

under the flags and illuminations for a couple of hundred officers. Everything was requisitioned to meet the inevitable demand. The house could be put right again, but the gardens—flowers, fruit, lawns, designs—were a wreck. “It is for this thou didst sacrifice thy foot!” wept Marguerite. She turned madly on Jules. “Go, coward, and kill them!” she cried.

“I go to see the illuminations,” answered Jules. “Come ye too.” And they did.

There were banners and colored lamps in abundance about the terrace where the great people sat. There was much popping of champagne corks and, toward the end, louder revelry than had ever been before. The servants of the estate gathered by the shrubbery. “The place is ruined: let us save what we can!” said Armand, the head gardener, picking up a bit of marble, the chipped nose—an unfortunate mishap!—of a nymph.

A rocket rose into the pale night; then a sheaf of them—the fireworks began. The military music broke into “Heil Dir im Siegeskranz!”—the whole brilliant company clashed to its feet. The tumult of its triumph roared on high.

*Hoch!* A fierce search-light, a blazing white bar, tore from the height of the chateau straight down into the black heart of the shrubbery opposite, piercing its laurelled alley and calling forth into sudden day its further end. The hoarding was down; the trophy stood out.

On a pedestal of rock rose a female figure—a statue—with two smaller at her feet. These two smaller wore the head-dress, universally recognizable, of Alsace, the wide bow, and Lorraine, the full cap. From the shoulders of the central goddess a protecting mantle swept broadly round the lesser nymphs at her base. But the mantle which half an hour ago had been the banner of the brand-new empire had somehow changed into the tricolor, and the helmet of Germania had given way to the cap of the no less brand-new republic. Also,—most noticeable!—the date which glittered huge in gilt letters at the foot had become prophetic, 1881.

In the horrid lull, after the fanfares and the hurrahs, his Serene Highness said very loud: “How now?” “*Ei, was?*” is what his Serene Highness said in his own tongue.

“Yes, the thing has gone wrong,” replied the general quietly—a gentleman, Baron von Krell. He called an orderly, bade them turn off the light, strike up music, and bring the brothers Gadraux. “These men must be punished,” he said, hoarse with vexation. “The thing is too public. We can not let it pass.”

His Serene Highness, a connection and friend of the Emperor, bit his lip under his big mustache.

“Which of you has done this?” demanded the general. Two soldiers had thrust forward Armand.

“I!” said the gardener. He had drunk; he was in his most quarrelsome and boastful mood. His fist closed over the chipped nose in his pocket.

“You? Where is your brother?” continued the general, sceptically. “I doubt your wit and your courage,” he added, with a sneer.

“I!” answered the new hero, tapping his breast.

“Really? Perhaps it was also you who murdered the lieutenant?”

“It was I! I am proud of it!” cried Armand.

The wife pressed forward. “Excellency, it is a lie! I can prove it!”

“The man is drunk,” said the prince.

The general lost his temper. “That is a pity. We shall have to wait till tomorrow to hang him.”

The general’s secretary leaned forward.

“We are leaving in a day or two. As he has confessed—even if he didn’t fire the shot—it would be just as well to hang somebody.”

“Humph!” said the general. At that moment two more soldiers brought Jules. The general seized gladly at a diversion.

“Ha, this is the man I was telling your highness of. You saw the mayor’s breloque, the carved cherry-stone, and the inkstand, the speckled duck’s egg, in your bedroom. He is an artist—he makes something out of nothing.”

“A republic of an empire,” said the prince.

“No, that, as we heard, was his brother. Here, you, what’s your name, your brother has confessed to various crimes. Tomorrow morning he will be hanged.”

“Excellency!” shrieked the man’s wife.

“Excellency, you will wait! Tomorrow he will be different,” implored Jules.