the color of Ferdinand's.

This dainty, albeit voluptuous, little person, is mated to a bull-necked He, pompous, broad and full of the conceit of the *duodez* satrap.

Marie was forced to marry him; their honeymoon scarcely lasted a fortnight and he treated her shamefully after that. Of course, babies she must bear like any other "royal cow."

Gradually, very gradually, she got over her disappointment and shyness, developing into a cunning, world-wise woman. Then came the man she was bound to love, even as the violet is bound to be kissed by the sun. She had no scruples about accepting him, thinking herself entitled to compensation for the sorrows of her married life. And revenge is sweet.

The Duke found them out in the first month of their young love, walked into her boudoir one fine afternoon and remarked casually that none of his hats would fit him,—"on account of the horns you kindly planted on my forehead."

Marie was more dead than alive when he asked her for the key of her writing desk. She lied and lied; to no purpose.

He kicked open the writing desk, and with his iron fists broke the shelves and pigeon holes, laying bare a secret drawer and stacks of love letters it shielded. These he confiscated. Then locked himself into his room to enjoy his disgrace. This monster is a *Masochist* and Sadist combined. He loves both to inflict suffering upon himself and upon others.

What monsters royalties be!

In the meanwhile Marie experienced all the tortures of purgatory; she thought of flight, of suicide. Before she could indulge in either her husband was back: Othello in the last act.

Marie was frightened stiff, her brain a whirl, her limbs inert. Rape most foul this crowned satyr committed. "He fell upon me as a pack of hounds overwhelm a hunted, wounded she-stag," she said.

Afterwards he commanded her to describe minutely every detail of her relations with the other. He was primed with the letter-accounts; he made her dot her amorous I's and cross her bawdry T's. And every attempt at omission he punished with kicks and cuffs; no drayman or brick-layer could give a more expert exhibition of woman-beating! And he violated her again.

This was the beginning of a series of outrages of the same gross character. Marie suffered for years and years that His Royal Highness may gratify his unclean fancies: he the pander; she the Cyprian.

"If I ceased having lovers, I think he would kill me," says Marie.

Alas, such is the stuff "God's Anointed" are made of! In the face of such, we pronounce a hypocritical *j'accuse* upon the Louis's and Pompadours, upon Marie Antoinette even.

The Duchess, who knows, gave Ferdinand an apartment near my own. We are living here like man and wife. He sometimes calls me "*Frau Professor*."

LOSCHWITZ, *July 19, 1899.*

Marie is dead. "Died suddenly," said the telegram. I understand now why she begged me, with tears in her eyes, to remain at least two weeks. She was afraid that, though ill and suffering after the confinement, he would treat her as he did when he first found her unfaithful.

"Don't go," she cried. "It will be my death." And when I showed her the King's letter commanding me to return at once, she made her confidential tire-woman swear on the Bible that she wouldn't leave her for a minute, day or night, until she herself released her from the promise.

Private advices from —r say His Highness brutally kicked the faithful maid out of his wife's bedroom and outraged his sick wife while the servant kept thundering at the door, denouncing her master a murderer.

Ferdinand says the great majority of crowned heads are sexual voluptuaries, deserving of the penitentiary or the straight-jacket.

LOSCHWITZ, *August 1,*

1899.

I caught the Tisch stealing one of my letters. Happily there was nothing incriminating in it, though addressed to Ferdinand,—just the letter the Crown Princess would write to a Privy Councillor. But the petty theft indicates that she suspects. Prince George, I am told, receives a report from her every few days.

Well, I had my revenge. The Queen called today to see the children, and when Her Majesty and myself withdrew into my closet, the Tisch, who had been spying, didn't retire as promptly as she might.

"Can't you see that you are *de trop*," I said sharply to her. "Please close the door from outside." The Baroness gave a cry of dismay and the Queen was scandalized.

"Louise," she said, "that is no way to treat servants. You should always try to be kind and considerate with them."

"I am, thanks, Your Majesty," I replied. "All the officials and servants love me, but I have very good reasons for treating the Tisch as I do."

Of course, George will hear of this, and the Tisch will be reprimanded by him as well. Spies that compromise themselves, compromise their masters.

The same evening I said to the Tisch in the presence of the nurses:

"My dear Baroness, I wish you would display a little more tact. Listen at my doors as much as you like, but whatever you do, don't spy on Her Majesty in my house." She exuded a flood of tears and I sent her to her room. "Don't come back until you can show a pleasant face. I want to see none other around me."

1899.

Ferdinand received a medical report from —r. My first private advices regarding Marie's death were correct, but the additional details given are too horrible to contemplate.

The poor Duchess was brutally murdered. She died cursing her crowned murderer.

The manner in which she was put to death can only be likened to that of the lover in Heinrich von Kleist's poetically sublime, but morally atrocious, tragedy, *Penthesilcia*, except that, in poor Marie's case, the *woman* suffered from the awful frenzy of the male, in whom the "gentlest passion" degenerated in Saturnalia of revolting cruelty. The Duke killed Marie because *doing so gave him the most damnable pleasure,—her the most excruciating pain.*

Yet the King's will is the highest law and criminals on thrones laugh at the criminal code.

CHAPTER XLII

I LOSE ANOTHER OF MY LOVERS

Happily no scandal—Rewarded for bearing children—\$1250—for becoming a mother—Royal poverty—Bernhardt, the black sheep, in hot water again—The King rebukes me for taking his part.

LOSCHWITZ, *August 10,*

1899.

Frederick Augustus sent for Ferdinand and gave him to understand that he had received divers anonymous letters, connecting my name with that of the Privy Councillor. "Of course I don't believe a word of it," said my husband, "but one in my position cannot afford to flout public opinion. It will be for the best, if you cease your services to Her Imperial Highness."

Upon the same day Ferdinand received orders from the King to stop his visits.

The Baroness's doings, of course,—pin-pricks when she would like to shoot with sharp cartridges. She evidently doesn't know the full extent of our intimacy. As to Ferdinand, he acted the coward, left my letters unanswered and didn't make the slightest attempt to continue relations that might possibly turn out to his disadvantage.

He is contemptible. My heart is unengaged, but my pride sadly humbled.

DRESDEN, *February 15,*

1900.

The King sent me an emerald, one-twentieth the size of that given me by the Shah of Persia. Frederick Augustus did himself proud and, on his part, I gained a pearl necklace in acknowledgment of my renewed services to the state. Little Marguerite was born January 24.

Frederick Augustus also gave me five thousand marks spending money. Not much for a multi-millionaire's wife or daughter, I reckon, but a terrible lot for an Imperial Highness.

When I read of the sums the Vanderbilts, Astors, Goulds and other dollar-kings spend in Paris and London, and even with us in Dresden, I sometimes wish I could exchange places with an American Duchess or Countess long enough to buy all the things beautiful and pretty I would like to own. An awful thing is royal poverty, but the reputation of affluence and unlimited resources, stalking ahead of us, whenever we enter a store or bargain with a jeweler, is worse.

"Your Imperial Highness is pleased to joke," says my man-milliner, when I admit, unblushingly, that I haven't the wherewithal to buy the things I dote on.

Wait till I am Queen, modistes, store-keepers, jewelers! The new Majesty will show you that she cares for money only to get rid of it.

DRESDEN, *February 20,*

1900.

This morning Lucretia came running to the nursery and whispered to me: "Imperial Highness, quick, to the boudoir. He begged so hard, I smuggled him in."

She couldn't say more, for the Tisch was watching us. What new trouble was brewing? Could it be Romano, dare-devil, who had come back to me?

If it was that poltroon, Ferdinand, I would have him thrown out by my lackeys.

The mysterious visitor doffed wig and false moustache. "It's me," cried Bernhardt. "You are my only hope."

"What have you been doing again?"

"They threaten to banish my girl from the garrison and I won't stand for it. If they send her away or imprison her, I will kick up such a row, all Europe shall hear of it."

"But why this masquerade?"

"S-s-sh!" whispered the young prince. "I came without leave." Quickly, breathlessly, he continued: "I hear you are in His Majesty's good graces. Go and see him on my behalf. Persuade him to annul the order of banishment or render it ineffective."

"Bernhardt," I said, "why don't you marry?"

"If I could get a girl like you, Louise, I would—today, tomorrow, but the royal scare-crows that will have penniless me,—much obliged! You are a very exceptional woman," he added earnestly.

We held a council of war, discussing the situation from every view-point, and finally I agreed to see Baumann.

"I'll have to vouch for your future good conduct," I said.

"On condition that they leave my girl alone."

"Precisely. And on your part you give me your word of honor not to scandalize the people of your new garrison; to gradually break with the girl and, in the end, get married."

"You are a brick, Louise," cried Bernhardt, and before I could shake him off, he was kissing me all over my face. No cousinly or brotherly kisses! His lips were apart, there was passion in his embrace. I struggled, but his hand pressed against my back. What strength the rascal's got!

1900.

DRESDEN, *February 21,*

The King is adamant. I no sooner mentioned Bernhardt's name than his face froze.

"Does your husband know about your interference for that rake?"

When I answered in the negative, he praised Frederick Augustus for strict submission to the royal will and upbraided me for "upholding Bernhardt in his wickedness."

"The boy is desperate," I said.

"If he is desperate," cried the King, "let him do the one reasonable and honorable thing: mend his evil ways. It will come easy if he seeks true strength in prayer, in fasting and religious discipline."

"I submit to your Majesty that it might be well to send Bernhardt travelling."

"On a tour of inspection of houses of ill-fame?" interrupted Albert coldly. "This is a mere waste of words," he added, looking towards the door, "and I'm sorry that Your Imperial Highness has the bad taste to take the part of this disobedient, immoral and altogether reprehensible *Lausub.*"

That meant my dismissal. I shudder when I think of the consequences of the King's obstinacy.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE CROWN PRINCESS QUELLS A RIOT

Asked to play the coward, and I refuse—A hostler who would die for a look from me—Hostler marriages in royal houses—Anecdotes and unknown facts concerning royal ladies and their offspring—Refuse police escort and rioters acclaim me—Whole royal family proud of my feat.

DRESDEN, *July 3, 1900.*

Behold Louise, a political personage!

I was driving with my little ones in the *Bois* yesterday afternoon. We occupied an open court carriage, conspicuous for livery and magnificent horse-flesh, for I love display and the children enjoy it. We were driving along leisurely enough when there was hasty clatter of hoofs and wheels behind. Presently a royal *coupé* dashed up alongside.

The Tisch stuck her head out:

"Imperial Highness—the town's in revolt.—Socialist riot. They are marching upon the palace.—For the love of God, return at once. Your Imperial Highness must take a seat in this

inconspicuous carriage. We will change to the first *Droschke* we meet, going through side-streets."

"My dear Baroness," I answered, "it's not in my nature to shirk peril. If I were to be hanged and quartered and could avoid that unpleasantness by changing from my carriage to a cab—I would be hanged and quartered. Take the children and return to the palace any way you like."

"As for me, I'll go back as Her Imperial Highness, the Crown Princess of Saxony, and my coachman will drive slowly."

I kissed the children, and the *coupé* rolled away at a sharp clip.

Calling the coachman by name, I commanded him: "You heard what my Grand Mistress said. Riot or no riot, I am solely responsible for my own safety. You will take orders from no one but me, neither from the mob nor the police."

The coachman lifted his hat respectfully and bowed a submissive "At Your Imperial Highness's orders." The groom, a young, good-looking fellow, struck the broadsword at his side.

"There is some good steel in this, Your Imperial Highness," he said with sparkling eyes. I believe this poor fellow would have died for a single look from me.

Among royal servants, the most devoted are those connected with the *Marstall*. No wonder so many of my sisters born on the steps of the throne, fell in love with their Master of Horse or equerries; some with mere hostlers, like Queen Christina of Spain, the mother of my aunt Isabelle, of amorous memory. Her lover, Munoz, of the Body Guards, was a famous equestrian and two years younger than Christina. He managed horses so well, she thought it would be great fun to boss this giant. But it ended by the brute lording it over her, the "Catholic Majesty." By the way, I wonder what became of Christina's and Munoz's several children. While they lived together from 1833 to 1844 without the sanction of either law or church, they were "regularly married" in the end, the hostler, Munoz, metamorphosing into Duke Rianzares. Yet the *Almanach de Gotha* knows not their progeny when, as "love children," they should live long and happily.

Another "hostler-marriage" occurred in the family of the proud Kaiser, the contracting parties being Princess Albrecht of Prussia and a groom, whose name I forget. This Princess, Marianne of the Netherlands, brought the first "real" money into the Hohenzollern family, and her husband, Albrecht, was long regarded the Cræsus among German princes.

After the divorce, His Royal Highness forced the ex-wife to marry the hostler, and the bloom of forbidden love having worn off in the meantime, Marianne seldom passed a day without being soundly beaten by the plebeian. Maybe she liked it. Some women do.

Today her offspring with Master Fisticuffs are sturdy farmers in Silesia, but two of the three sons she had with the royal Prince, as well as the sons the royal Prince had with his second wife, Rosalie von Rauch, are degenerates. Rosalie's sons are known as Counts Hohenau and the wife of the elder, Fritz, is giving my astute and pious cousin, the Kaiserin, considerable heart-ache.

Curious, isn't it? The children of the "adulteress" are successful men and women, aids in the progress of the world; those of the blood royal, in double or single doses, a menace to public morality. This much for your royal inbred custom.

But back to Dresden. The order to drive slowly was soon rescinded, for I was burning to see a riot at close range. "*Plein carrière*," I commanded, and my fast *Carrossiers* went at a tremendous rate for two miles. The moment I saw, in the distance, knots of people standing round or moving in the direction of the palace, I cried: "*Schritt*," and we proceeded as leisurely as if following a funeral.

As we turned around a corner, a detachment of gendarmes, sent to watch for me, hove into sight. Their commanding officer signalled frantically to the coachman to stop, but George had his instructions and proceeded.

The officer spurred his horse and rode up to me, questioning me with his eyes.

"My orders," I explained.

"Then I must escort Your Imperial Highness."

"Don't."

"Strict orders from my superior officer, Your Imperial Highness," and the gendarmes formed a *cordon* around my carriage.

I was furious. "Send for your commander."

The captain of the gendarmes could not be found at once and joined my cavalcade only when we were opposite a living wall of excited people, nearly all of them workmen.

"What is Your Imperial Highness's pleasure?" asked the captain, bending down from his horse.

"Send your men away instantly."

"But the responsibility?"

"Rests with me and with me only. Send them away. Every one of them."

The mob was watching us. I read suspicion in the eyes of those nearest. The captain gave the sign and the troopers turned their horses' heads, saluting me with their drawn swords.

"May I act as Your Imperial Highness's out-rider?" asked the captain in a low voice.

"Don't trouble yourself. I command you."

The groom had been watching us. I gave the signal and we proceeded at a pace. The rampart of human bodies swung open and lined the sides of the streets. Someone cried: "Three cheers for the Crown Princess," and everyone responded.

These Socialists, whom I had been taught to hate and despise, behaved in exemplary style. When I dismissed their tyrants, the gendarmes, they immediately took me under their protection. I am sure anyone daring to insult me, or raise a hand against me, would have fared badly at the hands of his fellows.

I was all smiles, bowing right and left. Labor agitators raised their hats to me, mothers offered their children that I might pat their little hand, or lay mine on their head—a veritable triumph!

When I drove into the palace yard, the Guards rushed out to do me honor. The Queen, the King and Prince George saluted me from the windows of their apartments.

Frederick Augustus embraced me in front of everybody. In short I was made a hero of.

I afterwards learned that as soon as the palace knew of the incipient riot, the King sent word to all members of the royal family, ordering them to stay in their apartments. They were even forbidden to show themselves at the windows overlooking the palace square.

Learning that I had gone driving, mounted grooms were dispatched in all directions to intercept me. The Tisch, being responsible for the royal children, got the fastest team the court commands and started for the *Bois*.

It gave me some satisfaction to observe that I arrived before her. Of course, I never doubted the children's safety.

The evening papers devoted columns to the little incident and Prince George had the great sorrow to hear the King say: "A dare-devil, that Louise, but she did the right thing. By pretending confidence in the loyalty of the people, she successfully gulled them. The riot's back was broken when she showed a bold front."

CHAPTER XLIV

THE NEW LOVER, AND "I PLAY THE HUSSY FOR FAIR"

Who is that most exquisite *Vortänzer*?—A lovely boy—"Blush, good white paper"—I long for Henry—My eyes reflect love—"I must see you tonight. Arrange with Lucretia"—Sorry I ever loved a man before Henry—Poetry even—I try to get him an office at court—Afraid women will steal him.

PILLNITZ, *September 5,*

1900.

Dance at the royal summer residence. Concentrated *ennui* as a rule, but a complete success this time.

I have seen Him,—capital "H." He is the one man for me.

I am happy; I am myself again. All sorrows are forgotten. I am ten years younger.

Love at first sight. I the aggressor. I must be getting very clever since I managed to hide it from hundreds of searching eyes, even from my entourage.

"Lucretia," I whispered breathlessly to my confidante, "find out the name of the *Vortänzer*, quick."

The *Vortänzer*, at royal courts, is a sort of official master of the dance, who sets the pace for the company, combining the duties of master of ceremonies and of dancing master.

The more I looked at the *Vortänzer*, the more he enchanted me. Taller than any other man present, elegant, blonde, clean-shaven. Not an ounce of superfluous flesh, I judged. Might be the reincarnation of the *Duc* de Richelieu, who seduced my three cousins d'Orleans.

His face is livid with white and carmine tints; his eyes glow with an irresistible charm. That figure of his! The elegance of the palm tree, both straight and flexible. And the infinity of grace as he waltzed that little Baroness around.

"Baron Bergen, of the Guards," breathed Lucretia into my ear.

"My Master of Ceremony will command Baron Bergen at the end of this dance."

When he stood before me, bowing and smiling, the idea that he was Richelieu reincarnated became almost a certainty with me.

Like Richelieu, his face has the refinement that we admire in women (I forgot to say that I became infatuated with him merely from seeing a back view of the man. When he turned around, I was lost).

While he chanted the usual compliments, my eyes hung upon his cherry lips, reveled in his white, strong teeth. The man I want. I say it without shame, without care.

Blush, good, white paper! I am giving an account of my feelings, and if they be impure, there's something wrong with nature.

Even as I write, I tremble with longing, with desire for Henry.

Ten days since we first met. It might have been this morning, so lively and overwhelming is the recollection. I am impatient for his kisses, for his blonde loveliness, for his whole self,—just as if we hadn't loved and kissed scarce an hour ago.

"My horse, Lucretia. We'll go for a canter. I must have air and plenty of it."

PILLNITZ, *September 10,*

1900.

I must give some additional account of our first meeting at the court ball. Ah, I was the hussy for fair! He couldn't help seeing the impression he made upon me. My eyes must have reflected it in letters of flame. I wish he were as bold as the *Duc*, who slept on a pillow stuffed with the hair of his mistresses, past and present.

I never made such advances to any man. I was gone clean off my head.

When he reddened and when his left hand, resting on the hilt of his sword, trembled, I became intoxicated.

And I danced with him, and I was angry with myself for lacking the courage to say: "Feel my heart beat." My great-great-aunt and namesake, Marie Antoinette, did and won the love of her life,—Fersen.

But we *fin de siècle* women are cowards. All I said to him was: "I must see you tonight. Arrange with Lucretia."

DRESDEN, *September 30,*

1900.

Summer heat continues, but no country-seat for me! The town is a much safer place for lovers, and old Countess Baranello keeps open house for us all the year round. We meet daily. I persuaded Henry's colonel that the lieutenant would never be a courtier unless he saw more of court life and was relieved, to a certain extent, of duties on the drill ground.

We see each other mornings or afternoons at the Countess's. The evenings we spend at the theatre together, I in the box, he in the *fauteuil* once sacred to Romano. Every Saturday afternoon we concoct the repertoire for the week following, and he goes at once to secure tickets for the various entertainments I intend to visit for his sake.

DRESDEN, *October 1,*

1900.

I wish I had never loved any man before Henry. I wish he had known me as an innocent girl. I wish I wasn't royal. Then I could get a divorce and marry him, but now, if I got ten divorces, he would always be the insignificant Baron, I the Princess of the Blood.

And I couldn't see my love humiliated!

As a talisman he wears on his chest a golden locket with my miniature. In exchange he gave me a *Portebonheur* with his picture and a few sweet words.

So help me, God, I am in love with this man,—love him to the verge of poetry. Indeed, I am writing silly verse in his honor, and later haven't the courage to show it to him. *Par exemple:*

I want you most, dear, when the sunset bright
Makes of the hills a glorious funeral pyre,
So die the love-light in your eyes, if die it must,
And leave the wondrous, throbbing silence of the night.

Henry isn't very intellectual, I am afraid, but he is the finest horseman in the world.

If I were Queen, I would barter a regiment to have him appointed my Chief Master of Horse. Augustus of the three-hundred and fifty-two sold one for his first night with Cosel.

I am racking my brains for a pretense to have him appointed to court duty,—anything to give him the *entrée* to my apartments. But he is far too beautiful. The sanctimonious cats that envy me my happiness, that look upon love as a crime, would at once combine to destroy him.

Well, we'll have to bear with the difficulties of the situation forced upon us by these moral busy-bodies. As for me, I'll be thrice careful, for if He was taken away from me, all the joy would go out of my life.

CHAPTER XLV

LOVE AND THE HAPPINESS IT CONVEYS

My Grand Mistress suspects because I am so amiable—Pangs of jealousy—Every good-looking man pursued by women—A good story of my cousin, the Duchess Berri—We all go cycling together—The Vitzthums—Love making on the street—A mud bath.

December 15,

1900.

When one is in love and loved a-plenty, weeks and months roll by without notice by the happy ones.

For my part I never thought there was so much happiness in the world as I am experiencing since the beginning of September. But I have my troubles, too. First, the Tisch. When a lady is well pleased by her lover, then her eyes are bright, her cheeks glow, her lips smile; she bears with her entourage; she is kind to her servants. The moment I treated the Tisch as a human being, she began to suspect, and I am sure she is eating her heart out fretting because God gave me both nuts and teeth to crack them.

But I am qualifying as an expert deceiver, and my Grand Mistress won't catch me in a hurry.

My other great trouble is: long separations from Henry, hours upon hours in daytime, half the nights.

What is he doing when he is not with me? Of course he pretends to tell, but I am not goose enough to suppose that he would incriminate himself for the love of truth. He is hiding things from me, perhaps cheating me. I have to arm myself with all the faith loving woman commands to forestall occasional noisy out-breaks of jealousy.

Was there ever a good-looking man, women didn't try to capture and seduce? Manly beauty is the red rag that enthralls and excites women and renders them dishonest, though their honor doesn't lodge at the point they designate as its *habitat*.

Sometimes, when in these jealous frenzies, I wish Henry had a face like a Chinese kite, or like Riom, husband and lover of my ancestress, the Duchess du Berri.

She was "*satisfied*" with him, but since her lady-in-waiting, too, was, I might, after all, fare no better than Berri, if Henry was a toad, "his skin spotted like a serpent's, oily like a negro's, changeable like a chameleon, with a turned up nose and disproportionate mouth." Yet I hardly believe that, like my cousin, I would say anent a rival: "Whoever would not be satisfied with him, would be hard to please."

Alas, with women in love the extreme of ugliness counts as triumphantly as the charms of Adonis. Ever since I read certain passages of Faust, part II, Eduard von Hartmann's "Philosophy of the Unconscious," and Lermontoff's "Hero of our Times," I am convinced that to love a man very good-looking, or, on the contrary, a perfect horror, is no sinecure.

Fortunately Henry is almost penniless.

DRESDEN, January 2,

1901.

Henry's sister married one of the numerous Vitzthums, of the family that furnished the Saxon court with titled servants and *maitresses en titre* for the past several hundred years.

I immediately sent word to her ladyship, that having taken up bicycling, I would be pleased to have her attend me on the wheel on the afternoon following. The invitation was issued from the office of my Court Marshal, which is controlled by the King's. Having thus secured beforehand His Majesty's approval, possible criticism was nipped in the bud. The bride asked permission to

bring her husband.

"Granted. Order of dress: *mufti*."

This enabled us, myself and Henry, and the Count and Countess to ride all over town, unrecognized by either officials or the public at large.

It was great fun, and I told the Vitzthums that I intended to wheel every morning at nine, immediately after breakfast. Count Vitzthum is Henry's colonel. Of course he granted both Henry and himself furlough for the time set.

What happiness! Now I don't have to wait till afternoon and evening to see my lover.

DRESDEN, *January 10,*

1901.

I am so happy, I am growing careless.

The Vitzthums, profiting by the fact that they are but recently married, prefer to travel in pairs, and always take the lead. Accordingly Henry and myself, incog. as far as my future subjects go, are free to indulge in occasional caresses and sweet nonsense-talk.

I was pouring honeyed words into Henry's ears the other morning when my wheel skidded on the wet pavement, and before he, or I, could save me, I was down on my back in the mud.

The fact that I was again *enceinte*, and the other fact that I was covered with dirt, ought to have prompted me to return to the palace at once, but how un-Louise-like the straight and sane course would have been.

I allowed myself to be wiped off by Henry; then mounted my wheel anew and raced after the Vitzthums.

Unfortunately, a reporter heard of the incident and, for the benefit of his pocket, made a column out of it.

A few hours after the story appeared in the evening paper, the palace was in an uproar. The King wasn't well enough to scold me, so he delegated that pleasant duty to Prince George. His Royal Highness promptly informed me that the "damned bicycling had to stop."

CHAPTER XLVI

FEARS FOR MY LOVE

Some reflections on queens of old who punished recreant lovers—Henry was in debt and I gave him money—Indignities by which some of that money was earned—Husband accompanies me to Loschwitz—Reflections on Frederick Augustus's character.

January 15, 1901.

My love played the melancholy Dane for the last few days. His tenderness seemed labored, his spirits under a cloud. Every smile I got had to be coaxed from him.

"The end of my happiness," I thought; "some chit of a girl dethroned me." And I cursed my birthday. "A kingdom for ten years off my age."

And my thoughts of thoughts travelled back to the times when royal ladies had their rivals immured, as practiced by a Brandenburg princess at the Kaiser's hunting box at Grünewald, or made a head shorter, like Lady Jane Grey, who was far too pretty to please Elizabeth; or shot, as elected by Queen Christina, *tribade* and nymphomaniac both.

And the things Queen Bess did to her unfaithfuls and the crimes Mary Stuart perpetrated to cheat Jeannie Bothwell out of her doughty Hepburn!

"If I were Queen," I thought, and I must have spoken aloud, for Henry said: "You would make me a great lord, love, wouldn't you, give me the best paying office at court, but that's small comfort to my creditors today."

"It's creditors, mere creditors bothering you?" I almost shouted with joy. This man was still mine. No one had succeeded in luring him away from me. I threw myself upon him and nearly smothered him.

Filthy lucre, or the want of it, oppressing my boy. Money, miserable money, caused me to doubt his very loyalty.

"How much?"

He stuttered and denied and swore it was all a mistake and that I had misunderstood him. "As an army officer——"

"Don't talk like Frederick Augustus. It will give me the greatest pleasure in the world to arrange your affairs, dearest."

I got him to name the sum after a while. What a pity I am not rich. As Catharine sent her Orloffs and Potemkins and Zoritchs to the State Treasury to help themselves as they saw fit, so I would gladly turn fortunes over to Henry, never asking for an accounting.

But this Imperial Highness is wretchedly poor, like most royal women not actually seated on the throne. I can't offer my paramour financial independence, not even luxury, but, thank heaven, I saved up enough to provide for his present needs, even if my treasury be drained to the last twenty-mark piece, and I will have to cut short my charities for the next quarter of a year. But he must not know these sordid details.

Some day I will be Queen. I will reimburse the poor and I will be a true Catharine to Henry.

DRESDEN, *January 16,*

1901.

I brought my mite to our rendezvous. Mostly in small bills and twenty-mark pieces. If Henry knew that many of these were earned in the right royal fashion of having them slipped down one's stocking by a husband, too drunk to distinguish a royal palace from a dance-hall!

He told me honestly enough how he got into debt. "How can one lay by for a rainy day when one hasn't got anything?"

I appreciate the play of words, for I am in the same predicament.

Only once has Henry touched a card, but he lost considerably in horse deals, as most young army officers do.

His sister made a rich marriage, but he wouldn't discover himself to her. If she asked money of her husband, there might be trouble, for Vitzthum is not a liberal man.

LOSCHWITZ, *April 1, 1901.*

The children's health called for country air and I was quasi-forced to retire to Loschwitz, though I have a thousand and one reasons for remaining in Dresden. Frederick Augustus accompanies us. After the strenuous city life (in Dresden!), he needs a change and a long rest from drinking and carousing, he says boastingly.

Of course, while he is here, I dare not invite the Vitzthums. But as soon as he is gone, they shall come for a couple of weeks, and their presence will make Henry's possible.

It's dreadful the way I miss the sweet boy. I suffer like a dog, when the longing seizes me, suffer both in heart and body. When I contemplate his miniature, tears come into my eyes. I often cry for hours thinking of him.

And to have to endure this great booby of a husband of mine day and night, especially nights. It's almost more than I can bear.

The grossness of his egotism reminds me of the story told of King James, whom the English got rid of in 1689.

The Dutch William, instead of waiting peacefully for the heritage of his father-in-law, went to claim it before his death, and James, pressed on all sides by enemies, decided upon flight.

One Sunday, in the month of December, his devotions over, he dismissed all his servants and advised his last partisans to turn towards the rising sun.

After which, he lay for an hour with his wife, the better to take leave of her."

The very thing Frederick Augustus would do if war or revolution made us fugitives.

I never realized the diversity in our natures as much as I do now, when all my thoughts go out to another, when even connubial tendernesses seem like whip-strokes.

The further our souls draw apart, the more disgusting this forced intimacy, the prostitution under the marriage vow, which I detest and abhor.

But what will I do? Shut my door to him? He would kick it in, or climb through the window. It's easier to submit to the violation of my person than to breaking of locks and furniture.

CHAPTER XLVII

LOVE'S INTERMEZZO

Bernhardt takes advantage of my day-dreams—My husband's indolent *gaucherie*—Violent love-making—Ninon who loved families, not men—Does Bernhardt really love me?

LOSCHWITZ, April 10,

1901.

Fortunately Bernhardt came for a few days to relieve the monotony of my alcove life *par le droit du plus fort*.

Tall stories of dissipation, indiscipline, scandal, had preceded the poor fellow. No doubt, his military superiors got orders to make his life as unhappy as they possibly can, and he retaliates.

The Prince told me that, at last, he had succeeded arranging for an audience with the King. His Majesty had denied himself to Bernhardt for months past. He managed the coveted boon only by the intervention of various high generals and the threat to appeal to the Kaiser.

The Royal House of Saxony, while compelled to recognize William as War-Lord, doesn't court his interference, or attempted interference, in matters military.

Flushed with this initial success and expecting lots of good things in the future, Bernhardt was bent upon having a good time. He drank with Frederick Augustus, made love to Lucretia and squeezed the chambermaids on his floor to his heart's content.

To me he was the most gallant of cousins and, glad to contribute to the happiness of the poor fellow, I gave him plenty of rope, perhaps too much.

On the second day of his stay we had a very merry dinner, having dispensed for the time with titled servants.

After dinner the three of us retired to the veranda. I was in a rocker, showing perhaps more of my ankles than was absolutely necessary. Frederick Augustus was smoking dreamily. Like an animal he likes to sleep after he has gorged himself.

Bernhardt, with my permission, had thrown himself on a wicker lounge and was absorbing cigarettes at a killing rate. I bantered him on his laziness. But he only sighed.

"You wish that audience was past and forgotten," I asked.

"Pshaw, I'm thinking of something prettier than the King."

Remembering Bernhardt's chief weakness, I indulged in the old joke, "*Cherchez la femme*."

Bernhardt replied, with another succession of groans, "You are right, Louise; *parfaitement, cherchez la femme*."

"Egads," grunted Frederick Augustus, glad for an excuse to go to his room, or play a game of pinochle with his aides, "egads, if you indulge in intellectualities, I had better go. A full stomach and French conversation—whew!"

The Tisch was in Dresden; *Fräulein* von Schoenberg with the children, Lucretia flirting somewhere at a neighboring country chalet. We were alone on the remote terrace and it was getting dark. Bernhardt sat up and looked at me with eyes of life-giving fire, but continued silent.

"You want me to think that you command the rays of the sun stolen by Prometheus?"

He answered not, but sought to burn the skin of my neck and bosom by those Prometheus rays.

Now, in the morning I got a note from Henry, and I had been thinking of the dear boy every minute. I was longing for him; my heart, my senses were crying for him.

I forgot Bernhardt; I forgot all around me. With my fancies focussed on my lover, I leaned back in my armchair, gazing at the rising moon. My word, at that moment I was lost to everything.

I half-awoke from my dream when I heard Bernhardt rise. A moment later I felt his eyes prowling over my body. Then a shadow darkened my face and Bernhardt said with a strange quaver in his voice:

"*Cherchez la femme*. You are the woman, Louise, you and none else."

And wild, forbidden kisses burned on my face, on my neck, on my breasts. Both hands claimed a lover's liberties.

I was taken completely unawares; in my mind of minds I was in the Countess's pavilion, receiving Henry's caresses. All sense of location had vanished. And, thinking of my lover, I clasped both arms about Bernhardt's neck and drew him to me. We kissed like mad. The love feast for Henry became Bernhardt's in the twinkling of an eye.

Whether he felt like a thief, I don't know; for my part my senses responded to Henry, not to his

substitute.

How long this embrace lasted, I don't know. Somebody, or some noise, caused us to separate.

I fled and locked myself in my room.

"Tell His Royal Highness he must excuse me. I can't see him before he goes away. Say I have a headache, or the gout, I don't care which," I commanded Lucretia next morning.

The previous night I had denied myself to Frederick Augustus, though he entreated and raved.

While I appreciate the arch-Lais's *bon mot* that "one can't judge of a family by a single specimen," which made Ninon talk of her lovers *not* as Coligny, Villarceau, Sévigné, Condé, d'Albret, etc., but as *les Rochefoucaults*, *les d'Effiats*, *les Condés*, *les Sévignés*, etc., I was determined not to betray Henry by the whole House of Saxony in a single twelve-hours.

I wonder whether this Bernhardt loves me? Perhaps, on his part, it was the longing for the girl he adores, as, on mine, it was longing for Henry that drew us together with electric force. And, of course, environment had something to do with it: moon, opportunity, Frederick Augustus's indolent *gaucherie*. Yes, why deny it, the good dinner we had, the champagne.

CHAPTER XLVIII

GRAND MISTRESS TELLS HUSBAND I KEEP A DIARY

He wants to see it, but seems unsuspecting—Grand Mistress denies that she meant mischief, but I upbraid her unmercifully—Threaten to dismiss her like a thieving lackey.

LOSCHWITZ, *May 1, 1901.*

Frederick Augustus leaves tomorrow. Forever, I thought, when he put this question to me:

"You are keeping a Diary, Louise?"

I was frightened dumb. I stared at him.

"What's the matter," he laughed. "I'm not going to eat you." He didn't seem to be at all perturbed.

"How do you know I keep a Diary?" I stuttered.

Nonchalantly enough he made answer: "Your bag-of-bones Baroness told me. Full of forbidden things, I suppose, since you regard it a state secret. You often say that my education was sadly neglected. Maybe I can learn a thing or two from your scribblings. Let's look 'm over."

By this time I had regained my composure. "Naturally," I said, "a Diary records thoughts and things intended for the writer only, but if you choose to be ungentlemanly enough to wish to peruse those pages more sacred than private letters, I suppose I will have to submit."

Frederick Augustus changed the subject, but I felt instinctively that he was disappointed. Someone had played on his curiosity, and to go unsatisfied is not at all in this prince's line.

Of course, the someone was the Tisch, but how did she know? I will ask her as soon as Frederick Augustus is gone.

LOSCHWITZ, *May 2, 1901.*

"Have you ever seen my Diary?" I asked the Tisch this morning.

"Never, Your Imperial Highness."

"Then how do you know I keep a Diary?"

"I surmised it because I saw Your Imperial Highness write repeatedly in one and the same book." The hussy affected a humble tone, but the note of triumph and hatred underlying the creature's meekness did not escape me.

"And the mere surmise prompted you to blab to my husband, arouse his suspicions?"

"For Heaven's sake," cried my Grand Mistress, "I had no idea that His Royal Highness didn't know about the Diary. Secrets between the Prince-Royal and Your Imperial Highness—how dare I pre-suppose such a state of things? His Royal Highness casually asked how the Crown Princess killed time in Loschwitz. I mentioned riding, driving, bicycling, writing letters, writing in the Diary——"

My fingers itched to slap her lying face, Grand-Duchess of Tuscany fashion, but I kept my temper.

"Listen to me," I said. "While you have secret instructions to play the serpent in my household

and to betray, for dirty money, your mistress of the Blood Imperial, your duties as a spy are confined to my going and coming, to my exterior conduct, to my visits outside the palace, to my friendships, perhaps.

"They cannot possibly encompass my thoughts. And my Diary is the repository of my thoughts—thoughts that must not be defiled by your favor-seeking curiosity. Be warned. The next time you dare act the burglar—I say *burglar*—I will kick you out of doors like a thieving lackey."

She got as white as a sheet and hissed back: "Your Imperial Highness can't dismiss me. Only His Majesty has power—"

I interrupted her with an imperious gesture.

"I said I will kick you out of doors like a thieving lackey," I repeated, "and I will do so this moment if you say another word. Whether or not His Majesty will punish me for the act, that's *my* business. You will be on the street and will stay on the street."

I pointed to the door: "I dismiss you now. You will keep to your room for the rest of the day."

I saw the Tisch was near collapse.

"Your Imperial Highness deigns to insult a defenseless woman," she breathed as she went out.

Defenseless! So is the viper that attacks one's heel! First these "defenseless" creatures goad one to madness, then they appeal to our *noblesse oblige*. The enmity between the Tisch and I is more intense than ever.

CHAPTER XLIX

ARISTOCRATIC VISITORS

I hear disquieting news about my lover's character—The aristocracy a dirty lot—Love-making made easy by titled friends—Anecdotes of Richelieu and the Duke of Orleans—The German nobleman who married Miss Wheeler and had to resign his birthright—The disreputable business the Pappenheims and other nobles used to be in—I am afraid to question my lover as to charges.

LOSCHWITZ, *May 15, 1901.*

The Vitzthums have been visiting for a week. Henry lodges in the village, but spends nearly all his time in the castle and grounds. We play tennis, polo, ball; we drive, ride, go bicycling, we dine and sup together.

I ought to be the happiest woman in the world, but a shadow dims the ideal picture my mind's eye drew of the lover.

I have it recorded somewhere—I wish I hadn't, so I might doubt my memory—that Henry told me he never borrowed from his sister. Countess Vitzthum's confidences to me show that he did repeatedly, that, in fact, he is forever trying to borrow.

"He is a spendthrift; he cannot be trusted," said his sister, who loves him dearly. "He will wreck his career if he continues at the pace he is going. Some day we may hear of him as a waiter or cab-driver in New York."

These disclosures frightened me. I might forgive him the lie, but what is he doing with the money?

Spending it on lewd women like Bernhardt, I suppose.

I said: "Oh," and Madame von Vitzthum seemed to catch its significance. It occurred to her at once that she had said too much and she tried to minimize her brother's delinquencies. But I know.

Maybe some of my money went to pay hotel expenses for—

At Midnight.

My cousin Richelieu caused his mistresses to be painted in all sorts of monastic garments and licentious devices, saying: "I have my saints and martyrs; they are all that; but, as for virgins, there are none outside of Paradise." Substitute *paillards* for the holy ones and you have the situation in a nutshell.

The Vitzthums are panderers. They always manage to leave me alone with Henry. When we are a-wheel, they ride a mile ahead; while playing tennis one or the other aims the ball, every little while, to enter the open window of a summer-house, where my lover and I can exchange a few rapid kisses. When we are driving, without coachman or groom, of course, they always "feel like

walking a bit," while Henry and I remain in the carriage.

The same at the house, on the veranda. They are always *de trop*. Vitzthum even sacrifices himself to the extent of paying court to the Tisch and engaging her entire attention, if it must be. He reminds me of a certain colonel of the French army during the Regency.

"*Monseigneur*," said this gentleman to my cousin d'Orleans, "permit me to employ my regiment as a guard for my wife, and I swear to you that nobody shall go near her but Your Highness."

Of course, it's very lovely of them, but rather emphasizes the poor opinion I have of the nobility.

Your nobleman and noblewoman adopt all tones, all airs, all masks, all allures, frank and false, flattering and brutal, choleric or mild, virtuous or bawdy—anything as long as it makes for their profit. Some months ago I met at the Dresden court the Dowager Countess Julie Feodorowna of Pappenheim, who told everybody she could persuade to listen that her eldest son, Max Albrecht, had to resign the succession, because he married beneath him, an American heiress, Miss Wheeler of Philadelphia.

"Then you despise money?" I queried with a malicious thought just entering my head.

"Not exactly, Your Imperial Highness," she said, "but our house laws—"

"Those funny house laws," I smiled, "you don't say they forbid a Pappenheim to accept half a dozen millions from his wife, when, in days gone by, the Counts of Pappenheim's chief income was the tax on harlotry in Franconia and Swabia."

The Countess nearly dropped. "Don't be alarmed," I said. "See the pompous looking man in the corner yonder? It's Count Henneberg. His forbears held the fiefship of the Würzburg city brothel for many hundred years. That's where the family fortune came from."

LOSCHWITZ, *May 17, 1901.*

I am an ingrate. I bit the hand that fed me. Noble iniquity that yields such delicious crumbs of love as Henry and I stole in moments of ecstasy in park and parlor, in pavilion and veranda, on our drives and rides, be blessed a hundred times. Ah, the harvest of little tendernesses, the sweet words I caught on the wing—recompense for the weeks of abstinence I suffered!

Occasionally only, very occasionally, I feel like questioning Henry as to the lie he was guilty of. I quizzed his sister time and again about his relations with women. She always gives me a knowing laugh; I wonder whether she means to be impertinent, or is simply a silly goose.

I won't ask him. If he is innocent, as I sincerely hope, he will be offended. If he is not, he will be ashamed of himself and will avoid me in future. It's "innocent," you lose, and "guilty," you don't win.

And I love him. I want him, whether he lies to me or not.

CHAPTER I

TO LIVE UNDER KING'S AND PRINCE GEORGE'S EYE

Abruptly ordered to the royal summer residence—The Vitzthums and Henry take flight—Enmeshed by Prince George's intrigues—Those waiting for a crown have no friends—What I will do when Queen—No wonder Kings of old married only relatives—Interesting facts about relative marriages furnished by scientist.

LOSCHWITZ, *May 18, 1901.*

All-highest order to proceed to Pillnitz, the royal summer residence, without delay—a command I cannot possibly evade. Conveyed in curt, almost insulting terms—the Tisch's work, no doubt.

It came like lightning out of a blue sky, just when Henry and I had planned some real love-making *à la* Dresden.

The Vitzthums lost no time taking their leave when the scent of royal disgrace was in the air, and, as if to emphasize the obscene office they had assumed, they spirited Henry away ere we had time even to say goodbye.

What a life I am leading with the ogre of the King's wrath forever hanging over me; Prince George's intrigues, octopus-like, enmeshing me!

Ten years I have been Crown Princess of these realms. Three Princes and a Princess I gave to Saxony. A fifth child is trembling in my womb, yet every atom of happiness that falls to my lot is moulded into a strand of the rope fastening 'round my neck.

I haven't a friend in the world. A most dangerous thing to be on good terms with the heirs to the

crown. Makes the temporary incumbent of the bauble nervous, makes him jealous.

When I am Queen, I will have friends in plenty. But then I won't need any. Immense wealth will be at my disposal. I will have offices to distribute, titles, crosses and stars.

Instead of tolerating the serpents now coiling at my fireside ready to spring at a word from their master, I will appoint to court offices persons I love or esteem, at least.

Henry shall be my Chief Equerry; the Tisch will be dismissed in disgrace—no pension.

But I am day-dreaming again. I started out to say that I had no friends. Yet there's Bernhardt? Precisely—as long as I am his mistress.

Marie is dead, Melita expects to be divorced before the end of the year. She will be a Russian Grand-Duchess, and the tedium of petty German court life will know her no longer.

Aside from Lucretia, there isn't a man or woman at the Saxon court whom I can trust, for our high functionaries are only lackeys having a bathroom to themselves. In no other way do they differ from the servants who are allowed one bathroom per twenty-four heads.

But the high aristocracy! Its men and women flatter us to get us into leading strings, try to make us pawns on the political or social chess-board. As a whole, they are a despicable lot.

No wonder kings of old married members of their own family exclusively, even their sisters, *in re* of which the learned Baron von Reitzenstein told me many interesting details.

He copied especially from Egyptian records, but also from Armenian, Babylonian and Persian, to wit:

Daranavausch married his niece, Phratunga.

His son and successor married his niece Artayanta.

Artaxerxes was also married to a niece of his.

Darius II and Parysatis married their sisters.

Kambyses married two of his sisters.

Artachschasa II married his two daughters; Kobad his daughter Sambyke.

Artaviraf, the founder of a great ancient religion, married no less than seven of his sisters—because "there were no other women worthy of the honor."

According to that, the aristocracy of old must have been as rotten as that of our day.

Lucretia is the only person I trust, and they would have robbed me of her services long ago if my marriage contract did not vest the power of dismissal in me.

Unlike me, she can afford to defy the King's wrath.

CHAPTER LI

COLD RECEPTION—ENEMIES ALL AROUND

Frederick Augustus gives his views on adultery—Doesn't care personally, but "the King knows"—"Thank God, the King is ill"—I am deprived of my children—Have I got the moral strength to defy my enemies?

PILLNITZ, *May 20, 1901.*

I am undone. That malicious Tisch woman holds me in the hollow of her hand.

I dropped into a sea of ice when I set foot in the castle. Long faces, suspicious looks, frigidity everywhere. The King treats me like a criminal. I wonder the guards don't refuse their *spiel* at my coming and going.

PILLNITZ, *May 21, 1901.*

Frederick Augustus arrived. He doesn't say for how long, and acts the icicle in the presence of others. At night he seeks his "rights," seeks them brutally.

This afternoon he said to me:

"That you made me a cuckold isn't exactly killing me; this sort of thing happened to better men than I, and—I was almost prepared for it. But to hear it announced from the King's lips——"

Because His Majesty knows—Frederick Augustus raved and swore I had dishonored him.

"If I wasn't a royal prince, I would be kicked out of the army," he whined.

In short, adultery isn't so very reprehensible if the King doesn't know.

Late tonight profound disquietude at court. The King is ill.

Thank God, the audience I feared must be postponed.

PILLNITZ, *May 22, 1901.*

It wasn't. His Majesty appointed Prince George his representative, and I received a command to call on him at ten sharp.

I wrote on the Court Marshal's brutal invitation: "I refuse to see His Royal Highness."

Ten minutes later the Tisch entered my apartment with a look of triumph on her hateful face. She handed me a letter on a golden plate and waited.

"Your Ladyship is dismissed," I snapped.

She didn't move: "I expect your Imperial Highness's commands with respect to the royal children," she said. "May it please Your Imperial Highness to read Prince George's letter."

I tore open the envelope. His Majesty's representative "graciously permits me to see my children at nine in the morning and between five and six in the afternoon. At no other time, and never unless Baroness Tisch is in attendance."

I threw the letter on the floor and trampled on it. "Get out," I commanded the Baroness. If she hadn't gone instantly, I believe I would have choked her.

So I am deemed unworthy to mother the children I bore; and a spy is officially appointed to watch my intercourse with the little ones lest I corrupt them. No other inference was to be drawn from the measure.

"I will show them." But no sooner was the threat launched, than a great fear clutched at my heart.

Was I in a position to defy them? To guard the purity of the royal children "is the King's first duty towards his family." If he had proof positive that I was an impure woman, there was no use quarrelling with his decision. Besides, moral delinquencies engender more than physical weakness. I felt my boasted energy ebbing away fast.

"I am without strength, unnerved, because Henry left me," I lied to myself. The abandoned woman is either a tigress or a kitten. I happen to be no tigress.

CHAPTER LII

PRINCE GEORGE REVEALS TO ME THE DEPTH OF HIS HATRED

A terrible interview—"The devil will come to claim you"—Uncertain how much the King and Prince George know—I break into the nursery and stay with my children all day—Prince George insults me in my own rooms and threatens prison if I disobey him.

PILLNITZ, *May 23, 1901.*

I caught Prince George in the park after laying in wait for him three long hours.

"Why does Your Royal Highness forbid me to see my children?" I demanded, every nerve aquiver.

"His Majesty's orders. He thinks you are not fit company for growing children. You are leading a godless life."

"What does Your Royal Highness mean?"

"What I said. A godless life, such as you entered upon, is an invitation to the devil. Sins are the devil's envoys. When you are black with sin, the devil himself will come to claim you."

He dropped his theological lingo and continued: "My fine daughter-in-law wants to be everybody's lady-love. If she had her sweet will, she would ruin every young chap in the residence and the surrounding country."

He looked about him and, seeing we were unobserved, eased his bile in this pretty epigram as rank as a serpent's saliva: "An adulterous wife, that's what you are. Satan alone knows how many you seduced."

It was more than I could stand and I burst into tears. In moments like this women always cry, but

even if I hadn't felt like doing so, I would have cried because George hates it.

"Prove to me, prove to the King that you are sorry for what you have done, return to the path of righteousness, to God, and we will see about the children," he whispered as he moved away.

"What does he know?" "How much have they found out?" I kept saying to myself as I withdrew to my lonely apartments.

PILLNITZ, *May 24, 1901.*

No answer to the questions in my last entry. The silent persecution continues unabated. I am growing desperate.

PILLNITZ, *May 25, 1901.*

This morning at eight-thirty I went to the nursery.

The Baroness tried to speak to me. I held up my hand. "Not a word from you, or something terrible will happen."

Fräulein von Schoenberg, who is really a sweet girl, offered some respectful advice. I begged her to be silent. If the door had been locked I would have forced it with the dagger I carried in my bosom.

Lucretia came and whispered. "I have decided to stay, and stay I will. Let them do their worst if they dare," I told her.

I changed the children's *curriculum*. "You can drive every day; you can't have mother every day. Let's have some games."

I remained in the nursery till all the children were asleep. They partook of the breakfast, lunch and dinner I ordered for myself. A great treat for them. We were very happy.

But I waited in vain for interference. Nothing happened to clear the situation. Those questions were still unanswered when I returned to my apartments.

I had just sat down to read the evening papers, when Prince George entered unannounced.

"If ever again you dare disobey my commands"—he shouted without preliminaries.

I cut him short: "Are the children yours or mine?"

"They belong to Saxony, to the Royal House," he bawled, and poured forth a torrent of abuse without giving me a chance to put in a word. "You shall be disciplined to the last extremity. We will imprison you in some lonely tower, without state or attendants. You shall not see your children from one year's end to the other."

"Prison for the Crown Princess? Would you dare, Prince George?"

"At the Tower of Nossen rooms are in readiness for your Imperial Highness," sneered my father-in-law as he walked out.

Nossen! A ruined country-house, flanked by a mediæval tower in the midst of swamps. The nearest habitation miles away. Neither railway nor post-office, neither telegraph nor telephone—just the place to bury one alive. And I only thirty-one.

Augustus the Physical Strong imprisoned Countess Cosel at Nossen six months before he sent her to her prison-grave in Stolpen. After Cosel's departure, another royal mistress was lodged in Nossen, and as she would neither commit suicide, nor succumb to the fever, they starved her to death. And it all happened in the eighteenth century.

The word Nossen sent cold shivers down my spine. I am sure I won't sleep a wink.

CHAPTER LIII

REVOLVER IN HAND, I DEMAND AN EXPLANATION

An insolent Grand Mistress, but of wonderful courage—Imprisonment, threats to kill have no effect on her—Disregards my titles—My lover's souvenir and endearing words—How she caused Henry to leave me—My paroxysms of rage—Henry's complete betrayal of me.

PILLNITZ, *May 26, 1901.*

This morning I awoke a mental and physical wreck, but determined to solve those vexatious questions: "What do the King and Prince George know?" "What have they found out?"

I slipped on a dressing-gown, fetched my small revolver from its hiding-place in the boudoir and rang for the Tisch.

I received her politely enough. I was quiet, cold, calculating. She gave a start as she observed my stony countenance.

"Baroness," I said, motioning her to come nearer, "explain the attitude assumed by His Majesty, Prince George and the rest."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"I want to know. Do you hear, Grand Mistress? I command you to speak," I cried.

A sneer of contempt hovered about her lips. She is a viper, this woman, but has the courage of the rattle-snake in action.

I turned the keys in the several doors and threw them under the bed. From under the pillow I drew my revolver.

I showed her the weapon and calmly announced, accentuating each word: "You won't leave this room alive until the question I put to you is answered to my satisfaction. I want the whole truth. You needn't excuse your own part in the business. As Henri *Quatre* said to the lover of Diane de Poitiers, secreted under her bed, as he threw him half a cold bird: 'We all want to live, some honestly, some dishonestly.' You choose the dishonest road. Be it so.

"But I want you to state what you accuse me of. Hurry," I added menacingly.

The Tisch was unmoved. Either she thinks me a horrible dastard or is brave to madness. She looked at me fearlessly and smiled. She seemed to enjoy my rage.

"Answer or I will shoot you like the dog you are."

And then her cold and fearless voice rang out: "Put your revolver away. I am not afraid to tell you, and that thing might go off. Is it possible," she continued sarcastically, "you have to ask?"

This woman dared to address me "you." "Tisch," I thundered, "my title reads Your Imperial Highness."

Another contemptuous smile curled her thin lips as she answered insolently: "At your commands. But if you want me to talk, put away the weapon. I won't open my head while threatened."

I threw the revolver into a drawer of my chiffonier and the Tisch approached me. "Do you know this?" she hissed, whipping from her desert bosom the golden *Portebonheur*, Henry's present.

I had missed it for two days. Fear seized my throat.

"Do you know this?" repeated the Tisch, pushing the button and disclosing Henry's miniature with the legend "To my sweetest Louise."

"Where did you get it?" I asked, half-dead with shame and fear.

"Never mind. It's the last piece of evidence that fell into my hands. The real facts I have known for a long while."

"And sold that knowledge?"

"I did my duty."

"Report, then."

And she told the story of her infamy—or mine?

My true relations with Henry were discovered by her at Loschwitz. He is a distant relative of hers and she an intimate friend of his mother. Hence she took care not to compromise the young man. The entire blame was put on me.

"Her Imperial Highness is indulging in a dangerous flirtation with Baron Bergen," she advised the King. "They must be separated at once lest that exemplary young man fall victim to her seductive wiles. I beseech Your Majesty to order the Crown Princess to Pillnitz and put a stop to her most reprehensible conduct."

Hence the royal command to proceed to Pillnitz without a moment's delay. "The King and Prince George deem your honor unsafe unless you are under their watchful eyes," she had the effrontery to tell me.

She drew a key from her pocket and opened one of the bedroom doors.

With her hand on the knob, she said, bowing formally:

"By Your Imperial Highness's leave, I will keep the *Portebonheur* to use in case you are ever tempted again 'to throw me out of doors like a thieving lackey!'"

A low bow, a sarcastic smile,—my executioner was gone. And I broke some priceless bric-a-brac,

stamped my foot on the pearl necklace Frederick Augustus had given me, tore three or four lace handkerchiefs and stuffed the rags in my mouth to prevent me from crying aloud.

PILLNITZ, *May 27, 1901.*

Lucretia finished the Tisch's report. The good soul hadn't had the courage to tell me before, but now that the Grand Mistress had spoken, considerations of delicacy no longer stood in the way.

What a judge of character I am, to be sure: Henry, whom I raised from obscurity, whom I befriended, loved, advanced, rescued from the hands of usurers—a traitor, pshaw, worse,—I cannot write down the word, but it's in my mind.

Henry, who hadn't the time to take leave from me, devoted an hour to the Tisch before he went away with the Vitzthums.

He told her all and gave her his word of honor—the honor of a man who accepted money from the woman weak enough to love him—that, first, he would never see me again of his own accord and would reject both my entreaties and commands; secondly, that he would petition to be transferred to a distant garrison to be out of the path of temptation; thirdly, that he would burn my letters.

The Tisch, on her part, promised to tell the King only half the truth—not for my sake, of course, but to shield her dear, seduced young relative.

CHAPTER LIV

FORCED TO DO PENANCE LIKE A TRAPPIST MONK

"By the King's orders"—I submit for the sake of my children—Must fast as well as pray—In delicate health, I insist upon returning to Dresden—Bernhardt, to avoid being maltreated by King, threatens him with his sword—The King's awful wrath—Bernhardt prisoner in Nossen—I escape, temporarily, protracted *ennui*.

PILLNITZ, *May 28, 1901.*

Though I am in delicate health, the King, having recovered from his illness, commanded me to do penance,—almost public penance.

Fast and pray, pray and fast is the order of the day for the next two weeks.

I arise every morning at five. At six a closed carriage takes me to a distant nunnery of the Ursulines, a good hour's travel. I am forced to attend mass, which also lasts an hour. Then a half-hour's sermon, dealing with fire and brimstone, hell and damnation.

When that's over the Mother Superior kindly asks me to her cell and lectures me for an hour on the duties of a wife and mother, and on the terrors that follow in the wake of adultery.

(I wonder where she gets her wisdom. She isn't married, she isn't supposed to have children, and she ought to know that the founder of her religion was most kind to the adulteress.)

Then back to Pillnitz and breakfast, for it's the King's express command that I worship on an empty stomach; some Jesuit told George my sins would never be forgiven unless the torture of the fast was added to that of early rising, travel, prostration before the altar and listening to pious palaver.

I stand it for my children's sake. They will be returned to me after I did penance full score. My only satisfaction: I compel the Tisch to attend me on my trips, and make her sit on the back seat of the carriage. I know this turns her stomach and watch her twitching face with devilish glee.

1901.

DRESDEN, *June 15,*

With the authority of the pregnant woman I demanded that I be allowed to return to town.

"If compelled to see Prince George and the rest of my enemies daily, my child will be mal-formed, or I will suffer an *avortement*," I told the King.

They let me go and I am breathing more freely. I still wear the chain and ball, but they don't cut into my flesh as in Pillnitz.

Yesterday I learned that Bernhardt was in Dresden, and sent for him. He came in company of two army officers who remained in the anteroom.

"I am a prisoner," he said resignedly, "those fellows outside will conduct me to Nossen."

The audience granted him several months ago took place only after my departure from the summer residence, and developed into a fearful scene.

"His Majesty," said Bernhardt, "was in a rage when I entered. 'State what you have to say,' said the King, 'and be brief.'

"If Your Majesty will graciously permit me to reside in Dresden, I will promise to lead a life in accordance with Your Majesty's intentions and will obey your slightest wish."

"What?" cried the King, "You dare name conditions for your good conduct?"

Bernhardt denied any intention to impose conditions, but begged to submit to His Majesty that he couldn't exist in those small garrisons. If in Dresden, it would come easier to him to turn over a new leaf.

"Sure, all you young rakes want to live in the capital," sneered the King, "because it's easy in a big town to hide one's delinquencies."

"Your Majesty," cried Bernhardt, "if I ever did a reprehensible thing, it was forced upon me by intolerable conditions."

The King grew white with rage.

"No excuses," he thundered. "You are a rip and ugly customer and you will stay in the garrison I designated."

Even before the King had finished, Bernhardt interrupted him with a fierce: "Don't you call me names, Majesty. I won't stand for that."

"Won't stand for anything that I think proper to mete out to you, rascal? I will make you." The King had risen and was about to box Bernhardt's ears.

Bernhardt jumped back two paces and shouted like mad: "Don't you dare touch me. I will defend my honor sword in hand, even if I have to shoot myself on the spot."

For several seconds the King stood speechless, then he reached out his hand and touched an electric button. Marshal Count Vitzthum responded.

"Take him," said the King hoarsely—"he is your prisoner."

Bernhardt drew his sword and threw it at the King's feet. He was conducted to a room, and sentinels were posted outside his door and under his windows. Presently the telephone called together a council of war and it was decided that Bernhardt go to Nossen during the King's pleasure, or rather displeasure.

"The army officers that act as my guards are not allowed to speak to me," said Bernhardt, "and the garrison in Nossen will likewise be muzzled." He laughed as he added: "I suppose I shall have to make friends with the spirits of the great Augustus's mistresses haunting the old burg. They were gay ones! If the King remembered that, he would send me to the Trappists rather than to Nossen."

DRESDEN, July 1, 1901.

I never dreamt that science would come to my rescue, but a clever woman has more than one trick up her sleeve. On a visit to a book store I happened to see a new publication on the Hygienics of Pregnancy and had it sent to the palace.

Last night, when nearly dead with *ennui*, I turned over the leaves of the volume and came across an article advising women in my condition to seek plenty of merry company. My mind was made up at once.

First thing in the morning I sent for the Court Physician, and with many a sigh and groan gave him to understand that I feared to have melancholy if I continued the monotonous life I was leading.

I happened to strike one of the doctor's pet theories, and he recited whole pages from the book I had been reading. Then he asked me a hundred questions, and rest assured that my answers were in accordance with my wishes.

"I will have the honor to report to His Majesty at once," said the Councillor at the end of the examination, "that some diversion is imperative in Your Imperial Highness's case. Would Your Imperial Highness be pleased to visit the theatre or the Opera if the King approves?"

The King did approve, and the Crown Princess of Saxony is once more permitted the privilege of *Frau Schmidt* and *Frau Müller*; namely, to go to the theatre when she feels like it.



THE LATE KING GEORGE OF SAXONY
Louise's Father-in-Law

CHAPTER LV

FRANCIS JOSEPH JOINS MY SAXON ENEMIES

Cuts me dead before whole family—Everybody talks over my head at dinner—I refuse to attend more court festivities—Husband protests because I won't stand for insult from Emperor—I give rein to my contempt for his family—Hypocrites, despoilers, gamblers, religious maniacs, brutes—Benign lords to the people, tyrants at home—I cry for my children like a she-dog whose young were drowned.

DRESDEN, *November 2,*

1901.

Great family concourse to look my new baby over, dear Marie Alix, born at Wachwitz, September 27.

Emperor Francis Joseph was first to arrive, the Majesty who is forever posing as the family's good genius, as upholder of peace and amity among his countless cousins and nieces, and the many uncles and aunts and other relatives of his grand-children.

Behold how he lived up to this reputation!

I had been commanded to attend the reception in the Queen's *salon*, and made my bow to him. He bowed all around, looking at each present, but managed to overlook me.

Then he commenced a long and weary conversation with the Queen, at whose elbow I sat, and when his stock of platitudes was exhausted, turned to fat Mathilde, congratulating her on the possession of the *Stern Kreuz* decoration, an Austrian order which I likewise wore at my corsage. It was none other than the late Empress Elizabeth who pinned it on me.

Presently dinner was announced. The Emperor took in Her Majesty, the King, *nolens, volens*, had to conduct me, but gave me neither word nor look. Nor did the others. I couldn't have been more isolated on a desert island, than at this royal board.

They talked and cracked their silly jokes, and paid compliments to each other and were careful not to let their tongues run away with their intriguing minds, but all went above my head. No one spoke to me but the lackeys: "If it please Your Imperial Highness—"

Frederick Augustus tore into my bedroom some little time after I had retired. Picture of the offended gentleman, if you please. I got no more than I deserve, but it "reflected on him, h-i-m,

HIM." Though it was a "family dinner," he, the Crown Prince of Saxony, was "publicly" disgraced. The Emperor had treated the Crown Princess as air. He had not deigned to address a single word to her. The Crown Princess was a trollop in the Imperial eyes—it was enough to drive the Crown Prince to drink.

"Drink yourself to death then," I shrieked.

During the night I speculated what to do: ask a private audience of the Emperor, state my side of the case and beg his forgiveness and protection, beg, especially, for better treatment at his hands?

And if he refused?

Francis Joseph is a good deal of a Jesuit. When he hates, he never lets it come to a break; when he loves, he never attaches himself.

If I stooped to humiliate myself, he might choose to debase me still more. It was entirely probable that he would betray my confidences to the King and Prince George.

I will defy him and—all of them!

"Her Imperial Highness regrets——" my Court Marshal wrote in answer to all invitations or rather "commands" for the next three days. When I refused to participate in the "grand leave-taking," Frederick Augustus came post-haste to expostulate with me.

"You must. It would be an affront without precedent."

"Take leave of a man who didn't say good-day to me on his arrival, and who probably intends to slight me in similar fashion on going away——"

In lieu of argument the Prince Royal abused me like a pick-pocket; I had waited for it and now I let loose.

"You are like the rest of your family," I shouted: "ignorant, thoughtless, brutal *en venerie*, sanctimonious in dotage. I know few people for whom I have so great a detestation as for the Royal Saxons. Look at your father, there is no more jesuitical a Jesuit, the inward man as hideous as the outward. He would be an insolent lackey, if he didn't happen to be a prince.

"And Johann George—a shameless inheritance-chaser, despoiler of pupillary funds, gambler at the *bourse*, who whines like a whipped dog when he loses.

"The royal Bernhardt, companion of street-walkers!

"Prince Max, who talks theology, but keeps his eye on Therese.

"Your Queen, a victim of religious madness, your King and his system—organized selfishness. Chicanery for those dependent upon him, ruin for all more gifted than the average Wettiner.

"While living here I have learned to look upon my father's discrowning as a stroke of good luck for, since kings can no longer indulge their brutalities against their subjects, they turned tyrants at home.

"If your father did to the humblest of his subjects what he did to me, he would be chased from home and country. The people, the parliament, his own creatures would rise against him and blot his name from the royal roster.

"In the palace, in boudoirs, in the nurseries, he plays the prince—extortioner—executioner. To the public he is the benign lord, whining for paltry huzzas."

Frederick Augustus was so dumfounded, he could only grind his teeth.

I continued: "You prate of respect due the Majesty. There's nothing to induce feelings of that sort. Round me there is naught but weakness, hypocrisy, pettiness. I see shame and thievery stalking side by side in these gilded halls—gilded for show, but pregnant with woe.

"Fie on you, Prince Royal, who allows his wife to be dogged by spies. Thieves, paid by your father, steal my souvenirs; a burglar's kit hidden in their clothes, they besiege my writing table. Jailers stand between me and my children.

"My children!

"Like a she-dog,^[7] whose young were drowned, I cry for my babies—I, the Crown Princess of Saxony, who saved your family from dying out, a degenerate, depraved, demoralized, decadent race."

When I had said this and more I fell down and was seized by crying convulsions.

FOOTNOTES:

[7] Queens seem to like this unseemly comparison:

"Am I a kennel-dog in the estimation of the Bastard of England?" cried Mary of Scots, when Queen Elizabeth refused her safe-conduct through England upon her departure

CHAPTER LVI

I AM DETERMINED TO DO AS I PLEASE

I reject mother's tearful reproaches—I beard Prince George in his lair despite whining chamberlains—I tell him what I think of him, and he becomes frightened—Threatens madhouse—"I dare you to steal my children"—I win my point—and the children—"Her Imperial Highness regrets"—Lots of forbidden literature—Precautions against intriguing Grand Mistress—The affair with Henry—was it a flower-covered pit to entrap me?—Castle Stolpen and some of its awful history.

DRESDEN, *November 5,*

1901.

Patience ceased to be a virtue. Tolerance would be a crime against myself. I am determined to do as I please in future. If it upsets the King's, Prince George's and the rest's delicate digestion, so much the better.

The newspapers are hinting about my troubles with Prince George and the King. When I go driving or appear at the theatre, the public shows its sympathy in many ways. Sometimes I am acclaimed to the echo.

Mamma wrote me a tearful letter. She spent six hours in prayers for "sinful Louise" and sends me the fruits of her meditations: six pages of close script, advising me how to regain the King's and Prince George's favor.

Never before have I failed in outward respect to my mother, but this time I wrote to her: "Pray attend to your own affairs. Don't meddle in mine which you are entirely unable to understand."

DRESDEN, *November 6,*

1901.

Bernhardt was sent to Sonnenstein. Whether he became insane at Nossen, or whether it is the family's intention to drive him mad among the madmen of Sonnenstein, I don't know, but it behooves me to be careful.

Sonnenstein has accommodation for both sexes.

LOSCHWITZ, *November 15,*

1901.

I sent a letter to the King, asking him to have Loschwitz Castle prepared for my reception. His Majesty didn't deign to answer, but Prince George commanded me in writing to stay at Dresden "under his watchful eye."

I immediately proceeded to his apartments in my morning undress, without hat, gloves or wrap. As I rushed through the anteroom, Adjutant von Metsch begged me with up-lifted hands not to force His Royal Highness's door, Prince George being too ill to receive me, etc., etc. I paid no attention to his mournful whinings. At that moment I had courage enough to stock a regiment.

"So you won't allow me to go to Loschwitz," I addressed George as I suddenly bobbed up at the side of his desk.

My father-in-law looked at me as if I were a spook, emerged from a locked closet.

"Who let you in?" he managed to say after a while.

"I didn't come here to answer questions," I replied. "I came to announce that if you don't let me go to Loschwitz, there will be a scandal that will resound all over Christendom and make you impossible in your own capital."

"Why do you want to leave Dresden?" he insisted.

"Because I want to be alone. Because I am tired of hateful faces. Because I refuse to accept orders and insults from people that are beneath an Imperial Princess of Austria."

Prince George turned pale.

"Am I one of those beneath Your Imperial Highness?" he queried stupidly.

"Decidedly so."

A long pause. Then Prince George shouted: "To the devil with you. I don't care whether you stay in Loschwitz, or Dresden, or on the Vogelwiese."

The Vogelwiese is an amusement park, respectable enough, but the word or name, as used by George, reeked with sinister and insulting meaning.

Trembling with rage, I replied: "Right royal language you royal Saxons use. From time to time, I suppose, you refresh your fish-wife vocabulary in the annals of Augustus the Physical Strong, than whom a more gross word-slinger did not walk the history of the eighteenth century."

I believe Prince George was frightened by my violence. Assuming a haughty tone he said formally: "Your Imperial Highness is at liberty to travel whenever you please, but you will be so good as to leave your children in Dresden."

I stepped up to the white-livered coward and hissed in his face: "Steal my children if you dare, and I will go to France, or Switzerland and ask a republican President to interfere for humanity's sake."

"And—land yourself in an insane asylum," sneered George.

"An old trick of the Royal House of Saxony, I know," I shouted back. "Bernhardt is saner than you, yet the King sent him to Sonnenstein. If such a crime had been perpetrated by one not a king, he would go to jail."

Prince George pointed a trembling finger towards the door. "Out with you!" he bawled hoarsely. "Out!"

I stood my ground. "May I take my children? Yes or no?"

He rang the bell and repeated mechanically: "Out with you, out!"

I had another fit of crying convulsions. Doctors, maids and lackeys were summoned in numbers. They bedded me on the couch and six men-servants carried me to my apartments.

Two days later I went to Loschwitz with my children.

I had defied the King. Prince George was humbled. I carried my point, and the Dresden court will not see me again in a hurry.

1901.

LOSCHWITZ, *Christmas,*

I refused to spend Christmas at Court. Frederick Augustus planned a stay of a couple of weeks. "Not a single night," I wrote back.

They parleyed; they begged. "The Crown Prince desires to spend Christmas with the children. In the interests of public opinion, it's absolutely necessary that he does."

"But not—that I submit to prostitution. I will give him a dinner, but he will drive back to Dresden immediately afterwards."

Frederick Augustus brought numerous presents for me. "You may place them under the Christmas tree," I ordered the Tisch.

"Oh, Your Imperial Highness, look," cried the Tisch, holding up something or other.

I turned my back on her and looked out of the window. I never went near my end of the Christmas table. "You will send the things brought by His Royal Highness to the bazaar for crippled children," I told the House Marshal. "They shall be sold for the benefit of the poor."

1902.

LOSCHWITZ, *January 1,*

"Her Imperial Highness regrets."

I refused the invitations to today's family dinner; the grand reception, *Te Deum* and parade. "Unprecedented affront!" What do I care!

I have eighteen horses, half-a-dozen carriages, I drive, I ride, I hunt, I give the Tisch palpitation daily by the literature I affect: *Zola, Flaubert, M'lle Paul, Ma Femme, M'lle de Maupin, Casanova, M'me Bovary*. And the periodicals I subscribed for! *Simplicissimus*, Harden's *Zukunft*, all the *double entendre* weeklies and monthlies of Paris. May Prince George and Mathilde burst with rage and envy when they hear of my excursions in the realms of the literary Satans.

1902.

The Tisch is beginning to treat me like a person irresponsible for her doings. Sonnenstein is looming up anew. But I am going to fool her. As I will hold no more speech with her, there will be no occasion for turning my own words against me.

If I have to give a command, or answer a question, I ask Lucretia or *Fräulein* von Schoenberg to convey my orders.

LOSCHWITZ, *March 20,*

1902.

An uneventful winter is drawing to a close. By banishing myself to this quiet place I raised a barrier against quarrels, against harsh orders, against humiliations. And the barrier also shuts out: love, happiness.

Sometimes, when the Tisch's hateful mouth spouts honeyed platitudes, I ask myself whether the affair with Henry wasn't, after all, a flower-covered pit dug for me by my enemies.

It was the Tisch who had Henry appointed *Vortänzer*.

Maybe, knowing my inflammable heart, she offered the tempting bait solely to the end of getting me into her power?

Far from impossible.

I curse the day when I entered Dresden, joined this court and family.

LOSCHWITZ, *May 15, 1902.*

Royal command to join the court at Pillnitz June 1. The King, who has been ailing for some time, is anxious to be reunited with the children, and, as a necessary evil, I must go along.

I replied that I would prefer Nossen, or even Stolpen, if it pleases His Majesty.

Castle Stolpen is an old-time stronghold of the bishops of Meissen, and its very ruins are pregnant with reminiscences of a barbaric age. The apartments once occupied by the Countess Cosel, as a prison first, as a residence after the death of Augustus, might be made habitable even now. Exceedingly interesting are the old-time torture chambers and the subterranean living rooms of the "sworn torturer" and the dogs, man-shaped, that served him.

Sanct. Donatus Tower, a wing of the great, black pile, was the ancient *habitat* of these worthies, and the torture chamber, still extant, is a hall almost as big as the Dresden throne-room. In an inscription hewn in the basalt, the sovereign bishop, Johannes VI, poses as builder and seems proud of the damnable fact. Other princes of the Church let us know in high-sounding Latin script that they created the "Monk hole" and the "stairless prison" respectively.

The latter is a vast subterranean vault, never reached by sunshine or light of any kind. Its victims were made to descend some twenty feet below the surface of the earth on a ladder. When near the bottom, the ladder was pulled up and—stayed up. The prisoners were fed once every twenty-four hours, when a leather water pouch and some pounds of black bread were sent down on a rope.

Of course only the strongest got a morsel, or a drink of water. The others died of starvation and the survivors lived only until there were new arrivals, stronger than themselves. The dead bodies were never removed, and horrible stories of necrophily smudge the records of this awful prison and cover its princely keepers with infamy.

The "Monk's hole" was called officially "Obey Your Judge." It is a sort of chimney, just large enough to take the body of a man.

When a monk or other prisoner refused to confess, he was let down into the hole in the wall to starve, while tempting dishes, meat, wine and bread, were dangled over his head, almost within reach of his hands.

Of course, after enduring this torture for several days, the delinquent was glad enough to "Obey His Judge."

By offering to go to this abode of horror and to take the place of Cosel, I meant to show my utter contempt for the royal favor vouchsafed.

I CONFESS TO PAPA

King Albert dies and King George a very sick man—Papa's good advice—"You will be Queen soon"—A lovely old man, very much troubled.

CASTLE SIBYLLENORT, *June 19,*

1902.

King Albert is dead. George is King, and may God have mercy upon my soul.

Of course the demise of His Majesty changed all my plans of defiance and otherwise. I am once more an official person, even an important one, for the new King can't last long. He is a very sick man, in fact. Perhaps that is the reason why he wants to hear himself addressed "Your Majesty" all the time. Petty souls like to be called "great."

DRESDEN, *June 21,*

1902.

I intended to return at once to Loschwitz, but the King, hearing of my intention and not wishing to provoke another scene, invited my father to come to Dresden "in the interests of his daughter."

The same evening I received a wire from papa, saying that he would be in Dresden within twenty-four hours.

My own arrival in the capital was kept secret by the King's order, but next afternoon, when I drove to the station to welcome my father, I got my reception just the same. The people wildly cheered their Crown Princess and thousands of sympathizing eyes followed me from the palace to the depot.

I was almost overcome by so much sympathy and when at last I saw father, I threw myself on his neck, crying aloud.

The King was standing by, impatiently waiting to conduct his grand-ducal guest before the guard of honor had drawn up. "Later, later," whispered papa, patting me on the cheek.

DRESDEN, *June 22,*

1902.

I had an hour's talk with father. I bared my heart to him. I reported my own faults along with those of the others.

Papa understands me. He sympathizes with me, but help me he cannot.

"These are only passing shadows," he said. "Look boldly into the future. You will soon be Queen."

And he told me of his financial difficulties and of the misfortune of being a sovereign lord without either land or money.

"The Emperor ordered me to scold you hard," he continued, "and mamma wants me to be very severe. As to King George, he said he would thank God if I succeeded in breaking your rebellious spirit. 'If you don't, I will,' added his Majesty."

Then father kissed me more lovingly than ever and asked, half apologetically: "Is it true, Louise, that you had a lover?"

"I thought I had one, but he was unworthy of me," I replied without shame.

My confession seemed to frighten him.

"It's sad, sad," he said. "Royal blood is dangerous juice. It brought Mary of Scots to the scaffold; it caused your great-aunt Marie Antoinette to lose her head, only to save the old monarchies a few years later, when we inveigled the enemy of legitimate kingship into a marriage with another of your relatives. But for Marie, Louise, the descendants of the Corsican might still sit on a dozen thrones."

Father forgot his daughter's disgrace when he mounted this historic hobby-horse and, needless to say, I did not recall the original text.

Only when, three days later, he took leave of me, holding my head long between his two trembling hands and kissing me again and again, I felt that the poor, old man's heart was oppressed with shame and torn by fears.

MONSIEUR GIRON—RICHARD, THE ARTIST

The King asks me to superintend lessons by M. Giron—A most fascinating man—His Grecian eyes—He is a painter as well as a teacher—In love—Careless whether I am caught in my lover's arms—"Richard" talks anarchy to me—Why I don't believe in woman suffrage—Characters and doings of women in power.

DRESDEN, *July 1, 1902.*

King George is determined I shall stay in Dresden to end the newspaper talk about trouble in the bosom of the royal family.

He engaged a new head-tutor for my little brood. Monsieur Giron, a Belgian of good family.

"I would be pleased if you attended the children's lessons and reported to me on the method of the new man," he said. "You are so intellectual, Louise, you will find out quickly if M. Giron is not what he is represented to be."

I promised, for, after all, I owed so much to the King and my children.

Alas, it was fate!

DRESDEN, *July 1, After*

Midnight.

He is tall, well made, and his wild, Grecian eyes fascinate me. He is conscious of self, but modest. His voice is sweet and sonorous, his eyes are bright with intellect. Speaking eyes!

I asked him to visit my apartments at the conclusion of school hours. He told me he was a painter as well as a teacher of languages.

"Would you like to paint me?"

"I am dying for a chance to reproduce your loveliness as far as my poor art permits."

He told me he had a studio in town, where he is known under his artist's *pseudonyme*, Richard.

"How romantic! I'd like to see it," I said impulsively.

"Several ladies and gentlemen of society sat for portraits at my studio here and at home."

In short we arranged that he paint my picture and that I should go to his studio, where the light is excellent.

DRESDEN, *July 15, 1902.*

I am happy once more. Those hours at Richard's studio are the sweetest of my life.

Lucretia acts the protecting angel as usual. Richard calls her Justice because she is "blind." When she is along, I drive boldly up to the door in one of the court carriages. Sometimes, when I can sneak out of the palace for a little while unobserved, I go alone in a cab.

How long this sort of thing can go on without discovery, I know not. As to what will happen afterwards, I care not.

If I was told that tomorrow I would be caught in my lover's arms and banished to a lone island for life, I would go to his studio just the same.

DRESDEN, *August 1,*

1902.

Richard is moulding my character. I, once so proud of rank and station, I, who upheld the Wettiners' robbery of a poor, defenseless woman, the Duke's wife, because Socialistic papers spoke in her favor,—Louise now allows anarchistic tendencies to be poured in her ears. She almost applauds them.

This easy change from one extreme to the other at a lover's behest is one of the things that make woman's rule—or co-rule—as the male's political equal—impossible. It's a sort of *Phallus* worship that always was and always will be.

"Though women have not unfrequently been the holders of temporary and precarious power, there are not many instances where they have held secure and absolute dominion," says Dr. William W. Ireland in his famous "Blot upon the Brain."

Because they were swayed by the male of the species, of course!

Though the characters of the world's female sovereigns differed as to blood, race, education, environment and personal traits, neither showed any inclination to resist the allurements of irregular *amours*.

Think of Semiramis, of Mary of Scots, of Elizabeth, Catherine I, of the Tsaritzas Elizabeth and the second Catherine—under the temptations of Power, they recruited paramours for themselves in all ranks of society.

Agrippina was more licentious than Caligula; Messalina's infamy surpassed Nero's, and the furthest reaching, the one irresistible Power swaying them all was MAN.

Augustus of the three hundred and fifty-four emphasized this in the negative and, in his own uncouth way, by "posting" the Countess Cosel's chief charm on penny coins.

"She cost Saxony twenty millions in gold—behold the penny's worth she gave in return."

When the beauty who had brought the richest German kingdom to the verge of state bankruptcy died February 2, 1765, four hundred of Augustus's infamous medals were found hidden in her favorite armchair. She paid three or four times their weight in gold for each.

CHAPTER LIX

THE PEOPLE THINK ME A WANTON

Credit me with innumerable lovers, but don't disapprove—Glad the King feels scandalized—Picture of the "she-monster"—Everybody eager for love—I delight in Richard's jealousy—Husband's indelicate announcement at table—I rush from the royal opera to see my lover—A threatening dream—Richard not mercenary like my noble lovers.

DRESDEN, *August 10,*

1902.

This is the kind of speech Richard holds with me and—I enjoy:

"Every working-girl, every poor woman who suckles her own children and helps her husband in the fight for existence, stands mountain high above royal ladies like you.

"None of you royal ladies are their moral equals.

"In no distant time," he says, "they will chase you from your thrones, even as your relatives had to evacuate France by tumbril, post-chaise or train."

Richard's ethical and intellectual valuation of royal princes coincides with my own. He has rare insight into our family life.

However, these disclosures both amazed and alarmed me when I first heard them pronounced. I never dreamt that opinions of that kind prevailed among the masses.

"But why am I acclaimed whenever I show myself?"

"Because you are pretty, because you impersonate the one thing all are desirous to embrace: affluence, kindness, youth and beauty. Because you are a treat to the senses and because sensuality is the paramount thing in life, whether we admit it or not."

"Who's 'we'?"

"Kings and anarchists, princesses of the Blood and laundresses, royal princes and cab drivers, empresses, street-walkers, society ladies, big-wigs and *sabretasches*. The draggled Menads and the helpful Lafayette, the Jacobins, Charlotte Corday and the man she killed—all were, and are, on similar pleasure bent."

And he added quickly: "As to the Dresdeners, they are tickled because, every time they applaud you, the King is scandalized."

"How do they know that I am not on good terms with the King?"

"The very children in arms understand."

All Dresden, says Richard, is talking about me. Everybody assumes to know the number and qualities of my lovers. "Louise," they argue, "knows how to enjoy herself, but, though it serves the King right, we wouldn't have her for a daughter-in-law, either."

According to the masses, I visit the Vogelwiese at night, ride on the flying horses and solicit men and boys that please my fancy. Like a gigantic she-monster, I drag them to my lair—"some to vanish forever." (No doubt, I eat them.)

"Unwashed soldiers and clerks reeking with cheap perfume, actors and students, draymen and generals, it's all the same to the Crown Princess.

"Sometimes, when the spirit moves her, the Crown Princess issues from her gilded apartments in the palace and seizes the sentinel patrolling the corridors. Or she visits the guard-room *en déshabille* and selects the youngest and best looking officer for her prey.

"Generous, too. She thinks nothing of handing a pension of ten thousand marks per year to a chap that pleased her once."

"Is that all they say about me?"

"Not one-half. Poor devils that can't afford ten marks per year for their fun, Cit's wives that know only their ill-kempt husbands, factory girls that sell their virtue for a supper or a glass of beer—though afterwards they claim it was champagne—all take delight in contemplating that you, or any other good looking royal woman, are Frankenstein's succuba or worse. Didn't they accuse your grand-aunt, Marie Antoinette, of incest with her son and gave him to the cobbler to thrash the immorality out of him?"

"And they give names?"

"Strings of them"—among them several I never heard mentioned before.

1902.

DRESDEN, August 15,

Richard is jealous—jealous of the men I did love and the regiments that public opinion give me credit for. He must needs think I have loins of steel.

He tells me he suffers agonies by what I confessed, and still more by what I hide. To see him thus unhappy gives me intense pleasure, for it shows that the boy loves me to distraction.

Midnight.

M. Giron was very cold and distant during the afternoon's lessons.

I had previously lunched with him at his studio and we were very gay then. I teased him unmercifully about "his royal *demi-mondaine*," as the masses painted me.

Frederick Augustus was very gallant at dinner and told me, before a table full of people, that he would take pleasure in sleeping with me tonight. I have too bad a conscience to deny myself to him. But I ran over to the opera for half an hour and ordered M. Giron to my box.

"I got over my vexation," he said,— "got over it because I reflected that you are the Princess Royal and that I would be a fool to take your love seriously. Henceforth I will regard it a passing adventure and let it go at that, for if I thought it the great passion of my life, I would despair, indeed."

"Find a closed cab," I whispered, my heart in my mouth; "I must see you alone. I will be at the northern side-exit in five minutes."

Cabby was ordered to drive slowly along unfrequented side streets. We lowered the curtains.

"So you don't love me?" I wailed. Burying my face on Richard's chest I cried as if my heart would break.

"Not love you?" he breathed. "If I loved you not, I would die, Louise."

"Then why those cruel words?"

"Good heavens," he cried, "haven't I the right to be jealous? I said what I said to hear you say that you love me."

"And you will always love me?"

"Always, dearest," and he covered my face and neck with burning kisses.

Ten minutes later I was again seated at the opera.

I hear Frederick Augustus in the corridor.

1902.

DRESDEN, August 16,

A horrible night. Lucky that Frederick Augustus was more than half drunk when he sought "His Imperial Pleasure-trove," as he likes to call me, for I often talk in my sleep and—I dreamt of Richard. I dreamt of my enemies, too.

They stole him from me. He was of the past like Henry, Romano and the rest.

In a second dream he jilted me—cast me off like a garment, old or out of fashion.

Lucretia, who sleeps in the next room, heard me cry out in terror, heard me denounce the King, Tisch—everybody.

And Frederick Augustus snored.

DRESDEN, *October 1,*

1902.

Princes and noblemen have ever sought their own advantage of me. To them I was always the milch-cow, or Phryne, outright.

Richard is poor. I offered him a considerable sum for one of his paintings.

"Never again mention the matter," he said curtly.

"But it would give me much pleasure to be of assistance to you."

"Louise, we must separate if you don't stop that line of talk," he replied.

And he means it.

A day or two later I let fall, casually, that Frederick Augustus might buy the portrait of myself that was nearing completion under his skillful brush.

"His Royal Highness won't have the chance," he cried fiercely. "I will tell him it isn't finished, or doesn't come up to my artistic standard, or something of the sort."

CHAPTER LX

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT LOOMS UP

My Grand Mistress shows her colors—Richard advises flight—I hesitate on account of my children—My Grand Mistress steals a letter from Richard to me—I opine that an adulteress's word is as good as a thief's—I humble my Grand Mistress, but it won't do me much good—Pleasant hours at his studio.

DRESDEN, *October 15,*

1902.

That dreadful dream is becoming a heart-breaking reality.

The Tisch entered my boudoir last night in her mantilla, emblem of her office as Grand Mistress.

Some dirty business on hand, I surmised at once.

"Imperial Highness," she said, genuflecting ceremoniously, "I submit that your artist takes too long about the portrait. Your Imperial Highness's visits to the studio must cease."

"Since when do you give orders here, Baroness?"

"His Majesty empowered me," answered the Grand Dame.

"In that case, do as you like, but don't bother me," I cried bravely enough, but trembling in every limb. The Tisch, no doubt, is preparing to deal me another blow.

When I told Richard that henceforth we would have to exercise extra care, he was beside himself with rage.

"Why stand such tyranny?" he cried. "No self-respecting woman, other than royal, would submit for a single week to be bullied and intrigued against and threatened and browbeaten as you are, and they have ill-used you for eleven years. If you were a simple Cit's daughter, instead of the descendant of a decrepit, bloodless family, yclept royal, you would make an end now, leave them to their shabby kingship and be a free woman—free and happy."

My lover forgets the children, but the picture of the free life he draws is most attractive.

"And would you go with me to the end of the earth, as the story books put it?" I asked tremblingly.

"Louise," he answered, "if you are brave enough and strong enough to throw away a crown, I will be your slave for life."

DRESDEN, *October 20,*

1902.

"Your Imperial Highness was pleased to call me a thief once," said the Tisch early this morning as she entered my boudoir, triumph written all over her yellow countenance. "You repeated that calumny to the Prince Royal and doubtless to many other persons. Today came the opportunity to live up to my reputation. I stole a letter addressed to you by your present lover, and as Your Imperial Highness is pleased to doubt my authority, immediately sent it to His Majesty. It makes highly interesting reading."

The blow made my knees tremble, but pain and rage came to my assistance, effacing the momentary weakness.

"Don't think for a moment to frighten me," I cried. "I say to your face that I have a lover—a gentleman, not an unspeakable, like your nephew. And now listen: I will tell the King and the press of Europe, if it must be, that it was you, my Grand Mistress, who 'pandered' me to Henry—for—revenue. I will have him whipped out of the army——"

"You don't suppose for a moment that the word of an adulteress would prove acceptable either to His Majesty or anyone else?" hissed the insolent creature.

"My word will be accepted all around," I shouted back, "for I have the proofs, proofs that you smuggled this unspeakable into my household, proofs that you lied to the King in order not to disrupt your nephew's career."

"And I will cry from the house-tops that you discovered my relations with Henry only *after* I had paid his debts, *after* I had financed his excursions to gambling-houses and to usurers' dens. Ah, I paid his tailors and glove-makers, his board and lodging, his laundry bills. I paid the alimony due his strumpets, and *after* all was done, *after* his lieutenantship had again a clean bill of health, financially speaking, then, and not a moment before, did you step in and make an end of the farce, wherein I played the part of 'angel,' or pay-master."

The Tisch got visibly smaller under my lash. The air of triumph she bore when entering the room gave way to an expression of despair. If she hadn't sent the letter to the King, I believe she would have given it up after I was half through with her.

Once more I hold the whip hand, but what good will it do me since I am condemned to lose the man I love?

At

Midnight.

Richard approved of all I said and did. We were unspeakably happy this afternoon, despite the storm threatening us.

I fear neither the King nor Frederick Augustus now, but the fear of Sonnenstein I can't shake off.

If the King takes it upon himself to say that I'm mad, there will be plenty of medical authorities to bear him out, none to oppose him.

Of course, they will separate me from my children and will do their utmost to drive me mad between now and the time when I should be proclaimed Queen.

CHAPTER LXI

A MAD HOUSE FOR LOUISE—PROBABLY

My confidential maid, Lucretia, is banished—The new King has got the incriminating letter, but Frederick Augustus says nothing—On the eve of judgment the King falls ill.

DRESDEN, *October 21,*

1902.

This morning, at six, Lucretia rushed into my room. She was in her night-gown. Her hair was loose. No color in her face.

And between sobs and curses she told me that she had orders to leave by ten sharp. "If you dare stay over the appointed time, you will be transported to the frontier on foot, between gendarmes."

"Von Baumann shall come."

I threw a loose wrapper over my night-gown and received him at once.

"My marriage contract provides that no one but I have the right of dismissal with respect to Countess Baranello," I said sharply.

"As long as the lady keeps within the law," replied Baumann with just a trace of insolence in his voice.

I looked at him in astonishment.

"The Countess is guilty of a crime, of a succession of crimes," continued Baumann, "but His Majesty, not wishing to be harsh, decided to treat her merely as an obnoxious foreigner. She has forfeited her right to live in Saxony, and will do well to obey."

I helped poor Lucretia pack. I gave her a handful of jewels, I paid her a year's salary in advance and ordered the treasury to procure first-class passage for her to Rome.

I sent her to the station in my own carriage, and wired to our Rome representative to show her every courtesy.

Afternoon.

Frederick Augustus hasn't said a word to me about the affair with Richard. We have our meals together and his attitude in no wise differs from that usually maintained. Yet I am convinced he knows.

The last service rendered me by Lucretia, gave me great relief. She found out that neither the Tisch, nor Frederick Augustus, nor the King know who "Richard" is. Fortunately his letter was typewritten, signature and all.

Six o'clock.

The King announced his visit for eight o'clock.

Nine

o'clock.

The King had a fall in his apartments shortly after he sent me notice of his coming. He was unconscious for two hours.

Safe for the time being!

CHAPTER LXII

KING'S ILLNESS A BOON TO LOVERS

Prayers mixed with joy—Espionage disorganized, and I can do as I please—Love-making in the school-room—Buying a ring for Richard—"Wishing it on"—"Our marriage"—King's life despaired of—My tormentors obsequious—Smile at my peccadilloes—Husband proud of me—My popularity a great asset—Frederick Augustus delighted when he hears that King can't last long—The joyous luncheon at Richard's studio—Making fun of majesties—I expect to be Queen presently.

DRESDEN, *October 22,*

1902.

He is dangerously ill. It may be weeks and months before the King recovers—if he recovers at all.

I feel like praying, crying, shouting with joy.

When Richard folded his arms about me this afternoon, I said to myself: "God doesn't begrudge me a lover as kind and good as Richard."

The King's illness has disorganized the espionage, my coming and going are no longer controlled. The body-groom brings in my letters as delivered at the gate.

In the school room, while the children are writing or studying, Richard and I find time to exchange kind words and even an occasional caress. When I "command" the tutor to my apartments, we need fear no surprise.

The utmost quiet prevails in the palace. The courtyard is sanded foot high and strewn with straw to deaden the sound of wheels and horses' hoofs. No more mounting of the guard with fife and drum.

I suggested that the children be sent to the *Grosser Garten* to play. The Tisch agreed with

enthusiasm. This yields us—Richard and myself—two hours of love-making.

DRESDEN, *October 25,*

1902.

The King continues ill.

I went into a cheap jeweler's this afternoon and bought an inexpensive ring with a ruby no larger than a pin head. When I gave it to Richard, he grew red with joy.

Strange, he bought a similar ring for me. I shall never wear another ring in my life but Richard's. I pulled my rings off one after the other and threw them on the bed.

I kissed the larger ring and "wished" it on Richard's finger. He did the same with the ring intended for me. And we said, as with a common breath, "Our wedding."

DRESDEN, *November 1,*

1902.

A bulletin, by the King's physicians, holds out scant hopes for George's life.

I am watching the palace yard. The Archbishop of Dresden, attended by two court chaplains and a host of other clerics, is just mounting the stairs to administer the last rites of the Church. The next minute may see me Queen of Saxony. I may even be Queen now. I wish I had the effrontery to promise the lackey or official, announcing my enthronization, a handful of gold, as George did, when King Albert was dying.

Even so, I have risen immeasurably in everybody's esteem. The sweet family knows me again. Johann George, Mathilde, Isabelle and Max are kotowing to me. Bernhardt sent me a telegram of condolence—condolence! He is a humorist, that boy.

Minister of the Royal House, Baron Seydwitz, called twice. The Royal Adjutant, General von Carlowitz, spoke of the possibility of giving Bernhardt a command in Dresden. Von Baumann says it was the President of the Police who insisted upon Lucretia's hasty departure. If he, Baumann, had his way, my maid of honor would have got off with a warning.

And you should see the Tisch. She must have spent a month's salary on flowers for me, which I promptly sent to the nearest pauper hospital. She smiles, she nearly breaks her back genuflecting. Her every second word is "most submissive," "will the Imperial Highness deign to do this," that, or the other thing.

The terror got into her old bones and she trembles for her pension, for, of course, she knows that instant dismissal will be her portion.

Frederick Augustus talks of having some more princes and—acts accordingly. Perish the thought that his Louise is an adulteress, that she ever had a lover, has one now!

He is haunting my room, running from door to window, from window to door. Every little while he opens the *portières* to see if no one's coming to address him "Your Majesty."

"Your popularity with the public is a great asset," he says over and over again. "Lucky devil I, to have a wife as smart as you."

DRESDEN, *November 2,*

1902.

Frederick Augustus came running into my room and gave me a bear-hug.

"The doctors say the King is lost. Impossible to keep him alive any longer."

He rushed out.

I am Queen.

After Lunch.

Just back from Richard's studio. We had lunch together. We laughed, we danced, we sang. We bombarded one another with pillows.

We acted the jubilant heirs. I recalled Sybillenort at the time King Albert died. In Saxony, when man or woman shuffles off this mortal coil, there's always a good "feed" at the corpse's expense. At the late King's castle a "mourning breakfast" was served upon the royal family's arrival from

Dresden—a most magnificent repast in the matter of plate and victuals offered, but each had to serve himself or herself, as servants were dispensed with.

This by the new King's special orders—that he might hear himself addressed "Your Majesty" by his kith and kin, a formality usually neglected in the family circle except when two or more of the big-wigs are warring against each other.

"Will Your Majesty have one or two lumps of sugar?"

"May it please Your Majesty—some steak?"

"I hope Your Majesty will allow me to peel an orange for Your Majesty."

Thus at Sybillenort. And at Richard's:

"Will Your Greatness (Majesty) deign to take Your Greatness's feather out of my eye?"

Or: "May it never please Your Transparency (*Durchlaucht*, German for Highness) to let *His* Greatness see through you."

I am several times a Countess besides a Princess, Duchess, etc., and Richard continued with his paraphrasing of titles:

"Your Illuminatedness^[8] makes lights quite unnecessary," and he switched them off in a room already darkened by blinds and shades and curtains.

FOOTNOTES:

[8] "Illuminated" is the proper title for German counts of the higher class.

CHAPTER LXIII

WHAT I WILL DO WHEN I AM QUEEN

A foretaste: titled servants put me *en route* for lover—The bargain I will propose to Frederick Augustus—Frederick Augustus will be a complaisant King—To revive *Petit Trianon*—I am addressed as Queen.

DRESDEN, *November 3,*

1902.

Though still styled Crown Princess, I am already revelling in the delights and perquisites of queenship: I do as I please, go where I please, I would think aloud, as I please, if anyone dared me.

For all my enemies of a week ago turned flatterers and flunkeys, bowing, grovelling, fawning, contemptible in their self-abasement, but quite useful to my purposes.

Like most royal palaces, ours at Dresden has a secret staircase and exit for emergencies. It is never used by ladies; only the princes have recourse to it, occasionally, to drop out of sight in *mufti*, for, of course, royal incognito is more or less legitimate.

"In the evening, after our card party was over, Catherine was seen to dismiss her court and retire to her private apartments with the new favorite," say the Secret Memoirs of the Court of St. Petersburg.

Less publicly, perhaps, but even more illegitimately, I walk the secret staircase *en route* for my lover whenever I please nowadays.

I go veiled and—make the Grand Mistress open the door for me. She knows that I am on sweet pleasure bent and—smiles.

"When will Your Imperial Highness deign to return?"

I name the hour and she is there to receive me—smirking, blind, deaf and dumb.

A foretaste of my queenship paradise! No one will boss me, no one will dare talk about me, everything I do will be good, even sublime.

I made up my mind as to Frederick Augustus.

"Frederick Augustus," I will say to him, "now that we are King and Queen, let's enjoy to the full the thing's emoluments; otherwise, what's the use? You will allow me to go my way and I will certainly shut both eyes as to your doings, even if you follow in the footsteps of your namesake of the three-hundred-and-fifty-two."

Of course, I will say it differently, but my husband will understand. The main thing: the royal family and court must stop hurling at me the long, watery *haussez les mains* of narrow-minded,

provincial inquisitiveness, which both oppresses and goads me.

Frederick Augustus has too much respect for the kingly dignity to impugn his partner, the Queen.

Will I revive, then, the seraglios of the Russian Anns and Elizabeths, or start a new *Parc aux Cerfs* with strong men and Marathon winners for inmates? Thank you, a miniature *Petit Trianon* will be good enough for me.

The Tisch entered a minute ago and respectfully remains at the door, though she sees I am engaged on my Diary. I watch her in the mirror. She would travel bare-foot to Kevlaar, of which Heinrich Heine sung, for a glimpse of what I wrote. Her variegated grimaces give her the appearance of a carved wooden devil, sprinkled with holy water.

At last I deign to inquire: "What is it, Baroness?"

"The Crown Prince wants to see Your Imperial Highness. May he come in?"

"Since when does my husband send you to announce him?"

"Pardon, Your Imperial Highness, I meant Prince George."

Designating my first-born Prince Royal, means recognizing me as Queen.

And, but ten days ago, this same viper refused to address me by my *proper* title.

CHAPTER LXIV

THE KING IS ALIVE AND PUNISHMENT NEAR

My queenship postponed—King George publicly acclaimed—Cuts me dead in church—Frederick Augustus's disappointment—Terrible power of a king over his family, and no appeal—I am like the nude witch of old.

DRESDEN, *November 10,*

1902.

The King has taken nourishment. The King will not die—he will live and punish me. Still, I must not complain. I had a respite and Richard says, "when one rises from the dead, one is less inclined to be severe with the living." But he grew rather despondent immediately.

"*La liberté est une garce, qui ne se laisse monter que sur des matelas des cadavres humains!*" he quoted *Comte Mirabeau*. Our corpse was alive, our liberty is dead for the time being.

DRESDEN, *November 15,*

1902.

The King went driving this morning and I am told that he came home well pleased, for there was lusty cheering along the line. Frederick Augustus hasn't mentioned my affair at all. Disappointment made him rather gloomy and he begins to treat me again in the right royal Saxon fashion: I am air for His Highness.

After

Supper.

The family will wait upon His Majesty in a body tomorrow, to congratulate him on his recovery. After that, *Te Deum* in the cathedral, which the court and authorities must attend by command.

"Your Imperial Highness's pew will be in readiness, but my sublime master has not deigned to graciously announce that he wishes to receive Your Imperial Highness,"—this from the toad Baumann, who but yesterday licked my boots.

DRESDEN, *November 16,*

1902.

Another straw indicating the direction of the wind—the ill-wind.

King George commanded Bernhardt to be madman no longer and come and live in Dresden. Since his arrival he has paid assiduous court to all members of the royal family, but me. He called on the royal ministers, the courtiers, the high civil authorities, but my apartments have seen him not. I don't blame the boy for making the best of the situation, but was it really necessary to offer

gratuitous insult to the only relative that stood by him when in trouble?

Doubtless, he took his cue from the King, who cut me dead while, with the rest, I thanked God for his recovery.

November 20,

1902.

The Tisch is openly talking Sonnenstein. "The royal apartments are ready for her reception," she let fall yesterday.

Old Andrew, my confidential servant, told me.

She shows me the face of a bull-dog about to spring at a victim, a sea-green devil filled with vinegar and gall, but affects icy courtesy.

Frederick Augustus is down in the mouth. If he knows of any evil intention against me, he evidently made up his mind to hold his tongue and avoid scenes.

Richard keeps on saying: "Don't worry. After all, what can they do to you?" He doesn't know, or doesn't want to understand that, while the law holds out protection for all, from pedlars and vagabonds to and including prime ministers, royalty itself is only technically above the law; in *praxis* we are beyond the benefits of all law, human and otherwise.

To be sure, a Cit is sometimes unjustly treated, but with tenacity and a small amount of courage, he finds his remedy in the courts and in the press.

To royal princes and princesses the King is both judge and executioner, as the cases of the Duke of Saxony and Bernhardt show. Maybe it pleases His Majesty to cloak his tyranny by convoking a commission, but what of it, since the commission is invariably made up of his creatures, trained, if not commanded, to do the all-highest will and nothing but the all-highest will?

As in days gone by, the poor "witch"—if she be young and comely—must face her accusers naked, the sworn torturer at her elbow, so I have no standing in law or decency before the Powers over social life or death in our sphere of society.

If there be blemishes in my character, the King sees them magnified by the sharp tongues of evil creatures, his spies. There is no privacy. I must submit to be stared at, to have my flesh lacerated by curious eyes, and, as in the case of the old-time "witches," the handsomest were condemned the quicker because "the devil was more liable to choose them for an abode than ugly ones," so my very beauty will hasten my destruction.

CHAPTER LXV

FISTICUFFS DON'T SAVE MY CROWN

The attempted theft of my Diary—Grand Mistress discovered after breaking open my desk—Reading Diary like mad—Personal encounter between me and Grand Mistress—I am the stronger, and carry off the manuscript, but have to leave all my love letters, which go to the King—I discover that they had stolen the key to my Diary from my neck.

DRESDEN, November 27,

1902.

I am undone.

They tried to obtain a picture of Louise *in the nude*—Louise as she paints *Herself*—this Diary, in fact—and, though I foiled them, the King now has in his hands my entire correspondence—every letter from every man that ever approached or possessed me.

And be sure he won't use them for curl papers as did the Duke of Richelieu with the remnants of his ladyloves' *billets doux* that escaped confiscation.

"My collection is incomplete. I have to begin another," he said.

Alas, my collection was only *too* complete!

This is how it came about:

As I was in the act of retiring last night, a clairvoyant's vision seized me. "Somebody meddling with your papers!" "They are breaking into your *secrétaire*," the voices said.

I slipped on a pair of bath sandals and stealthily opened the door of my boudoir.

My writing desk was open, all the drawers ajar and in disorder; the Baroness bending over this,

my Diary. She was reading like mad, her eyes danced with lust of revenge.

With one bound I was at her side and she was so frightened at first, I thought she would drop. Her chest seemed to draw inward; she swayed to and fro. But only for a second or two. Then, recovering her self-possession, her fighting harness was in place again.

"Go to your room, Royal Highness," she said in a tone of command. "These papers are confiscated in the name of the King."

I was beside myself with rage. "My Diary," I cried; "instantly return it to me."

More I couldn't say, for I had neither breath nor voice. My right hand was on the book when she attempted to seize it.

I struck her hand with Richard's ring—I wish it was bigger, I wish it had a good diamond point—but she wouldn't let go. Then, before one could count one, two, three, I had hold of her—Heaven, how I enjoyed it; the satisfaction I had in giving rein to my passion, for all was up now, anyhow.

With the left hand I caught her by the throat, while my good right boxed her ears after the homely manner mamma had taught me. Good, sound cuffs, I assure you, each liable to dislocate a tooth.

"*Canaille*," I cried, "*miserable canaille*." I pushed her into a corner and recovered the Diary, folding it up quickly. I was holding the book close to my bosom when I crossed the room to regain my bedchamber.

The Tisch after me, trying to snatch it back. I caught her on the chest and sent her flying. Then, with the manuscript, I made good my escape, leaving for the contemptible bird of prey all my love letters, reams of them, the oldest fifteen or more years old, the latest bearing yesterday's date.

Once in my room, I recollected and made a grab at my throat. The key to my Diary was gone. They stole it, chain and all, while I was asleep, no doubt.

DRESDEN, *November 28,*

1902.

Awakening, I find myself seated at the little table near the window. Both my hands are ink-spotted. So is my night-dress.

I see, I have written an account of the battle. I must have done so some time after I returned from the field. It's well, for at the moment, I don't remember a thing.

The palace clock strikes seven.

The day of my doom.

CHAPTER LXVI

ABANDONED

My titled servants withdraw from me—An old footman my sole support—Queen takes the children—Old Andrew plays spy for me.

Afternoon.

No one has come to see me. My household, my adjutants, marshal, chamberlains, equerries, the ladies of my entourage are on duty, but since I ordered my meals brought to the room, they pretend to assume that I'm too ill to see anyone. There may be no truth in the saying that rats leave the ship destined to sink, but the titled vermin royalty surrounds itself with certainly knows when to avoid dangerous craft.

I rang for Andrew. The good, old man wouldn't put me to the humiliation of asking questions.

"Your Imperial Highness's children are with Her Majesty," he said; and, coming a step nearer, he added in an undertone: "Baroness Tisch has been with His Majesty since nine in the morning."

"You are a kind and brave man." I held out my hand.

"If Your Imperial Highness has no immediate orders for me," continued the good soul, "I beg to be allowed to visit my friend, Hans, the King's body-servant."

I thanked Andrew for his good intentions. "Wait in the ante-chamber until I am dressed."

I donned a forty-mark costume that I keep on hand for the purpose; it didn't take me more than six or seven minutes.

"I will have to leave by the secret staircase, Andrew."

He understood and cleared the way for me.

CHAPTER LXVII

FAMILY COUNCIL AT CASTLE

Rendezvous at studio—State takes my children from me—Madhouse or flight—I brought fifty-two trunks to the palace—Depart with small satchel—If I attempt to see my children I'll be seized as "mad woman"—Varying emotions of the last ten minutes—Threatening shadows thrown on a curtain decide me—Ready for flight—Diary the last thing to go into the satchel.

At Night. Eleven

O'clock.

They went into family council at six tonight and are still deliberating, Andrew reports. The Tisch, he says, acts as secretary; His Majesty, of course, presides.

Present are the Dowager Queen, Mathilde and Isabelle. Then Frederick Augustus, Johann George, Max and Bernhardt. Baron George von Metzsch, a high government and court functionary and my enemy, attends as legal adviser to the King.

It's in the nature of things that the Baron will do his worst to destroy me, but Bernhardt! Bernhardt, who held me in his arms, now one of my judges! He will have to be especially severe with his *quondam* mistress lest the King suspect.

While the sweet family bent over those love letters—I bet the Tisch withheld Henry's—I sat in Richard's studio, advising with him.

"There are only two things to be considered: the madhouse or instant flight."

"You dare advise me to leave my children?"

"There are no nurseries in madhouses. Your children are lost to you, anyhow. If you remain, as an alleged insane person, you 'can't be trusted,' they'll argue, for you are helpless, legally, morally and physically.

"If you run away to Switzerland, on the other hand, you are a free woman, under the protection of a republican government.

"Switzerland, I needn't tell you, will not go to war to wrest your children from the royal family, but will afford you personally every advantage, legal and otherwise.

"Decide quickly: are you going to make King George a present of yourself as well as of the five children you bore for the benefit of the Wettiners?"

"Never."

My mind is made up. My few belongings are packed. I, who came to Dresden with fifty-two trunks, leave the palace with a satchel, easy to carry. I take nothing but my personal jewels, the little money I own and some changes of linen.

If I could only see my children for a moment or two, but the Queen has them in her keeping, and I might be seized as a "mad woman" if I dared leave my apartments and cross to those occupied by Her Majesty.

And Frederick Augustus! He will miss me in his way.

Ten more minutes. I hear the distant clatter of a carriage. Richard driving to our rendezvous, two streets north of the palace gate.

Will my limbs carry me to him and liberty? I pace the room to test their strength.

"Louise," says the voice within,—"your last chance. Your good-natured husband, your darling children, your old parents, pomp and state and circumstance, indeed, a crown, you are going to abandon for—what?"

A man whose carnal side only you know, a poor man, an artist without fame, a professional without future.

Sadly perturbed in mind, I walk to the window. Those of His Majesty's cabinet, where the family council is in progress, are directly opposite.

Shadows of men and women, rising from a sitting position, are thrown on the curtains.

One of the shades slowly ascends.

I see the Tisch pointing a bony finger to the windows of my boudoir. Von Metzsch stands by her side. They grin.

You triumph, wretch and Jezebel?

But when your *sbirri*, in an hour from now, or tomorrow morning early, invade my rooms, instructed to carry me away—bound hand and foot to a sofa, or in a straight jacket, perhaps—they will find the Crown Princess gone—her and her Diary.

Both will be safe on foreign soil ere you can make arrangements for organized pursuit, for Richard and I will travel by carriage to a distant suburb, there mount the fast express and keep to our state room, engaged under an assumed name, until without the sphere of Saxon or German influence.

A discreet knock. Andrew, my liberator! In his hand a tallow dip to light this Imperial Highness down back stairs to the new life of her choice.

"One moment, old man, this book goes into the valise.

"Hand me the blotter, please. Tears won't do.

"And a couple more handkerchiefs from the top of the chiffonier, please."

FINIS

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