

Marika Moreski

**CES DAMES
EN BOTTINES**



DOMINIQUE LEROY ebook

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Editions Dominique Leroy 3,
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domleroy@enfer.com [website:](#)
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Editions Dominique Leroy, France for the digital edition.
ePub format: ISBN 978-2-86688-366-9 Legal
deposit: September 2009

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THESE LADIES IN ANKLE BOOTS

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That day, when I heard my front doorbell ring, I wasn't expecting any visitors. I opened the door. The man standing in front of me was tall, dark, pleasant-looking with a thin black mustache.

He handed me a package covered in gray paper.

- Excuse me for disturbing you, Miss Moreski, he said to me, I know that you write quite... special novels and I would be very happy if you would accept this manuscript.

Taken by surprise, I replied: - I am very touched, sir, that you place your trust in me. I agree to read your manuscript with pleasure but...

- Don't thank me, the man replied quickly, this manuscript is autobiographical. It's the story of my life. Judge it...

- Sir Sir...

The man had already turned on his heel and was rushing down the stairs. I heard his hurried steps clattering on the steps.

I remained there, standing on my doorstep, the package in my hands. I didn't know who this man was or where I could reach him. Yet I had, in my hands, the story of his life.

I opened the package, slid the pages onto my desk and read in one go. The word "end" was followed by a sentence for me: "You can publish this manuscript, Miss Moreski, I see no problem..."

A large signature spread like an ink blot at the bottom of the page: Ernest Pinacci.

I hesitated for a long time before throwing Ernest Pinacci's strange story out into the open. It contains a terrible secret that I did not dare, that I could not publish.

Today, while having breakfast, I understood that nothing was stopping me from publishing this work. A simple news item in the newspaper gives me complete authorization to deliver, for everyone's lust, the unusual story of Ernest Pinacci.

April 1962 I

come from a modest family. My mother, who was in fragile health, died in childbirth. The doctor had warned my father that pregnancy would be fatal for this poor woman. Unfortunately, my father, who worked as a mason, drank excessively and lost his reason and dignity in the vapors of alcohol. It was during one of these drinking nights that I was conceived.

But this alcoholic also had another passion: a woman he saw very often and whose existence my poor mother was not unaware of. However, she never knew the name and face of her rival.

My father did what he could to raise me. I went to boarding school very early, with my father's visits taking place every Sunday afternoon. I must admit that my father never failed to make these visits and that as a general rule he always came in full possession of his lucidity.

I had reached my fourteenth birthday when the news, the terrible news, reached me in the playground: my father was dead. Totally drunk, he had climbed a scaffolding and had a dizzying fall of several meters.

The director of the pension called me to tell me that my father, several years ago, had deposited with a notary a will according to which I was to be taken in by a certain Dana Alice de Soltigen, who had been his "mistress" for ten years. seven years. Our poor house and the few possessions we had also went to the lady...

The night was long. I barely slept. My eyes are red from crying and my heart is anxious. I know nothing about this Madame de Soltigen. Who is she ? How is she ?

I enter the principal's office with great trepidation. I've barely taken a step when I see her. She came to take delivery from me.

She sits up straight in the red leather armchair. She has the appearance of a woman of the world. I even think it really is one. She is tall and thin. His bony face looked stern. His small, piercing black eyes scrutinize me with haughty indifference. I don't like her hooked nose, her pursed lips and the thick layer of makeup that covers her face.

She is dressed in a dress with pink and black ruffles and her shoulders are covered by light fur. I take a few steps into the office. The director takes me by the shoulder and leads me near my tutor:

- Madame de Soltigen, here is little Ernest Pinacci, we have already had his few pieces of luggage taken to your car...

Turning towards me, he continues:

- ...Mr Ernest, I present to you Madame de Soltigen on whom, by the will of your late father, you now depend entirely.

Pay him your respects, please.

Trembling, I approach the lady and after bowing very politely before her, I take the hand she offers me and place my lips on it. I have just joined the de Soltigen family.

- Mr. Ernest, continues the director as he sits down, it is useless to tell you that your life will change from now on. Mrs de Soltigen did not consider it useful for you to continue your studies in our establishment. For my part, I regret it infinitely because I have always had nothing but praise for you, but Madame de Soltigen has other views for you which she will explain to you herself. And, with these words, I am asked to

withdraw and go and wait for Madame de Soltigen in her car. The lady doesn't have to wait very long. The road is long, stifling and silent. From time to time, I cast small glances in the direction of my benefactress who has not shed her haughty attitude.

Finally, after at least an hour of driving, as we arrive in the grounds of a house that seems to me to be a castle, she turns to me: - Monsieur Ernest, you have arrived. This is where you will now be staying with my three daughters, my niece and me. I would therefore ask you to be a true gentleman

and to always show yourself perfectly correct. I need a stable master, this is the task I have assigned you.

She withdraws into her silence. I am completely stunned: Stable Master! I who know so little about horses, who have seen so few.

The car stops in front of the steps of the house and the driver opens the door for Madame de Soltigen. I go down behind her, not daring to take a step in the rich scenery that surrounds me. In front of me, a vast house spreads its wings like an impressive branch. Finely carved with Renaissance arms, the facade is painted white, which adds dazzling luxury to the residence. A bed of flowers spreads out softly between the two banisters of a staircase sliding in a semi-circle of a staircase which advances swollen with pride, to meet the newcomers. A dress appears at the top of this balcony, hugging a still quite young body which descends the

walks and comes to meet us.

"Come," Madame de Soltigen said to me in a harsh voice, without turning around but accompanying her order with an imperative gesture of the hand.

I follow her up the stairs, meeting the dress and the young woman wearing it.

- Monsieur Ernest, here is the eldest of my daughters: Germaine!

The girl gives me an icy look and turns away without having time to consider me. I give him about twenty-four years. Her brown hair slides in light curls over her bare shoulders. His eyes are black like his mother's but his lips are thinner and give him an even more severe appearance. She wears shoes with stiletto heels and pointed toes. I follow the two women into a vast corridor while the driver takes my poor suitcases to my room where Madame de Soltigen takes me herself.

It is a vast room coquettishly wallpapered and decorated with several paintings representing biblical scenes. Madame de Soltigen closes the door and leaves me alone. I am amazed and my new vocation as stable master appears to me to be a place of importance, a sort of kingdom.

I never cease to be amazed by everything around me. It seems impossible to me that this large carved wooden bed is all to me. And this pretty dressing table with the mirror where you can see yourself from head to toe, and this heavy wooden desk with this red velvet armchair. This is all for me. No, it's impossible, I must be dreaming. I suddenly need air to pull myself together because I fear I will faint. I open the window and stand on the balcony. At my feet lies the large park that we crossed a few moments earlier by car. A large park with its lawns and flower beds crisscrossed by vast stone paths. In the distance, a wood of fir and poplar trees and, behind the house, out of sight, I can make out vast fields of olive trees from which the confused murmur of cicadas reaches me.

A small cloud of dust rises from the fir woods and a rider rushes out, heading towards the house. I focus my attention on this arrival and realize that it is a horsewoman. The young person stops her horse at the bottom of the stairs and jumps to the ground with flexibility. She wears high brown boots over riding pants and her slight body is molded into a very skimpy black coat. His little black hat prevents me from seeing his face. I watch her go up the stairs and see her disappear down the hallway. I close the window and do a quick wash before

go down for the meal as I was told.

All the young ladies are gathered in the living room around Madame de Soltigen. My shyness went away. The spacious room where I was accommodated, the thought that my father had been the lover of this noble lady and the prospect of being "Stable Master" in this "palace" erased all my apprehensions. When I enter, all eyes are on me but, only the rider deigns to give me a light smile that only I notice.

The dry voice of Mrs. de Soltigen resonates: -

This is Mr. Ernest Pinacci who today enters our protection and our service.

There are a few smiles. I bow.

- Mr. Ernest, you have already had the honor of meeting Miss Germaine, this is my niece, Miss Géraldine.

The young person before whom I bow is small and slender. Blond hair frames a pale face with dull blue eyes. The hand she holds out to me feels light and clammy. She freezes my lips.

- This is my second daughter, Miss Caroline, it is to her that you will have to do for your stable work.

I bow to the rider with the sturdy, gloved hand. His face, although emaciated, is laughing, frank.

- And here is the last one, Miss Sylvie.

So much beauty dazzles me. I stay for a few fractions of a second before leaning down to contemplate this magnificent face, with green eyes and a full mouth, surrounded by a long wave of jet-colored hair.

Before my gaze, Miss Sylvie has a disdainful pout. She must be around seventeen and is the most beautiful thing I have seen in my entire life.

Madame de Soltigen waits for me to get up and

continues: - Above all, do not forget, Monsieur Ernest, that you owe obedience and submission to all these young ladies as well as to myself, as well as to those who will be invited to this residence.

I feel a little humiliated to be treated like a servant in front of all these young people in a house where my father had been... Nevertheless, I bow as I have done until now. What else can I do?

- Let's sit down to the table now, says Madame de Soltigen, getting up.

All the young ladies follow and I close the procession.

They sat around the table, with the exception of Miss Germaine who

arrange her dress so as not to wrinkle it. I too am going to sit down when Madame de Soltigen's voice rises: - It is good, it seems to me sir, to remind you that, when a servant has the honor, as you have, to have lunch with his mistresses, it would be proper if he deigned to wait until everyone was seated before daring to sit down himself.

I turn scarlet with shame and rage. Servant! the word is dropped. Thus this noble lady abuses her power, reveals herself in her true light, taking advantage of the trust my father placed in her to subjugate a fourteen-year-old boy. This is too much. We'll get things straightened out right away. I'm going to speak but she beats me to it: - Miss Germaine, after lunch you will give this boy a good pair of slaps to teach him how to behave in the world...

Sit down now, sir, and take care not to speak until you are given permission to do so.

It takes my breath away. My arms slide along my body and I take a seat without being able to say a word. While I lower my head and eat slowly for fear that the sound of my jaws will attract further wrath on me, these ladies begin to discuss, laugh and joke among themselves without paying any further attention to my presence. Only one, moreover, seems to have looked at me kindly and from time to time gives me a sneaking smile; it is Miss Caroline, the date. I have the feeling that all the calamities, all the chores, all the punishments, all the chastisements will fall on my back in this house and that the only one from whom I will have nothing to fear will be Miss Caroline. By a happy coincidence I will work with her most of my time. I no longer dare look at Miss Sylvie who, however, is so beautiful. I glance worriedly at Miss Germaine's fine but strong hand with its polished nails. This hand, which will soon slap me twice without me being able to say anything. The fear of this unjust punishment takes away all the taste from the dishes served to me by the little maid whom I barely see as I am so prostrate on my plate.

- Mr. Ernest?

Madame de Soltigen's voice wakes me from my torpor. I raise my face towards her, still red with humiliation.

- Mr. Ernest, she continues, there is one thing that my daughters and I hate above all else, and that is cleaning, polishing, brushing and polishing our shoes. This is detestable and demeaning work. You are now

charge. But be careful, as soon as the shoe becomes dirty it will immediately be polished. I want everything to shine. Understood !

- Yes, Madam, I say, blushing even more.

- Besides, I am convinced that this task will suit you and delight you, she finished.

I wonder why this little job doesn't fall to the maid, as would be normal, but I keep silent for fear of attracting some bullying.

Madame de Soltigen gives the order to get up from the table and this relieves me because I was very afraid that she would have me corrected in front of all the young ladies. I hope that Miss Caroline will return to her horses and that the other young ladies will go to their rooms. Alas, my hope is short-lived. Madame de Soltigen takes me into a small living room where all the young ladies are seated. I stand up.

- Mr. Ernest, please ask Miss Germaine for the punishment that you were promised, expressing yourself clearly, please.

I foolishly walk towards Miss Germaine, comfortably seated in an armchair. She watches me come with a cynical and cruel smile. Her fingers are clasped on her clenched knees. I stammer more than I speak: - Will Mademoiselle give me the two slaps that were promised to me for my incorrectness?

The laughter becomes even more cruel on the girl's lips. She gets up: - But certainly my little one, certainly, put your hands behind your back, you will be served.

She raises her hands one after the other and two resounding slaps fall on my burning cheeks.

-And so, what do you say to be treated so well?

- Thank you, Miss Germaine!

I say this without a hiccup. Smirks appear on everyone's faces and I can barely hold back the sobs that choke my throat.

- Remember, Mr. Ernest, that every time one of us misses you, this will be done. The punishment will vary according to the importance of the fault committed. Now go to your room and prepare to follow Miss Caroline to the stables.

I turn on my heel when she reminds me: - Wait, here for you, it's a letter that your late father gave me.

She hands me a white envelope which I take with a bow. I ride

in my room where I let my tears flow as I open the envelope. I recognize my father's clumsy handwriting. I read and my tears dry from surprise.

"My dear little

one, "I don't know at what age I will die nor the age you will be at that time but, in any case, this letter will be given to you by Madame de Soltigen when you are old enough to understand.

"You may have hated your father and thought very badly of my behavior and you have the right to do so. Maybe you'll hate me even more when you know the truth about this horrible thing I did. I cheated on your mother, it's true, before you were born, I cheated on her but I loved her. I deceived her when I conceived a "real passion" for Madame de Soltigen. However, I was never the lover of this noble lady. I entered his service as stable master. I spent all my nights working at her house, for her. The meager salary of a stable master, added to the little masonry work that I did here and there, helped me to earn my living, to pay for a nanny and also, I admit, to drink.

"When you were old enough to go to boarding school, that was no longer enough. But I wanted you to continue your studies, to become someone and not a poor fellow like your father. So, Madame de Soltigen offered me a deal which may seem horrible but which I accepted on my honor. It is to this honor that I ask you, my son, to conform. She offered to pay for your studies until the day of my death on the condition that I draw up a will leaving you to her as soon as I breathe my last. And this until you reach the age of majority. It's up to me to know how to drink moderately so that I don't die until you reach twenty-one. If I succeed in this, my son, Madame de Soltigen will have lost her money and you, otherwise... You must expect the worst. You will fall into his hands as stable master. I was one myself with all the "advantages" that it entails. You will have to obey him, as well as his daughters, his niece and all the young people who will be his guests. Whatever they tell you or do to you, you must always obey and submit. At twenty-one, you will be free to leave them to find a job. Would to God, my son, that you never belong to this woman because she is merciless and her daughters have even less.

"I love you, my child. May you forgive me one day."

I'm devastated. Poor father, how he must have suffered. Madame de Soltigen was never his mistress. He preferred that my mother believed this infamy rather

than to admit to having become the valet of a noble lady in order to improve the family nest egg. He played on the word "mistress" to hide his humiliation. He suffered in his soul and in his flesh so that I could grow up without lacking anything, not even a mother. He agreed to play the game in a nefarious deal so that I could rise to a higher social rank than him and he lost. In short, his only vice was drinking to excess. Poor father, he drank too much and died seven years too early. Seven years during which I will be delivered to Madame de Soltigen, her three daughters and her niece. This strange deal is based solely on the word of honor of my dead father, but I am determined to respect this word of honor as it should be. I will be obedient and submissive to Madame de Soltigen, her three daughters and her niece as well as to all the people they will designate for me. I swear this on my faith and on the letter from my poor father.

I hear someone coming up the stairs and, a few moments later, my bedroom door opens. Miss Caroline is there, dressed in her fine coat, her riding pants and her high brown boots. In her hand she holds a flexible black riding crop.

- Come on, hurry up, I'll be waiting for you. Do you want me to complain to my mother?
- No, no, I'll come straight away, miss.

I immediately follow in his footsteps and I'm out on his heels. Eager to please her and feeling that she means well towards me, I precede her to the horse and hand her the reins. She puts her foot in the stirrup and saddles up like a proud rider.

- Walk next door, she said, I'll take you to the stables.

She spurs lightly and we set off. I walk close to her and my face, at times, hits the cold leather of her high boots.

- Look at me ! she says, lowering her head.

I raise my slightly frightened face towards her.

- Right now, I see that you have regained your strength and lost your color... Were you really offended to be slapped like that by a girl? Is not it ?

- Yes Miss.

She bursts out with a frank and clear laugh.

- You must have understood what awaits you here. You can hardly hope that a day goes by without one of us punishing you. Personally I don't

I will very rarely beat in public and I will only do it with a riding crop. I hate hitting with my bare hands. In any case, be sure that I will only do it for stablemaster mistakes or... if you forget to shine my boots.

His tone becomes so ironic that I shiver. She adds:

- We only have two horses in the stables so you will have enough time to keep all our shoes clean. We would therefore be stupid to tolerate the slightest negligence on this point.

She is silent and looks straight ahead. I take the opportunity to stare at her: she is a beautiful girl of around twenty-two years old, very thin, with flamboyant brown eyes, brown hair tending slightly to red. Her shapes are not very apparent and we can guess her chest more than we see it. Its size, however, is well taken. Her long, slender legs

perfectly match the shape of the high boots that shape them. This

furtive examination reassures me a little and I have a crazy desire to

throw myself against his foot, encircle his boot in my arms and place a long kiss t

We left the stony path and headed through the vast olive groves. The

joyful song of the cicadas accompanies us.

My shoes dig into the dusty ground and I have to run to keep up with the horse. I have the impression that this exercise greatly amuses the pretty rider whose smile points to a small house whose thatched roof appears beyond a hillock through the olive branches.

- Here is the stable, this is where you will work... from time to time... The stable is a rustic building as indicated by its thatched roof. A heavy wooden door, barred with an iron arm, hides the entrance. Miss Caroline stops her horse and, while I hold the reins, she jumps, with a supple and elegant leap, from her mount. Unfortunately under his feet is a small puddle. His boots sink into the mud and are completely stained with it.

“Well, my boy,” she said, smiling, “here’s some work for you. I understand that she didn't land there by pure chance, but I keep quiet.

She leads me towards the stable. She lifts the iron bar and the door creaks on its hinges. Inside there is the sound of hooves and harsh breathing.

- Here is Pachi, she said, he is a good three-year-old horse, fast, but quite spirited. I ride him quite rarely because of his unstable character and moody spirit. A bit like me in short. One day he reared so violently while we were galloping at a good pace that he threw me off my horse.

I almost broke my bones. Then he came back to me, very sheepish, his head down, with an air of pain, he sniffed for a long time as if to ask my forgiveness. I didn't have the heart to scold him, I forgave him and we became friends again but now I'm more suspicious... He didn't like your father either.

I lower my head.

- This one, she continues, turning towards the horse she has just left, is Calari. He's as gentle as a cat and wouldn't hurt a fly. We handle it as we want. You will see clearly that this is not in your duties, when you are well behaved and have worked well, I will teach you to ride in the saddle and gallop with me, but you must not tell anyone about it, that is isn't it?

- Oh no, Miss Caroline, I thank you and I promise...

Seeing my delighted look, she bursts out laughing and takes me by the shoulder.

- Come on, we'll have to get to work, I'll show you how horses are groomed and groomed. Then you will take them to drink and you will give a light sweep in front of the door. Tomorrow you will clean the stable from top to bottom and change the straw.

I am happy, divinely happy. There is something between us that no one will know, something that will remain for both of us: a secret that at no cost will I reveal.

Miss Caroline puts her arm around my neck and pulls me towards the back of the stable. She has a strange look. His eyes are fixed and shining. She takes off her light coat and hands it to me: -

Hold this for me... and the riding crop too.

I take the garment. Miss Caroline keeps her eyes fixed on me. Her black men's shirt is unbuttoned and reveals the dark beginnings of the valley of her breasts. She undoes the buckle on her pants. I don't dare move. The thighs appear to me. Slowly, she pulls the pants down over the boots.

- Help me, she orders.

I throw the coat over my shoulder and slowly approach. I hesitate I don't know what to do. The briefs! says Miss Caroline, take down your underwear! I place my hands on each side of her hips. I feel her shiver. A strange feeling takes hold of me. I slide my fingers between the girl's warm skin and the elastic of the panties and, gently, I lower the small piece of nylon along the nervous thighs,

up to the knees.

- Enough !

I take a step back. Miss Caroline bends down and urinates.

- Have you ever seen a girl pee? she asks. I nod. She laughs.

- Then get down... lie on the ground and look...

I place the coat on a wooden panel and lie flat on the ground belly.

- Approach, closer...

I approach by crawling on my stomach. My face is now against the toes of the girl's boots. I watch her urinate. I contemplate this jet of liquid which propels itself like a torrent from a mysterious cave and which leaves the damp floor of the stable. Splashes hit my face. I don't do anything to avoid them. It is with some regret that I see the jet diminish and die out in an irregular drip.

- A girl who pees is beautiful, isn't it? asks Miss Caroline, who lies down and stretches out on the damp earth.

She continues:

- Don't you want to kiss this divine temple hidden under the hairy bush?

I nod yes.

- So come on... kiss me here!

And his gloved finger rests on the little pink lips which I immediately cover with my mouth.

This place has a special flavor that I didn't know, a peppery taste that activates my blood and makes my head spin. Miss Caroline moves her stomach and moans softly. His gloved hand rested on the back of my neck as if to prevent me from pulling away. But I don't want to leave: I've never sucked anything so good.

- Stick your tongue in, Ernest, stick it in!

I obey. The liquid I feel in my mouth is not urine. It's not salty and it seems gooey to me. What is it ?

Suddenly, I realize that Miss Caroline is breathing very heavily, that she is moaning even more and that a smile of pleasure is painted on her face with closed eyes.

- But keep going... Lick... idiot... lick!

This time my mouth is flooded with the delicious sticky liquid. Miss Caroline

sighs, moans, sighs again and lifts his lower abdomen in a jerky rhythm. Finally she pushes me away, stays lying there for a few seconds without saying anything, her eyes still closed, her lips parted. I step back, still staggering with voluptuous intoxication.

Miss Caroline gets up, pulls up her underwear, readjusts her pants: -
It's good Ernest, you are docile and gentle, we will continue the lesson another time.

She dips her boot in the mud formed earlier by her urine. She digs her heels into it.

- Since you will clean these boots later, she said, I want you to take with them the memory of having seen me piss... Come on, give me my coat and my riding crop and come, I'm going home on foot with you but the other evenings, I will return on horseback and you will bring the mount back to the stable.

On returning to the castle, Miss Caroline said to me: - I will show you the "shoe cabinet".

This is where you will have to stand at all times when you are not at the stable.

It is a small, low room with several shelves covered in red felt. Countless pairs of fine ladies' shoes and kid's boots are carefully placed on these shelves.

- Here, said my guide, is what we called "the shoe cabinet".

Each of us has our own shelf. You will have no trouble finding your way around because the shelves are marked with our respective names. Ah! there is also a shelf, at the back, which is empty and intended for the shoes of young ladies and guests in general. You just need to keep everything in good order and make sure that each pair is shiny. She sits on the armchair adjoining her shelf and stretches out her legs: -

Give me my purple mules and
take off these boots which you will clean immediately.

I have no trouble finding, in the locker, the little mauve suede mules with Louis XV heels. I place them near Miss Caroline and, kneeling in front of her, I pull off her boots. I put his little warm white feet in their new setting. The young girl gets up and goes out, closing the door. I remain alone in this strange office. A real dizziness takes hold of me.

I am kneeling in front of Miss Caroline's boots and my task remains to be accomplished: brush, remove dirt, wax, shine. A flash crosses my mind.

A flash of joy: Miss Sylvie may have dirty shoes. And if there are, shouldn't I polish them first? What will she say if she finds out that I didn't serve her first? I quickly get up and run to his locker. Oh, joy! The first object my eyes land on is an adorable pair of black leather ankle boots covered, in part, with a thick layer of mud. I slowly approach the locker and place my hands near the boots of the divine Miss Sylvie. I consider them for a moment and, suddenly, I grab hold of them, pressing them to my heart with mad passion. Ah! how I would like to extinguish the frail body of the wonderful young girl in the same way. How I would like to hold her lovely face against my chest. By pressing her two little boots like this, isn't it a little of her that I'm squeezing, a little of what accompanies her, serves her, on which her light gait danced, delicious will-o'-the-wisp, in an azure studded with stars?

“ Gracious support from an adorable fairy whom I barely know but who became, in an instant, my inflexible mistress and the ardent passion which will never be extinguished. I surrender my heart to him for life. Boots, you are the divine incarnation of my days and my nights, the holy Image of my sweetest dreams and the despotic terror of my most horrible nightmares. Let me embrace you, gird you with my life.

“Frail pedestals which launch your ambitious leather like ancient vases towards the finely sculpted stems of the most dazzling flower in the universe. It rises in you and rises to the firmament in the most illuminated curves and graces that nature has created “Sacred monsters who carry its disdain in addition to its beauty; which makes the deified imprint tremble beneath it, on the white marble tiles. of his footsteps (dust more precious than a pile of rubies and dearer to my heart than the breath of my life); which motivate the heartbreaking complaint of crushed gravel in their magical ecstasy when it passes indifferent; who pour the waters of a recent rain into a hole in the road to defile you with mud like warm blood. Boots of Goddesses, delectable wings of an angel of Splendor, allow me to place my lips on you as an offering of my most pious respect. »

I walk the talk. Wet lips refresh the dried mud on the boots of She for whom my heart swells with sap.

I kneel down and, taking a brush, I carefully remove the dirt from the little boots, brush them with love, wax them and make them shine. I put them back with

a thousand precautions on the shelf and, after having kissed them again, I return to Miss Caroline's boots which I clean with the same care but without passion. Each of the ladies has at least one pair of dirty shoes and it takes me two hours to shine them. I have just finished my work when the maid comes in and orders me to follow her.

We sit down at the table. This time I wait until all the ladies are seated, Madame de Soltigen is at one end of the table, Miss Germaine at the other. To the right of Madame de Soltigen. Miss Sylvie, more ravishing than ever in a low-cut dress; next to her Miss Géraldine who faces me while to my right stands Miss Caroline in a very simple dress which makes her both more feminine and more attractive. All the ladies are resting on comfortable chairs. I alone have a small wooden chair.

The large chandelier over the table is lit. The rays of yellow light illuminate the beautiful faces of my mistresses. Miss Sylvie is divinely beautiful, splendid, fresh, delicious in her olive green evening dress. Her white bare shoulders capture all the light in the room. I am fascinated by her delicious chest which rises at a regular rhythm, and for which I would gladly die.

When dinner is over, Madame de Soltigen gets up. We all follow her into the large living room where I received my memorable pair of slaps. The ladies sit in their armchairs, place their feet on small poufs and surround me.

Mrs. de Soltigen speaks and helps me out of my difficulty: -

Ernest, you have studied and I have no doubt that you can read fluently. Plus you have quite a pretty voice. So take the book that is on the chest of drawers, you will read to us.

I bow, walk over to the dresser and return with the book.

- Sit on the ground and start! Take to the third tale!

It's a book of Russian stories. The third, the one I have to read, is titled: "The Black Flower". I sit down in the center of the living room and start reading. The ladies listen but, very quickly, Miss Géraldine yawns and seems bored. Miss Caroline asks permission to withdraw. Miss Germaine's thoughts are obviously elsewhere. Only Madame de Soltigen and Miss Sylvie seem passionate about this tale. The interest that Miss Sylvie has in the tale that I am reading fills me with ease, joy and honor. On the sly, I glance at him furtively. Her delicate little foot, wearing an adorable mule, plays with the pouf. Thanks to this game, I see from time to time

another, under the fold of her long dress, the bottom of her milky foot...

The tale ends, I close the book. Madame de Soltigen gets up and Miss Sylvie, as if with regret, detaches herself from her dream and returns to herself, to the castle, to the living room. To everything, except me, whom she continues to ignore with the most humiliating contempt. Madame de Soltigen hands me a small notebook: - Ernest, here is a notebook in which the shoes that each of us will wear the next day will be recorded each day. Make sure they are at our bedroom doors when we wake up.

- Good, ma'am!

I bow and kiss the hands of the two ladies who are withdrawing. I check that the doors are closed and go to the shoe cabinet where I learn about the wishes of these ladies.

Monday April 18, 1962.

- Order is given to Ernest Pinacci, servant, to leave the following effects and shoes in front of the rooms of the lady and young ladies of Soltigen: - Mrs. de Soltigen: green leather

ankle boots, high and narrow.

- Miss Germaine: black suede shoes, very fine with stiletto heels.

- Miss Caroline: high black leather boots for horses, with whip and hat.

- Miss Géraldine: fine red pumps.

- Mlle Sylvie: brown kid ankle boots with black leather upper bands, tips and heels.

The lady and the young ladies intend to find these shoes when they wake up on Tuesday, April 19. Any deviation, failure, oversight or deception will be severely punished by the hand of the person who has been offended.

I take the requested shoes from the shelves and, slowly, I go up to the floor where my young mistresses have their rooms. I remember the arrangement that Miss Caroline explained to me very briefly and I place the shiny shoes in front of each door. Then I go quietly up to my room where I sleep, my head, eyes and heart filled with Miss Sylvie.

“ A new wind turned my life upside down like a hurricane of misfortunes which surprised my soul and tore my heart then which threw me back like a wreck on an unknown, mysterious and inhospitable shore. But the wind has taken on forms so beautiful that we begin to love it, to adore it, to venerate it, to follow it everywhere, to even precede it, to coat our skin with it, to let ourselves

swing by him wherever he pleases, to be his thing, his victim, his slave, to be part of him...

“ You are, Miss Sylvie, the last phase of the wind and here I am delivered to you in an eternity which will fill my life. You are this elusive wind by which I live. This swirl that I worship, that I can imagine but which I cannot touch. This God who is everywhere and for whom I am nothing. You live, you talk, you laugh; I can only listen. Listen and love your life, your words and your laughter. I belong to your life. I obey your words. I endure your laughter. If you scold I blush and lower my forehead. If you strike, I bend or lie down like a weak reed. Your statuesque beauty completely fades me. You appear and I am nothing. You do not see me. You ignore me too. I am here to serve you and keep quiet.

It doesn't matter what I think, what I say, what I do: you don't care. You have no time to lose to realize that I exist. I belong to you and must be content, obey, submit and ask for no more. I am the object that you handle, that you take, that you use and that you put down after use, in a corner, like a broom or a rag. You will pass by me ten times, a hundred times, a thousand times without seeing me if I do not have the slightest use for you. You owe me nothing and I owe you everything. Your eyes are too bright to linger on me.

“And I adore you, Miss Sylvie, I love the blur of your hair, the unusual shine of your eyes, the contemptuous pout of your lips, the roundness of your shoulders, the play of your arrogant breasts, the floating of your hips, the light sound of your party favors, the dance of your steps. I love you and this love has not the slightest interest in you. If you knew it, it would offend you.

No, what am I saying? I am too insignificant to offend you: you would be indifferent to it. My passion is all the more divine, more extensive. Ah! never wait for what you love, never tarnish it with human baseness. Seeing yourself rejected, despised, humiliated; have no hope and only love more. Persist in your faith when God is hostile to you, sow his love and reap disdain. Is this not the most powerful masterpiece, the paroxysm of love, the most celestial use of one's heart and soul?

“ I would love you less if you showed me some kindness, some thoughtfulness. If you gave me a look, an interest, even infinite.

“ I would be disappointed if you held me as an equal.

“ I *would be unhappy if you loved me too.* »

I fall asleep in a torrent of dreams where Miss Sylvie always plays the best role. Everything is permitted in dreams: love, crime, betrayal, cowardice, horror and abjection. There are no rules, no punishment.

I am woken up with a start, by the sound of a bell that I had not noticed but which is at the head of my bed. I get up quickly, get dressed and go down to Madame de Soltigen's room. The door is ajar. I hit. I enter and bow. Madame de Soltigen is sitting in her bed, her chest erect, her back resting on two pillows. Standing next to him, Miss Sylvie and Miss Géraldine are holding the shoes that I left the day before in front of their doors.

- Mr. Ernest, said Madame de Soltigen, it appears that your service is far from being satisfactory.

I start to shake.

- Madam, I...

- Be quiet, Mesdemoiselles Sylvie and Géraldine had the unfortunate surprise this morning, when they woke up, to discover shoes in front of their bedroom door that were not theirs. What do you have to say about that, sir?

- Please excuse me...

- Apologize to these young ladies, she continues.

- Ladies, I...

- On your knees.

It is the brittle voice of Miss Sylvie which gives this order. I fall on my knees more than I get on them.

- Ladies, please excuse me, I am a fool.

I said these words in one breath. Did my distraught look, my ease of humiliating myself get the better of the frail Miss Géraldine? I do not know. She

whisper:

- It's okay this time but don't do it again.

I don't have time to thank her until Miss Sylvie's whistling voice cuts in: - I don't forgive

you, mother! He offended me, he must be punished!

Miss Géraldine flinches, embarrassed and ashamed of her weakness. She lowers her head.

- Very good, Sylvie, Monsieur Ernest will be happy to ask you for six strokes of the rod. Go now !

Miss Géraldine leaves first. I'm getting up again.

- You, follow me! Miss Sylvie orders me.

I follow her into the corridor. I'm shaking all over. My humbled and worried heart beats to breaking in my chest. My eyes are riveted on my young tormentor, on his half-naked back where every little muscle twitches with the movement of his imperious gait. The size is fine, well taken. The loins, deliciously arched, flare out in a cascade of green fabric which trails its flight onto the thick red carpet. We enter his room. My mistake is glaring, I must admit. I put on the ground, at her order, the delicious little boots that she had thrown in my face in her mother's room. She turns to me: - You'll see what it costs to make fun of me.

Her long black hair falls over her shoulders. They partly cover the perfect arabesque of her breasts. His green eyes, filled with rage and anger, are even bigger, more beautiful than usual.

- I beg you...

- Useless ! You're going to run out and get a good handful of yards and you'll come back the same way! And do it quickly, otherwise I'll give you double the amount.

She is intractable, inflexible and merciless. Her chest heaves at a rapid pace, both excited and indignant, angry and delighted.

I run breathlessly to the small woods where, using a penknife, I cut a good handful of rushes which I shape to transform them into a formidable instrument of torture. I come back as quickly as I can and stop dead in Miss Sylvie's room, my pack of rods in my hand.

She is sitting in front of her dressing table. Its oval mirror reflects back to me its delicious face which I contemplate with downcast eyes. She put on a pink, transparent bodice, closed up to the neck and edged with ruffles at the cuffs and collar.

A black and white checkered skirt takes her at the waist and hides her white knees. She wore ankle boots. I remain standing, almost at attention, without daring to move, the bundle of rods in my hands. Everything about this room exudes luxury. A large carved wooden bed, with a canopy, reveals the shape of the venerable body which lies there. A blanket of white fur lies carelessly on the ground. An admirable bearskin is spread out at the foot of the bed; two cute emerald fur mules are placed on the back of the animal's neck. On the wall, I admire a portrait of Miss Sylvie.

I am intoxicated, spellbound and still shaking. The indifference of my torturer worries me more and more. Receiving punishment is nothing compared to the intolerable wait that precedes it. I wonder when Miss Sylvie will decide to take the rods? When she hits, where she will do it: on the calves? on the thighs? on the back or on?

...No, I prefer not to think about it. And yet this idea never leaves me. She makes me shudder. What if she actually took the liberty of pulling down my pants, hitting my bare buttocks who would stop her? Certainly not me who has no right to do so. If she does that, I will die of shame. Never again will I dare to be in his presence without blushing to the roots of my hair.

Yet what shame can I have? I'm absolutely nothing to her. I do not exist. Even naked, she would not see me, she would strike for pleasure; because she had to, because she would want to do it. She would never imagine that this "thing" could have modesty and that it could feel pain. Besides, she doesn't care. The fact that she brushes her hair while humming without showing me the slightest interest clearly demonstrates the extent of the ravine that separates us. I am the algae that cannot be seen from the top of the cliff, the gravel lost at the bottom of the abyss. I can only wait without having the right to get tired. I would like to talk, scream, beg, whatever... do anything as long as something happens. But no, it is this horrible silence charged with fear, anguish, shame and disdain that I cannot define but which is the often unknown path to sensual happiness. A happiness born in decline, in humility and in suffering which makes you venerate the being who gives you it.

Miss Sylvie now goes about various activities in her room. She passes back and forth by me without seeing me, without being in any way bothered by me. She acts exactly as if she were alone. I'm just a piece of furniture for her. Why would she bother? This awful comedy lasts more than half an hour. Suddenly, she turns to me. His eyes blaze with anger, cruelty. She asks me: - What are you doing here? What do you want ?

I jump but, as surprising as her insidious questions are, I understand and, throwing myself at her knees, I raise my arms towards her.

- I ask Mademoiselle Sylvie to give me six strokes of the penis.

She takes the edge, seems to soften. A wicked smile lights up his pale face. My humility seems to please him.

- Very good, she said to me, this is how you will have to ask for your punishments from now on. All this is for your good and you should be happy that we deign to strike you, you whom it would be easy for us to kick aside. I am good and I don't want to deprive you of this pleasure. Take off your shirt!

The ironic tone of these hurtful words should offend me deeply, but it does not. I quickly take off my shirt and remain kneeling in front of her.

She places the rods, takes two thin cords from the pocket of her skirt and, leaning over me, grabs my wrists, brings them behind my back and binds them securely. She does the same with my ankles.

"Here I am on my knees before you, fascinating goddess, with my bare chest and bowed head, like the prisoner who we want to humiliate by carrying him at the feet of his conqueror to make him feel the weight of his defeat, the infamous of its position. And the winner, drunk with his power, suffocating with vigor, wanted to push the painful martyr further. He destroyed his personality, fixed his limbs and tied his fists. He contemplates, radiant, this pile of enslaved flesh, this mass walled in the immobility he wanted, according to the curves he prescribed, the position he chose.

"Here I am on my knees before you, fascinating goddess; hindered by your hand, delivered to your mercy. I am just a package forced to remain that way as long as you want. The slightest gesture is forbidden to me. I don't even have the right to it anymore. My movements depend on you alone. You can take them away from me, give them back to me at will. You can, at your discretion, throw me into a dark dungeon and leave me there to rot without being bothered by the noise of my c Will I die of hunger, cold or devoured by a swarm of rats? What does it matter! As soon as the dungeon is closed, you will no longer remember that I existed.

"I'm just a poultry for sale at the public market, a chicken whose wings have been clipped and its legs tied, then thrown into a crate. And you, beautiful customer, you come near the display, put your hand in the crate, lift the roped chicken. You feel him to see if he is in flesh, put him in your shopping bag, exchange him for a little money and, at home, you take your hatchet to cut his neck without the slightest mercy. You pluck him and only then do you think about cutting his bonds... to throw him into the pot. Tonight, after your dinner, you won't even think that I was a roped chicken.

"I'm just a ham hanging from the ceiling and stupidly swinging if the door slams. A ham that waits inexorably for you to come, armed with a sharp knife, to cut it into slices and then arrange it

on a plate and eat it wholeheartedly. Every day I will lose a few slices so that you can have the joy of feasting on them until the day a bone remains ridiculously hanging. You will untie it and throw it away without bothering to remove this link.

"I am only the lamb that was tied to the foot of a tree to lure the beast. He cannot escape despite the fear that grips him. He proclaims this fear, he begs, he cries. The beast feasts on it in advance and delights in its bleating. He comes without hurrying, jumps on the lamb, kills it with a paw, bleeds it with a bite of his teeth. And you will kill the beast, you will take it away and you will leave me, the dead lamb, tied to my stake.

"Here I am on my knees before you, fascinating goddess, tasting the defeat of my masculine and absurd strength before your weak but triumphant feminine ingenuity.

"Here I am on my knees, before you, fascinating goddess, delivered to your good will, ready to sacrifice my life to you, to choose the death that you will not give me.

"Here I am on my knees, before you, fascinating goddess, contemplating my dignity as a man that you are taking away from me, slice by slice, to play with at your leisure, leaving only a bone that you will throw away from you.

"Here I am on my knees, before you, fascinating goddess, the lure of your pleasure, your joy, your desires and your whims.

"Use me as you wish, through all this I am yours. »

Miss Sylvie has taken back the bouquet of rods, she approaches me. His arm slowly rises and swings down with force. A sharp burn cuts my back, cuts into the flesh of my arm. I admit that if I were not so attached, I would try to protect myself. But all movement is forbidden to me. I have to endure.

Miss Sylvie waits a few seconds before knocking again. She wants to feast on my pain, let me taste it and provoke, in me, the obsessive anguish of the second blow, then the third. I grit my teeth to keep from screaming but this flogging is too excruciating and, despite myself, at the sixth blow I let out a cry: a painful complaint.

- How, she exclaims suddenly joyfully, this does you so much good that you ask for more! Take comfort, my little one, you're going to get it. And I still have to receive three more blows. This time, I manage to remain silent.

Finally, she places the rods, undoes my bonds and orders me to get up. My back is on fire. I wonder if he's not dripping blood, the pain is so horrible. I can imagine it with white lines that turn red as the blood returns. I take my shirt when a masterful pair of

slaps fall on my cheek

- What do we say about that? Do you want a second distribution?

I fall at his feet.

- Thank you, Miss Sylvie, I said, kissing the hem of her skirt against her white knees. -

Listen to me carefully, now so that your errors and your stupidities do not happen again, you will attend my rising every morning. You will stand in front of my door from seven o'clock and wait for me to ring the bell which will allow you entry. Now, outside!

Yesterday passed without incident and this morning, I am at seven o'clock in front of her door waiting with her two little boots in my hand for her to deign to ring my bell. I've been waiting for an hour and a half, there you go! the bell makes its imperative song heard. I enter and close the door. I bow while remaining at a respectable distance from the bed where Miss Sylvie is lying. She beckons me to come closer until I get off the bed.

- On your knees.

I come across the bearskin.

- Put on these ankle boots, I'll put on the mules first. I comply. She throws off the covers and her legs spring towards me like the petals of a magnificent flower suddenly in bloom. I see the most wonderful leg on earth, the most lovely knee, the cutest foot. All this within a flow of white and garnet silk of a Greek cut nightgown with its artistically draped veils. I take one of her adorable little feet in my left hand and her gold and black mule in the other. I gently push his foot into the precious shoe. I put on the second mule and I cannot resist the pleasure of leaning towards the ground and placing my lips on the warm and fragrant skin of the divine foot of which I have become a humble servant. Miss Sylvie lets out a cry of horror. The tip of her mule hits me violently on the forehead, and she jumps up as I roll to the ground.

- Down, you dirty dog! go to bed immediately! she screams, furious.

I lie down on my stomach.

She hits me with all her strength with her heels. She jumps with both feet on my back and stamps on my kidneys, my back, my neck under her delicate silk mules.

- Pardon... Pardon...

That's all I can say. Hitting me in the face with the tip of his

sandal, she makes me kneel. She remains standing in front of me, disheveled, out of breath. Her chest rises quickly and falls, making the fabric of her nightgown rustle. His eyes are on fire. She raises her arm, slides the strap of her shirt, then the second. With a soft rustle, the silk screen slides down his body and falls at his feet. She is naked. My eyes widen. I feel like I'll never be able to close them again.

- Follow me on my knees; she said after considering me for a moment. I follow her into the bathroom. She stops in front of the bathtub half filled with water. She bends down slightly and her buttocks are pressed against my face. I place a kiss on each of them and slowly I run my tongue down the beautiful valley between them. She enters the bath and I see her splendid forms melt into the water. She beckons me to approach, grabs my hand and guides it, under the water, towards her lower abdomen. My fingers caress the dark fleece which undulates under the swirls of the water. I feel the smooth lips of her sex. I slowly part the soft flesh of her intimacy and my fingers penetrate the hot and flooded temple. Miss Sylvie leans her head against the wall of the bathtub. She closes her eyes. Her small breasts, streaming with water, dart their dark buttons towards the ceiling, her stomach tenses. My fingers explore the cave. I touch a small needle of flesh. Miss Sylvie sighs louder. I take this needle between two fingers and knead it delicately. Miss Sylvie writhes and moans softly, stretching then contracting. I feel my fingers getting sticky and I see a few white threads escape from between her thighs and spread into the water. The young girl pushes my hand away and I stay on my knees for a few minutes, contemplating her, lying down and inert, letting her divine body flow into the murky waters of the bathtub.

Finally, she stands up, gets out of the bath, dries off and I stay on my knees behind her all the time she takes to dress and make up. She turns to me: - Go get my boots!

I run and come back to kneel in front of her. She holds out her legs to me, one after the other. I take off her little mules, put on her stockings and slip her delicious feet into the luxurious ankle boots. A white nylon bodice encloses her chest and her black and white checked gingham skirt brushes against my face.

I finish putting it on and remain kneeling, slightly inclined, waiting

his orders. She lifts one foot, places her sole on the back of my neck and lowers it until my forehead touches the ground, at the toe of her other boot. She keeps me in this humiliating position for a few seconds then bursts out laughing and leaves after hitting my cheek with the toe of her boot. I remain prostrate until she closes the door...

May 1962.

For a month, the same rites, the same work, the same obligations have returned every day with the most delicious regularity. I have become so accustomed to my domesticity that I can no longer do without it.

I am very often punished by young ladies but none put as much effort into it as Miss Sylvie.

One afternoon as I took off his boots, soiled during a walk, Miss Sylvie said to me: - Ernest, I'm going out later. You're going to shine these boots for me. I want them to be a mirror in which I can paint my eyes.

This morning I have already polished nearly thirty pairs of shoes, at least fifteen of which belonged to him. Exhausted, I dare, for the first time, to murmur a complaint: - Are you doing this on purpose, Miss, to dirty your boots? It hasn't rained for two weeks and your shoes are still full of mud. That's all I do: remove dirt and polish your shoes.

She looks at me with a nasty, fierce look: -

You are so insolent that deserves a good lesson. You should be happy to spend your time polishing beautiful ladies' boots and you should thank me for dirtying them at my leisure. Take this bucket and go get some water. I obey.

- Now go get some dirt.

I go there and come back with what she asked me.

- Okay, now throw the earth into the water.

I obey again. She demands that I put on all her pairs of shoes and boots one after the other. She dips and smears them in the muddy bucket. In less than twenty minutes, I have around me a good forty pairs of stained shoes, which I must carefully clean. I am desperate.

- Now, she said, put on these boots for me, you're going to polish them on my feet.

She sits in the chair. I kneel in front of her. She puts one foot

booted on my thigh and, under his mocking gaze, his ironic and contemptuous smile, I remove, brush, wax and shine the beautiful little boots.

This time I arrived at the lowest level of servitude. This is the first time I've shined the shoes on Miss Sylvie's feet. Does she feel great satisfaction from it? Is she experiencing exquisite pleasure? Does she realize that this imposition is terribly humiliating? I don't know, but she promises me that from now on I will polish her shoes every day.

The next day, Miss Géraldine imitates him...

I am at the height of my adoration for Miss Sylvie. She became my whole being. I only see her. I only think about her. I only dream of her.

My body trembles for her, sweats for her, feels cold for her. Praises constantly rise from my heart to her. My thoughts are with her. I read for her. I speak for her. I write for her. *"O, Mademoiselle Sylvie, where could the misfortune that has descended on me since my first awakening could have better thrown me so that I could encounter the most complete, the most figurative of happiness? Will you believe me, my Queen, but I come to thank heaven for having taken my mother from me, then for having struck down my father at the best possible moment. And him, this father whom I should hate for his life and love for my blood, I bless him for having had this bright idea to deliver me to your family which has become more than mine was.*

Madam your mother, Mademoiselle Sylvie, is a very severe and very cruel person but she likes order and sees right into hearts. She quickly let me know that my blood was inferior to that of all of you.

That I owed you full and complete obedience and had to maintain, towards you, all the respect of a servant for his young mistresses. It was she who had this ingenious, wonderful idea of adding to my work as stable master, the daily care of your adorable shoes.

I can still see her when she called out to me: "There is one thing," she told me, "that my daughters and I hate above all else, and that is removing dirt, polishing and brushing our shoes. This is detestable and humiliating work. You are now responsible for it, but be careful, as soon as your shoe gets dirty it will immediately be polished. I want everything to shine, understand? and she added: "Besides, I am convinced that this task will suit you and delight you. »

"Oh, Mademoiselle Sylvie, she didn't think she said it so well. Happiness has enveloped me in a shawl of pleasure. My imprisoned limbs float in its folds, clinging to its fringes. My life, among you, is at the level

of the ground. I feel like a harmless reptile there. I crawl tirelessly, from the highly booted feet of Madame your mother, to those finely sheathed of Mademoiselle Germaine. From there, to Miss Géraldine's fine pumps which I leave for Miss Caroline's riding boots. Which are abandoned for the frail and disdainful boots which are fortunate enough to fit you and under which I am, Mademoiselle Sylvie, your very humble servant. This world of soft, delicate feet, tiny shoes and authoritative heels has become a paradise for me. My paradise! It is, I must admit, Miss Sylvie, when I kneel at your feet that my ecstasy reaches its peak. Your adorable feet have become my gods. Your shoes are the relics of a cult which is my reason for living.

"I don't sleep at night on the carpet at the foot of your bed; that would not be appropriate. My only resource is to dream that I am there. However, in the morning, when your eyes open and bring dawn into the house, when your little hand stretches out and nervously plucks the cord of the bell, I run with the quickest of my legs and come ask myself, on my knees, in front of your bed. No one, closer than me, has seen the sun rise, rise into the firmament. No one has seen beauty blossom with such charm, lightness and insolence. It's as if my insides are knotted when, contemptuous and harsh, you throw back the sheets and take out your legs which you hold out to me. I take in my burning hand your divine foot. There remains only a faint second in the palm of my hand but my soul, subsequently, extends it and makes it take place there for whole hours. It is sweet for me, Miss Sylvie, to learn that, from now on, my life will be linked to your feet and that, never again, I will detach myself from them. That I will live for them and through them. Ah! never leave them. Follow them, haughty and disdainful, in the corridor of the house; running with them, worried and angry, in search of your studies: falling asleep next to them, calm and dreamy, at night, in your sumptuous bed... The dearest wish of every man is generally unrealizable. Here is mine, Mademoiselle Sylvie: that they kill me to make from my skin, fine boots that you would wear. What I would like to be is to become human boots sensitive to pain. My happiness is at its height in the home of Madame de Soltigen and her daughters. Despite the corrections that I receive very often and with

generosity (they do it more out of pleasure than out of necessity), my young mistresses only have to praise me and especially Miss Sylvie, for whom I have become as slave as one can be and Miss Caroline who relies entirely on me for the care of the stable.

She taught me the art of riding. I became a perfect rider. Often, in the afternoon, we gallop together through the woods and she tells me very beautiful stories of riding and hunting. It's a young girl very different from Miss Sylvie and she never used her whip against me to reprimand me. I only got two or three shots because she wanted it and it was the surefire way to dissipate her bad mood. However, these blows were light enough not to mark me...

December 1964.

It has been almost two years since my father died and I am in the service of Madame de Soltigen and her daughters. My idolatry for Miss Sylvie redoubles day by day and there is no service, however intimate, where she cannot do without me.

Tomorrow we celebrate Miss Sylvie's nineteenth birthday and Madame de Soltigen has invited many of her daughter's playmates and study friends. I'm happy for her. More than her, perhaps, of the splendor that will crown her nineteen years. However, I know that all this awakening nature, all this splendor will serve the diabolical power of my mistress. I guess, from the strange light that I see in his eyes, that this birthday is going to be a day of apotheosis for his despotism, his ardent tyranny towards me. And for me, it's going to be a grueling day where I will have to degrade myself on all occasions. But I am very happy that it is so because, only the happiness and joy of Miss Sylvie are important.

Madame de Soltigen calls me into the living room: - Monsieur Ernest, we are celebrating Miss Sylvie's birthday tomorrow. We invited ten of her friends for tea. The maid is unavailable at this time. She will prepare the snacks at lunchtime and you will serve them.

Since I hate seeing things lying around, you will also be responsible for cleaning the dishes. Apart from that, you will be available to Miss Sylvie and her friends. This for the whole day, did you understand me correctly?

- I bow: - Yes, madam.

- Oh! one more thing. I want foolproof hold and correction. The slightest error on your part will be punished in front of ALL the ladies present.

She presses the word “all” convinced that it will have the desired effect. Miss Sylvie does not hesitate to exploit this permission. I have to do her hair, dress her, perfume her, polish her pumps six times which she never finds to suit her. Finally, the finished work appears, magical, in its mirror. She wears a low-waisted white taffeta dress. The skirt flares out in very wide pleats and covers the cheerful gurgling of six nylon petticoats. Her hair is rolled into a bun.

- You are very beautiful, Miss Sylvie! This is the first time I have dared to pay him such a compliment. She has a slight contemptuous smile and does not respond.

She orders me to clean her mother and sisters' shoes, then to go up and meet her in her room. I hurry to “the shoe cabinet” where, fortunately, I only have to dust shoes that I had already cleaned the day before.

After lunch, Madame de Soltigen has me put on a new valet's outfit. This uniform suits me perfectly. The white shirt, fastened with a black bow tie, the little yellow and black striped vest, the black bell bottom pants, everything is there. I am spared the frock coat for which I have a particular horror. From one p.m., in this outfit, I pace up and down the hall. I am responsible for introducing Miss Sylvie's guests to their hostesses, who is waiting for them in the large living room. Sitting with her guitar on her knees, she plays a melody to deceive her expectations. Around two o'clock, I hear the gravel of the path crunching under the hammering of the wheels. I rush down the stairs and stand there to open the car door. A young girl escapes lightly in a flight of silks.

- Miss Hélène Berchonfair.

I announce it. Miss Sylvie stops playing, gets up and, with a radiant smile on her lips, comes to meet the newcomer. They kiss.

- Miss Liliane Rocheferras.

I announce.

- Miss Anne Ancona.

I announce again.

- Madame Véronique Du Poutil.

I look up. Until then I had paid no attention to the young people I had introduced, but this warm, deep voice, this sensual scent of an oriental muse encouraged me to look up. I meet her people that she throws at me. Black, shiny eyes, as treacherous as they are dangerous. My lips part in a mischievous, surprised smile, which makes my cheeks turn red.

- Hey! well, says the astonishing voice: madam aunt, don't deprive yourself! This "my aunt" surprises me. I suppose it is Madame de Soltigen, but why this term? If she had waited for the arrival of a niece I would have known and Madame de Soltigen would not have failed to give me special instructions about her. Who is it ?

I'm the mysterious woman on the stairs. Suddenly, she stops, turns to me, looks at me for a long time and, lifting my chin with a finger, she whispers: - Yes, with a cutie like that, all

these little ones must be enjoying themselves.

As I look at her with bewildered eyes, she adds: - How do they devour you, my big darling? With white sauce or Madeira?

And she turns on her heel, bursting out laughing. I am amazed.

She arrives at the threshold of the living room, without even waiting for me to announce her. The greatest astonishment can be seen on the face of Madame de Soltigen and that of her daughters. Presumably she is not expected and has not been invited. - Veronica!

It is Miss Géraldine who, throwing herself into his arms, utters this cry. The two women kiss. I understand now: Ms. Véronique Du Poutil is Miss Géraldine's sister. As a result, Madame de Soltigen's niece is Miss Sylvie's cousin. Everything seemed clear to me.

- Miss Sidonie Campillo.

I announce again. It seems to me that Madame de Soltigen's face has darkened since the arrival of this niece. The latter has taken off her fur hat and her red hair falls down to her bare shoulders. She's not exactly beautiful and looks about twenty-five years old. Small wrinkles, hidden by a thick layer of makeup, appear around the edges of her eyes and the corners of her lips. She is dressed in a black leather dress that sits above her breasts and is held up at the shoulders by thin straps. She is wearing black suede shoes with very high Louis XV heels. She moves with ease, if not grace, among these young girls who

seem a little startled by his presence.

- Miss Lucienne Millegendieu.

This is the last of Miss Sylvie's guests. All these little people are milling around, cackling, laughing in the large living room, Miss Sylvie makes me a sign. I approach her.

- Take off those pretty things and take them to my room.

These are the gifts that the young girls gave him. Some are real gems but, out of all of them, the one I like the most is a pair of white fur ankle boots. Ms. Du Poutil says she bought it in Canada.

At three o'clock sharp, Madame de Soltigen asks the young ladies to come to the table. They all settle down in the greatest joy.

I serve all these young ladies who pay no attention to me. I am at their disposal.

They don't ask me more. All of them, except Madame Du Poutil who smiles at me, looks at me with the same half-closed eyes with which she already stared at me when she arrived. She follows me with her eyes into the kitchen. I pretend not to see anything but avoid looking at her.

She is not fooled and, as I turn on my heels to carry the third dish to the kitchen, a shiver runs down my spine. His warm voice took advantage of a second of silence to be heard: - What an excellent lackey you have there, my aunt. He seems as talented as he is handsome.

Shocked little noses dig into their plates, faces blush.

Madame de Soltigen has a strong body. The storm that the young woman is obviously trying to provoke is on the verge of bursting. Madame de Soltigen restrains herself in time and responds in an icy voice: - Yes, indeed, he is very talented!

Little noses perk up, faces clear up, discussions resume. The calm of Mrs. de Soltigen prevailed over the arrogance of her interlocutor. In fact, I am the only victim of this skirmish. I tremble, my legs give way under me and, the moment I serve Madame Du Poutil, a fog passes before my eyes.

- The imbecile, the little idiot; she shouts, jumping up and pushing back her chair.

I'm devastated. A few drops of cream fell on her black dress. I look at Madame de Soltigen, anxious. Will she allow this woman to lay hands on me? That she hits me in front of the whole assembly? This woman, after Miss Sylvie? No it's impossible. Madame de Soltigen does not say

word and, as Madame Du Poutil hurls insults at me while I repair the damage, she exclaims, in a voice that trembles with anger: - Please, madame, that's enough! The clumsiness of this servant is excusable. He is so young. If you didn't gesture so much when being served, this wouldn't have happened. Besides, earlier, didn't you judge him to be very talented?

Madame Du Poutil gives him a hateful look and sits down again. Mrs. de Soltigen's bad faith is obvious since the victim of my clumsiness was motionless during the incident.

The snack ends. Miss Sylvie gets up: -

Mother, my friends and I are going for a walk in the park. The weather is nice and we really want to get some fresh air.

As her mother gives her permission, she says to me: - You, wash the dishes immediately and come join us in the park... We will need you.

I immediately understand the implication. I bow and lock myself in the kitchen after putting the living room back together. Only Madame de Soltigen and Madame Du Poutil did not join the group of young girls. After a brief moment of silence, Ms. Du Poutil begins the conversation. The tone rises very quickly.

- You don't seem happy to see me again, aunt - How can you set foot here again after what you did?

- You seem to casually forget, aunt, certain things which seem, on the contrary, to me, primordial.

- I'm not forgetting anything at all, I'm just offended that your head is still on your shoulders and it disgusts me to have it all in my presence.

Despite the hurtful tone of this reply, Mrs. Du Poutil begins to laugh: - If my head is no longer on my shoulders, that would suit you well, but many.

- Stop calling me "aunt", you are not worthy of it.

Once again, the niece's unpleasant laughter bursts

out: - So be it, madam. Moreover, this will facilitate debates on the matters that we have to resolve together. It's always awkward to have to bring feelings into money matters.

- Feelings, you? Come on then!

- Let's get down to business, please, ma'am. We are both aware that in the five years since we saw each other, he

There are quite large sums of money here which are rightfully mine. You will, I hope, have the dignified modesty not to oppose the slightest contradiction to me and to keep for yourself supplications which I am not decided to accept.

- Don't be afraid, we don't beg a girl like you: we chase her!
- That, madame, is another matter, and you know it very well.
- But why did you choose this day of Sylvie's birthday to come and talk to me about this?

Ms. Du Poutil has a little laugh before responding. I understand that, through this question, Madame de Soltigen is retreating, that she is giving in to her strange adversary, that soon there will be a desperate flight and the triumph of the adventurer.

- But simply, ma'am, because I remembered that it was my cousin's birthday. I hold her in very high esteem and am happy to be able to offer her a modest gift. Also because I hope that on such an occasion our relations will be more cordial.

The hypocritical diplomacy of Ms. Du Poutil is unassailable. Madame de Soltigen loses her footing.

- What if I refuse to pay? she says dryly.
- I am convinced that you will do nothing about it.

You don't even think about it. You know too well what would happen.

- You repay me with great ingratitude for the kindness I have for your sister.
- You are welcome ! Nobody forced you to. Or rather, yes! You had to make amends for what you had put me through. Prove to everyone that it was me who was a lost girl, that you had a heart of gold. You have succeeded so well that Geraldine herself believes it. She is convinced of it. She doesn't bother you in any way. You know very well that she is doomed, that she will not live.

- Shut up, you are hateful!
- No, let's talk, on the contrary. Let's talk about this money of mine. Of this money that you owe me and that you will return to me immediately.
- So you want to force us into misery? You want us all to go begging, to all die?
- All of them, no! I will never leave Sylvie in need, you know that well. She has nothing to do with this infamy. If she judges me with disdain and contempt, it's still your fault. When I talk to him, I will tell him the whole truth. I am convinced that his opinions are

will transform.

- I beg you, don't say anything to Sylvie, for heaven's sake.
- So, madame, pay! And let this absurd comedy stop!
- It's okay, come with me.

Madame de Soltigen's tone became pleading, humble. I am amazed. Not only does Madame de Soltigen capitulate, but it is also clear that all the assets are on Madame Du Poutil's side. It is unheard. Her words regarding Miss Sylvie deserve all my gratitude. Whatever happens, I know now that Miss Sylvie will not know the need, that this woman will help her. But at what cost ? Madame de Soltigen clearly has wrongs, serious wrongs, which she refuses to have revealed to Miss Sylvie. The more I think about it, the less it surprises me. Must not Madame de Soltigen be very unscrupulous to dare to speculate, with my father, on my own person in a horrible game...

My shift in the kitchen ends. I finish tidying up, take off my apron and head towards the exit. I'm about to go to the balcony but a voice calls out to me:

- Wait a minute...

Where are you going?

It's a warm voice that makes me shiver. I turn around.

- Join Miss Sylvie in the park, as she ordered me to do.
- Well fine ! she says, smiling, I'm going too. So let's go together.

I cannot imagine a more boring company than that of this woman, but it is impossible for me to refuse her. She threw a long fur pelisse over her shoulders. On the trail, she asks me about the box I'm carrying.

- What are you taking there?

I turn very red, confused, I whisper: - A shoe kit, in case these young ladies need it.

It's very possible with this weather...

- Hum! Hum! Obviously ! Strange, very strange! ... But tell me, are you the one who will polish them?
- Of course, ma'am, who do you want it to be?

I responded with enthusiasm, as if moved by ardent jealousy at the mere thought that someone other than me could polish these young ladies' little boots. Madame Du Poutil notices the embarrassment that grips me, but she has the good grace to say nothing. His voice becomes warmer, more

hoarse. She murmurs, as if to herself: - You

see, this whole castle, this park, this estate, all of it belongs to me.

I widen my eyes and, eager to know -

How, madame, does this castle not belong to Madame de Soltigen?

- No, no and no ! she replies, fiercely. He is mine and mine alone. It is the castle of the late Countess Anne de Harsignac, my mother.

Then she has this loud, unpleasant laugh, which sounds like a hyena's cry.

- Finally, all this is none of your business! You don't care at all.

We have joined the group of young ladies who, unconcerned by this drama, continue to cackle. Miss Sylvie has regained all her splendor and good humor of the morning. She plays like a child around Miss Milleependieu's spring.

When she sees me with Madame Du Poutil, she frowns her pretty black eyebrows.

- Finally, here you are! I was starting to get impatient and so were my friends. I promised them that a shoeshine boy would be at their disposal and I assure you that it is time for you to arrive.

A glint of anger and threat flashes in his blazing eyes.

- Please excuse me, miss, but I...

- Come on, get in place, stand there and unpack your equipment.

I kneel on the wet earth, at the edge of the spring, and a first young lady approaches.

It's Miss Sylvie. Her little boots are in a pitiful state. The leather is wet and covered in mud. I have to brush hard to try to get this damage out. The shoe polish doesn't

adhere well, and it's almost impossible to shine. I manage to do it despite everything, despite the nail that makes me suffer. An "oh!" » of admiration raises these young and fresh breasts when Miss Sylvie gets up. Everyone wants to have their shoes brushed by the amazing shoeshine boy that I am. I see a certain pride in Miss Sylvie's eyes. Am I not her work more than anyone else?

- This is definitely a very precious servant. I think I would pay dearly, very dearly, for it to be mine. If you part ways one day, Sylvie, think of me!

The warm voice said this with a half-laughter. removing her feet from the little red boots she had worn to go out and which I have just polished.

Miss Sylvie does not answer, but she leaves in the company of Madame Du Poutil, slightly to one side. I am now trying hard to make Miss Milleependieu's boots shiny. Miss Sylvie began a

lively conversation. I understand that Madame Du Poutil is confiding the secret that she swore to Madame de Soltigen to keep in exchange for money.

Mesdemoiselles Germaine and Caroline went back to their mother.

No one will be able to know what happened between the two women.

No one except me...

Madame Du Poutil takes her leave and Miss Sylvie returns to us as I finish polishing the last shoe of these lovely young girls.

- I offer you a little game! exclaims my mistress with a broad smile.

- Accepted! the young ladies shout in chorus.

- Then come to the stables. You too, Ernest!

And we follow her towards the stables.

She takes the horses out for me. All the girls sit in a semi-circle.

Miss Sylvie signals me to stay standing.

- Ernest, who you see there, is not a servant like the others... he is my slave An "oh!" » admiring

shakes the assembly. Miss Sylvie smiles and continues: - Since today is my birthday, I want you to be able to enjoy my slave too. We are going to play our "secret little game" with him.

- Do this with a boy! exclaims Miss Hélène Berchonfair, with horror.

Liliane Rocheferras shrugs her shoulders:

- Since Sylvie told you that he was her slave, he's not a boy!

- Enough discussion! Miss Sylvie says.

Ernest, take off your clothes!

I remain frozen in place. I expected anything but this. What, should I get naked in front of all these young girls? Furious to see me hesitating, my mistress jumped up, took down a riding crop that was hanging from the wall and lashed me three times. Her friends applaud. Quickly, I take off my clothes. My nudity appears to the sparkling and mocking eyes of all these girls. Miss Anne Ancone approaches me and pinches my testicles while laughing. Each one begins to detail me, to touch me, to evaluate me. My face turns red and Miss Sylvie laughs out loud. She claps her hands.

- Come on, my friends, let's get started! I burn with desire! Ernest, lie on the ground with your arms crossed and your legs apart.

I obey. I see all the young girls rolling up their skirts or dresses, sliding their little underpants to the ground, kicking them off and coming to line up in front of their leader. There are twelve of them. Miss Geraldine,

Miss Sylvie and her ten guests. So what will I suffer?

Miss Sylvie organizes everything. She makes Miss Géraldine kneel above my left hand, Miss Ancone above my right hand, Miss Sidonie Campillo between my legs. She orders Miss Hélène Berchonfair to kneel behind Miss Campillo. Immediately, the blonde Hélène takes a dildo out of her bag and attaches it around her waist using a leather belt. Miss Liliane Rocheferras comes to stand facing Miss Géraldine and Miss Lucienne Millegendieu in the same position facing Miss Ancone.

Miss Campillo bends down on all fours between my thighs. His mouth touches my genitals. Miss Alice Henri steps over him, remains standing with the other's body between her legs. She faces Miss Berchonfair. Miss Marie Lapinacci lies across my stomach and lifts her skirts; she receives Miss Jeanne Morin kneeling between her thighs and Miss Josette Fabrice above her face. The last of the young ladies, Fabienne Morlaix, straddles my body and remains standing above my chest.

Finally, Miss Sylvie lifts her dress and sits on my face. I receive his fragrant sex on the mouth. Her dress falls on me. I can't see anything anymore, but I feel that all these little people are getting busy. A cool hand takes hold of my sexual organ, and I feel it enter a warm mouth which sucks and suckles it. My fingers sink, some into Miss Géraldine's vagina, the others into that of Miss Anne Ancone. My tongue fervently licks Miss Sylvie's beloved cavern. I guess that Mlle Rocheferras is being sucked by Mlle Géraldine, Mlle Millegendieu by Mlle Ancône, Mlle Morlaix by Mlle Sylvie, Mlle Lapinacci by Mlle Morin, Mlle Fabrice by Mlle Lapinacci and Mlle Henri by Mlle Berchonfair, Mlle Berchonfair who sodomizes Mlle Campillo who sodomizes me sucks. All the mouths are in action, all the vaginas are in pleasure and I have a hard-on like a madman in the mouth of Miss Campillo who devours me like a slut.

I am the skeleton of twelve young pleasures but I also enjoy. There are screams, moans, complaints, sighs, irregular breathing. I see nothing. My fingers stick in the bellies of Miss Géraldine and Miss d'Ancone. I suck and drink with pleasure the sticky liquid that Miss Sylvie releases into my mouth. This is too much ! I got so hard that I filled Miss Campillo's mouth. She gets up. I feel the animation slowly wearing off. Mesdemoiselles Géraldine and d'Ancone withdraw and I feel the cold on my soaked fingers. Miss Sylvie gets heavy

and crushes my face under his buttocks. Miss Lapinacci is inert across my stomach.

Finally, Miss Sylvie gets up. I look around me. Miss Campillo spits the sperm with which I had drenched her into Miss Henri's mouth. Miss Henri spits it into Miss Rocheferras' mouth. One after the other, these twelve ladies receive the sperm of the male slave of their desires. Miss Sylvie is the last. She keeps my sperm in her mouth for a few seconds, bends down and spits it in my face. All the girls laugh.

- Now get up and get us dressed! Orders my mistress.

I have to replace the little nylon briefs on each of the twelve young ladies.

I put the stable in order, I bring in the horses and we return to the castle. I follow them at a respectful distance.

The young girls leave at nightfall. I am responsible for walking them to their cars and opening the doors for them. Madame Du Poutil leaves the same evening and, as she passes me, she says: - I think that in the end they will devour you like hell.

Mars 1965.

Mrs de Soltigen received a letter of invitation for herself, her daughters and her niece. At the castle of General Brémonfort. The general gives a party in honor of his son, Pierre-André de Brémonfort, who is said to be very in love with Miss Germaine.

The reception is this evening. There's not a minute left to waste buying dresses and coats. We run from store to store and only return to the castle two hours before our departure.

My mistresses, quickly dressed, sit down at the table for dinner. Everything is ready, except the shoes which are not clean.

- Ernest, said Madame de Soltigen, go under the table with your shoe kit. There will be no waste of time this way. You will do without dinner, it will do you no harm.

I hasten to obey and crawl under the table, dragging my gear behind me.

“ My God, is it possible that there is such a wonderful garden so close to us ? True beauty, grace, real grace, resides on the floor below, under the table top. It is a world of silk, velvet, round knees, curved calves, sumptuous ankle boots.

“ Kneeling, arms crossed, hands on shoulders, I can only admire, Mistresses. I feast on what is you. I like to be crushed by this sky

of boards which makes me bend over. I don't want other heavens, other universes, other horizons than the rigid and cold strip of the tablecloth falling like a cutting edge. I only want to see five stars born in this golden cage, each more magnificent than the last.

“ Miss Sylvie, it is in front of your pale white leather boot that I lean forward. It is before her that I bow my head, that I prostrate myself.

Your foot has moved and my lips come to kiss the divine imprint that your little sole left on the carpet. Punish me, Mistress, if I have sinned; if I have committed sacrilege by licking with my impious lips the celestial dust from your sole. Condemn me not to rise to the surface again. Keep me locked up in this dark dungeon as if in a vacuum. So you won't see me anymore. I will no longer offend your eyes. I won't exist at all this time. I will dematerialize THESE LADIES IN BOOTS and I will continue to serve you with as much eagerness. I no longer have a body. It was stolen

from me. I am a servile soul. I don't bother anymore. I don't hold any more space. I am at the bottom of the tomb, but I continue to serve, to brush, to wax, to shine. That's all I'm asked. I didn't want more. They put me in my rightful place once and for all.

“ Miss Sylvie, I will not see you again. I only have the right to marvel at the rounded curve of your knee, under the vaporous red muslins. All I have to do is stand amazed against the immaculate leather of your boot. I dream of the sweet warmth of your sublime foot. “ Slap me away from this boot like you would a dog that is too pushy. Hit me hard with its square tip if your anger is at its peak. Deign, when I lie down on the ground, to place on my body offered as a holocaust the authoritarian soles of your deified boots. Keep me, yes, keep me, Mademoiselle Sylvie, under your table, at your feet without allowing me to see higher than your

knees. »

© 2009 by Éditions Dominique Leroy, France 74 There are already

a certain number of cars parked along the castle, on either side of the grand main staircase. We stop in front of the steps where valets usher in visitors.

I get out and open the doors for my mistresses. Miss Sylvie turns to me:

- Ernest, you have free time until one o'clock. You can go wherever you want, but I advise you to join the other servants in the kitchens. You will be warm there.

- Yes, indeed, because it is very cold, adds Miss Géraldine, and I see her back shivering under the light fur cape she is wearing.

Contrary to what Miss Sylvie advised me, I do not go to the kitchens with most of the other servants. I slowly walk around the castle.

I squeeze my hands in my pants pockets. I lower my head and think...

“ You have just entered, Miss Sylvie, into this room lit everywhere. An elegant crowd gathers and all eyes are on you. Conversations stop. Hearts beat harder. The men's eyes widen. Their lips part. Their arms fall alongside their body : they gaze at you, fascinated. Women's eyes half-close, become hard. Their lips purse into a contemptuous pout. They stare at you with jealousy, with envy. They look for the fault in you which they will not find, since it does not exist. They all pay homage to your beauty. Your beauty advances. She is now free from a coat that is too heavy. Your shoulders are half-bare.

Your gracious and frank smile reveals the white row of your ivory teeth. This smile lights up your whole self.

“ You move forward, indifferent and beautiful, smiling and desirable. Already, you no longer think of me. You left me. You left me on the porch, like your coat in the cloakroom. You didn't bother with me.

I have become useless. You were kind enough to send me to the kitchens with the other servants. You want me to know the fullness of my fate, to verify the position of my degradation, to stop imagining that I am not like them, that I am superior to them. You want me to know what you think of me, what you compare me to. O Miss Sylvie, is it possible that you think that I am one of them? Do you believe me capable of slandering you? Ah! yet you know very well that I am of another essence! You know that, don't you?

Tell me you know! I beg you ! I suffer martyrdom and I would die if I were told that you are convinced, that you believe me capable of saying a word, just one, that is not favorable to you. »

I am behind the castle, under a balcony on the first floor from which laughter, words and the music of an orchestra burst forth. Ivy runs along the

walls to the roof. I climb up to the balcony to see what my revered mistress is doing. Luckily, the curtains are not drawn and I can, without being seen, discover the entire ballroom. The first person I see is Miss Sylvie. She stands with her back to her. Her red muslin dress falls in a corolla around her knees. She is speaking with a young man whose features I can see. He appears to be thirty years old at most. He has sparkling black eyes, wavy brown hair, a cheerful smile and a laughing forehead. From the outset, he seems unpleasant to me, and my heart beats very hard. Is it hatred or jealousy?

Miss Sylvie is not leaving this man. They dance together now. They talk a lot and are happy judging by their laughter. When my mistress looks at him, her face takes on a strange aspect that I have never seen before. Madame de Soltigen, whom I see standing near the piano, watches the couple move. His gaze became hard, his lips severe. She seems annoyed by the mutual sympathy of the young people. Miss Germaine is seated at the head table alongside a man in uniform who I guess is Commander Pierre-André de Brémonfort. General de Brémonfort is with them. Miss Géraldine, with bare shoulders, dances too, but her face is paler, sadder than usual. She does not clench her teeth and appears to be in pain. Finally, leaning over a little, I see Miss Caroline standing in a corner of the room, surrounded by five gentlemen of a certain age, one of whom appears to me to be General Count de Brémonfort. From the gestures the young girl makes, I understand that she is recounting her hunting exploits. His interlocutors seem surprised to discover so much skill and wit in this young and frail person.

I stay at my observatory all evening, as long as the reception lasts during which General de Brémonfort announces the engagement of his son to Miss Germaine de Soltigen. At this announcement, Miss Sylvie and her handsome date look at each other and a sad smile binds them to each other.

The evening is coming to an end. Madame de Soltigen gives the order to her daughters to leave. The handsome young man bows deeply. I climb over the balcony and go down the wall. I'm at the car in a few minutes.

- Let's hurry, I'm cold! whispers Miss Géraldine.

The car starts. There is a very brief silence and Madame de Soltigen speaks: - It is useless, I think, Sylvie, to tell you that I did not appreciate your attitude and your conduct this evening at all.

- What do you say, mom? So what did I do so wrong?

- Do you still have the audacity to act surprised and ask me what you did?

- Really, I don't see!

- Do you know who was the man you didn't leave for a single minute this evening?

- Yes, mother, Captain Eugène du Rouy.

- What, you knew that? And despite this...

- Captain du Rouy is a perfectly gallant man and he has nothing but respect for me. Did you have any other thoughts?

- So, not only did you show off all evening with the same man, but you also knew full well that this man is the son of your father's murderer!

- I knew the captain of Rouy long before this reception, mother. If his father was ours' murderer, I don't think he had anything to do with it.

Why would he suffer the consequences, I ask you?

- Ah, that, for example!

- Besides, don't forget, mother, that it was my father who had provoked this ridiculous duel, that it was regular and that the best shooter shot down the other. Where do you see the crime? Is it the fault of the captain of Rouy if his father was superior in shooting to M. de Soltigen?

- Sylvie, shut up! I forbid you from speaking like this and I forbid you from ever seeing this sad sir again!

- The captain of Rouy adores me and I love him too, that's enough I think.

- I forbid you from seeing him again!

- So, it is he who will come to ask for my hand, madame!

- I will throw him out properly! Ah, and that's enough!

Shut up, you impertinent girl, shut up or I'll...

Miss Sylvie considers it useless to respond and during the rest of the journey no one says another word. An uneasiness sets in, an uneasiness that I felt for the first time during Miss Sylvie's birthday. Disturbing silhouettes seem to emerge from the shadows. Madame Du Poutil, the captain of Rouy... The captain of Rouy! Madame Du Poutil!... Between these two characters, we feel caught as if in a vice, a vice which tightens on Madame de Soltigen and which makes her lose her footing little by little, while Miss Sylvie becomes more and more authoritarian. A drama has been playing out since that day.

This morning, Miss Géraldine has to keep the room. A very high fever has taken hold of her and her little body is shivering with the cold. We put this down to

of a monthly indisposition which the cold of the night only accentuated. We don't bring the doctor. Miss Sylvie orders me to bring breakfast to the sick woman's room.

I find her lying in the white sheets. Her frail little arms, covered by a yellow nightgown, follow the sickly shape of her body over the sheet. Surprised by the sound of my footsteps, she turns her head. Her eyes are paler, sadder and even more indifferent than the day before when she was dancing. Her lips are discolored. On his forehead, small drops of sweat slowly bead. She gives me a poor smile.

- Here you are as a nurse! You will definitely have done everything in this house, my poor boy!...

She has a very weak little laugh. This remark makes me jump. I hear another voice, followed by another laugh: "How will they devour you, my big darling? With white sauce or Madeira sauce? I think that in the end, they will devour you like hell! »

I pull myself together and approach the bed carrying my tray.

- You know, I'm not so hungry, I'm more thirsty! This damn fever...

No, don't put the tray down, I'd like you to hold it in your hand while I eat.

I kneel down and hold the tray in my hands the entire time she takes to drink her breakfast.

- I'm going to leave you soon, Ernest... Leave you all, she said to me.

I turn around, surprised.

- And where are you going, Miss Géraldine?

"I'm going to die," she said calmly. Yes, I'm going to die, tonight or tomorrow. But now I don't have much longer. I will never see the park and the spring again, over there, in the willows.

In surprise, I almost let go of the tray. I look at the girl, appalled by what she just said.

- Let's see, mademoiselle, it's not reasonable to speak like that. You know very well that this is only a temporary discomfort, that in a few days it will no longer appear...

- No, my good Ernest, it is useless to try to encourage me. Discomforts, you know, I've had a lot, but this time it's serious. I'm going to die, I feel it. Death already inhabits me. I am sure that my features reflect the marks of death... Here, bring me a mirror that I can see

that !

Slowly, I hand him a mirror. - It's
so funny to see what we'll be like after he dies.
She returns the mirror to me with a sad smile.

- You see, she continues, I would have liked to see the park again, the spring
with the willows. It would have been nice to run a little longer on the gravel
path. It's fun to walk on gravel... Want me to tell you? Sometimes I imagined
that you were lying on the path and that I was stepping on you, it wasn't the
gravel that cried out in pain, no, it was you! I'm sure you've never screamed
like I heard you do... Do you want me to step on you? And you will scream
very loudly!

I can only obey. I put the tray down and lie on my back. Miss Geraldine
herself. lifts with great difficulty. I put on her little yellow mules with square
heels. She places one foot on my stomach, then the other. Slowly she
tramples me and leaning on the bed.

- Scream, she said in a breath, shout loudly!

I scream, feigning pain, but Géraldine is so light that I barely feel her.

- I can't take it anymore, she said in a breath.

And she collapses on the bed. I quickly get up, take off his slippers and place
him in his bed. She closes her eyes and her lips seem to smile.

She breathes weakly. I grab the tray and rush down the stairs. I run towards
Madame de Soltigen's apartments.

- Madam ! Madam ! I said, we must alert the doctor. Miss Géraldine is in the
worst condition, she says she is going to die... Now she is resting but her
breathing is so weak that I thought it was worth...

"Good," she says sharply. Run to town to find the doctor. Tell him it's very
urgent.

And she continues reading as if the disastrous announcement that I have
just made to her did not require her presence up there, with Miss Géraldine.
I have to wait about a quarter of an hour for Doctor Campillo to arrive at his office. As
soon as he knows the purpose of my visit, he rushes and takes me with him. On the
way, I tell him about the patient's ramblings. He lowers his head.

- I hope that Mrs. de Soltigen is not having too many illusions about my
intervention today... Poor thing, to die so young, what a misfortune!
We had a hard time raising him. Alas! She was not twelve years old when

I already knew that she wouldn't make it past the age of twenty-five. I was saying it again a few months ago to his sister, Madame Du Poutil... Poor thing, all he had left was her as a real family. She will be very affected when she learns...

So Mme Du Poutil had taken the trouble to find out about her sister's state of health from the family doctor.

- Finally, he continues, poor little Géraldine will have been very lucky in her misfortune to have been taken in by Madame de Soltigen. She's a good lady!

We are welcomed in the living room by Madame de Soltigen who is pacing back and forth. Miss Sylvie, seated in an armchair, reads.

- Hello, doctor, said Madame de Soltigen, we were waiting for you. We are very worried, you know!

- My respects, madam. My respects, miss. How is the patient doing at the moment?

- I... quite badly. She sleeps.

-Has it been a long time since you went to his room?

- Uh! no...I just went there.

- It's okay, take me.

Madame de Soltigen and I follow the doctor. Miss Sylvie picks up her book and reads, indifferent, haughty. Doctor Campillo leans over the white bed where Miss Geraldine lies, apparently calm and relaxed. He uncovers the white chest, listens to the palpitations of the heart, gets up, feels the pulse, and suddenly he stands up and turns around.

"Madame de Soltigen," he said softly.

- Doctor, what is it? She...

- She is dead, yes madam, she is even starting to get cold. When did you tell me you left her?

- That is to say... I... I thought she was sleeping, so I didn't insist, right, doctor!

And she bursts into tears. The doctor takes her in his arms and, fatalistically, he adds: -

Come on, calm down, you have been warned for a long time. It doesn't matter all the same, poor thing!

Miss Géraldine has been dead for nine months already. At the castle of General de Brémonfort the marriage of his son, Commander Pierre-André, with Miss Germaine de Soltigen is celebrated.

At Miss Caroline's repeated urging, I was surprised to be invited to this wedding, not as a valet but as a member of the family, or almost. Which does not prevent me, in the morning, several times, during the day and in the evening, from brushing and polishing my mistresses' boots. I was given Sidonie Campillo, the doctor's daughter, as my date. When we find ourselves in an isolated place, she does not hesitate to hold out her little feet to me so that I kneel in front of her and polish her beautiful white shoes. She candidly admits to me that she wishes to find a husband like me who would at the same time be a servant and whom she would employ to do all the chores, who would obey her with his finger and his eye, and who would polish his feet, his shoes.

But without denying the charm of my date, I do not lose sight of Miss Sylvie whose beauty far outclasses that of the young girls present. Her long white silk dress covered with a light green veil makes her look like some nymph from a mountain lake. Her long brown hair is pulled back into a graceful bun in which a silk flower of the same color as her veil is inserted. Despite Madame de Soltigen's protests, she has Captain du Rouy as her rider. The two young people, visibly in love with each other, do not leave each other's side for a single moment, except each time my mistress feels the desire to come and have her shoes shined. When I reach her, I don't recognize her. His heart seems to leap with joy, his face is illuminated, and his eyes are more fascinating than ever.

- You know, she confides to me as I clean her shoes, I spoke to the captain about you. He is happy with your dedication and loyalty to me, but he is also a little jealous that you are indispensable to me.

And, laughing, she adds:

- You had better make me some very beautiful shoes this evening, otherwise I'll chase you away and order the captain to shine them for me... He'd be happy to do it, the scoundrel. And she laughs all the more, no doubt thinking of the day when she will place Captain Rouy before her, when she will order him the humiliating task, when he will accomplish it. This day when he will be nothing more than a poor puppet in her hands, a slave of which she will be the tyrannical mistress. Big tears are rolling in my eyes.

- I beg you, Miss Sylvie, don't say that. Is it possible that one day you will do without me for your dear boots? Is it possible that you will give someone other than me the honor of waxing them, of

cherish ? Tell me this is impossible!

She looks at me, stunned, and stops laughing.

- But, my poor Ernest, have you forgotten that you are only at our service until you are twenty-one? Four more years, after which you will be free.

Free to go away, to live your life as you wish...

- So, I said with passion, if I am free to live my life as I want, mademoiselle, I have chosen. I want, with all my soul, to spend this life at your feet. What more divine life can I dream of than serving you as a slave?

She gets up slowly. His gaze became hard.

- So you make me the mistress of your life? Are you offering yourself to me as a slave, without the possibility of redeeming your freedom? I could do anything I wanted with you. Will you unconditionally obey all my orders? You belong to me and I have the right of life and death over you? Is that understood?

- Yes, yes, Miss Sylvie! I surrender myself to you for my entire life!

And I prostrate myself before her, placing my lips on the toes of the little white shoes that she hands me.

- From this moment on, you are my slave! she concluded in a hoarse voice.

She places the sole of her shoe on the back of my neck, holds me there for a few seconds and leaves after giving me a kick on the cheek.

The next day, Commander Pierre-André de Brémonfort and Madame Germaine say their goodbyes. They leave for Lebanon where duty and business call for the military.

Madame de Soltigen cries while kissing her eldest daughter. For my part, I just respectfully kiss his hand and wish him a good trip.

A year has passed since Miss Germaine's marriage. Miss Sylvie has now reached her majority. She is still in love with Captain du Rouy, but Mrs. Soltigen for her part is still hostile to marriage. The handsome captain came one day to ask for the hand of Miss Sylvie. He was out the door before he could even open his mouth. Needless to say, since that day, relations between the two women have been strained. They hardly speak to each other anymore, except to quarrel.

Madame de Soltigen, apart from this misunderstanding with her daughter, only has reasons for good humor. Germaine married a good match and lives comfortably. Mrs. Du Poutil no longer gives any sign of life and everything suggests

that Madame de Soltigen has forgotten her. The olive harvests are good and Miss Caroline manages the budget like a perfect steward.

Miss Caroline takes no part in the conflict between her mother and her sister. She continues to live peacefully with her horses, her olive trees and her dear nature.

This morning, Miss Caroline comes to the stable very early. I'm already there and I'm finishing changing the horses' bedding.

- Hello, Ernest. Are the horses ready?

- My respects, Miss Caroline. Yes, the horses are ready. Which one do you want ?

- Take them both out. I'll take you galloping with me.

The weather is beautiful, and we need some fresh air.

I obeyed and, after saddling the two horses, I presented Calari to him, as usual.

- No, she said, today I'm going to change. I'm going to ride Pachi. With this beautiful weather, I am sure, Ernest, that we will leave you both far behind us. Isn't that right, Pachi?

The horse seems to nod its head.

- You see, he agrees.

And, laughing, she jumps into the saddle.

A few minutes later, we gallop through the olive plantations, towards this uneven and rocky terrain that we call "the bed of hell". This is where we usually hold our obstacle races. I have become an excellent rider and, with Pachi, I very often win by a good length. Far from getting angry, Miss Caroline congratulates me and laughs with me at this test of strength.

"The bed of hell" to which we ascend is a terrain covered with rocks.

No vegetation grows there. It is also teeming with vipers. The path which makes it accessible borders small precipices around fifteen meters deep.

Nothing is less prudent than venturing there on horseback. Yet this is where we go almost every day.

From the start, Miss Caroline takes me three good steps ahead. I see her, lifted gracefully by the movements of her horse. I spur with vigor because this is my only chance to get ahead of her before "the bed of hell". But no matter how hard I try, Pachi and his beautiful amazon always maintain the same advantage. Despite my efforts, upon arriving at the "hell bed", I lost further ground. I no longer have any chance of winning. I hear

already the sarcasms and jokes that Miss Caroline will not fail to inflict on me on the way back. She will certainly tell me that my previous victories were the reward not for my merits as a rider but rather for those of my wonderful mount. A good round of the whip will punish me for having defended myself so pitifully.

In front of me, I see his horse rising from the ground, leaping over the rocks with incredible flexibility and precision. I lose another meter, then two, and suddenly I let out a cry: his horse, stopped dead in his tracks, has reared up.

A snake swings in front of him. Although surprised, Miss Caroline held on. She holds on to the animal's mane, but the animal has gone crazy. He kicks in all directions, and just as I am about to grab him by the bridle and try to control him, his hind hoof slips on the rock. He loses his balance and rolls to the bottom of the precipice, dragging his unfortunate rider.

I rush to his aid. She lies about a meter above Pachi. I lean over her. Her sweet face is flooded with blood flowing from a deep wound on her head. His wide open eyes look at me. I allow myself to place my hand on his chest, under his black jacket. His heart beats weakly. She lives. His lips move, but no sound escapes.

- How are you feeling, miss? Don't move, I'll get help.

She shakes her head at me. Big tears flow down her cheeks and, at the sight, all my courage disappears. My tears flow too and I cry on my chest which barely rises anymore. She whispers: - It's useless, they would arrive... too late...

You see, I won.

With the last remaining strength, she takes my head and brings it close to hers. I feel, right against his lips, the smell of blood exhaling from his breath. She lowers my head again and kisses me on the forehead, then on the lips. She whispers again: - You are... a good boy... I really liked you,

you know... you...

She has violent hiccups. She stands up. A blood clot comes out of his mouth, then a trickle of blackish liquid slides down his chin. His eyes become fixed. His head falls back, limp. I get up, haggard, terrified. I scream: - Miss Caroline! Miss Caroline!... I don't want... I don't want! I beg you !

Alas, the poor child no longer hears anything. She is dead. I run like crazy, screaming and crying. I jump on my horse and, at full speed, I

wins the castle. I dismount, climb the stairs two at a time and burst into the living room without bothering to knock.

Madame de Soltigen suddenly gets up:

- Eh! well, what's happening to you? Here are some ways to get in!

I fall to my knees.

- Madame, madame... Mademoiselle Caroline...

- Hey! well, what, what is it?

- She fell off her horse.

- Fallen! Or this ?

- In the "hell bed". She is dead !

The poor woman falls back into her chair with a long moan.

- It had to happen ! What an idea to go horse riding there!

What unconsciousness!

I turn around quickly, Miss Sylvie is on the threshold of the door. Her haughty attitude has not left her. Not the slightest pain alters his features.

She is divinely beautiful in her horrible cruelty.

- Come on, she adds, take me there. We can't leave her like this!

I help Miss Sylvie to sit on the horse. Holding the beast's bridle, I walk alongside it, guiding it towards the scene of the tragedy, towards the precipice where I abandoned Miss Caroline's corpse. During the journey, we do not chat. I keep my head down and cry quietly.

Miss Sylvie's imperative voice cracks like a whip: - Will you stop crying, slave!

Slave ! This is what she has called me since I gave myself to her.

She finds this word very exciting and says I am worthy of it. As much as she is of "mistress" with which I must respond to her. She continues, threatening: - What was

she more to you than my sister for you to mourn her like this? Had you given yourself to her for life? Did you swear to him that you would spend your life polishing his boots? Answer!

I stammer, looking up: - No, mistress, no, I swear, but...

- So, silence! You must cry when I order it and laugh if I demand it. Let this be understood once and for all!

- Yes mistress !

And I stop crying. All it takes is for her to order that I stop crying so that my eyes dry up immediately. The help of tears is refused to me. I have no right to mourn the only one of these women who was kind to me. The only one who never really mistreated me. The only one who considered me as a brother, more than as a servant. O Miss Caroline, you who were so good, by obeying this cruel order, I show myself unworthy of you: We arrive at the "bed of hell", at the scene of the tragedy. I help Miss Sylvie off her horse and hold her hand as she cautiously ventures towards Miss Caroline's body. She considers for a few minutes the corpse of her sister lying at her feet. She does not lean towards her and her face remains hard and closed. There is no sign of grief, terror or emotion. Indifference alone reigns over this divine mask. Finally, she turns away.

- Pick her up, she said to me, and put her on the horse. I slowly lift the girl's beautiful dislocated body and hold it tightly in my arms. Her long hair and arms hang back as if to still cling strongly to her short life. I place her delicately across the saddle and go back down to get Miss Sylvie.

She picked up Miss Caroline's black riding crop and tapped it nervously against her leg. She watches me go down and her eyes take on a cruel expression. A powerful desire emanates from her. A desire that gives him fierce pleasure. A desire that she must satisfy immediately. I look at her, fascinated. I slowly approach her without taking my eyes off her.

She doesn't say a single word. Got it. I know what I have to do. A meter from her, I fall to my knees on the rocks still browned by Miss Caroline's blood. I put my hands behind my back and lower my head.

- Naked! she hisses, touching me with the end of the crop.

I raise my head.

- I said naked, slave!

A light and cruel smile wrinkles the corner of his lips. I take off my jacket and my shirt but I keep my pants on.

- Do you know what naked means? Removes all !

His voice falls, unyielding and vigilant. I have to comply and a few minutes later, I find myself in the middle of these accursed rocks, near the corpse of Miss Caroline, in the most perfect nudity, facing this beauty queen whose hidden chest rises towards me. Miss Sylvie considers me

with a contemptuous smile and walks around me. She examines me in the smallest details. Oh ! what horrible torture is inflicted on me by this woman, hidden behind her fabrics and silks, and amused by my poor nudity which puts me in such a state of inferiority.

- On your knees! she orders.

I obey. She tickles my face with the end of her riding crop. Forces me to suck the tip and suddenly, with a sharp blow, slaps my back. I cry out and lean forward. A second blow tears me apart. I am prostrate at his knees. My back, my kidneys and my buttocks are offered to the lines of fire which streak my sore skin. I scream and moan but I don't dare move.

Human patience and endurance have limits. If I were tied up, I would be forced not to move and receive what my mistress intended for me, but free of all movements, I relax, roll on the ground, at her feet, seeking to protect my poor people as much as possible. flesh. The cruel whip mercilessly scratches my back, my kidneys, my thighs, my stomach, my arms. My screams rent the silence and returned to me in a sinister echo. The sharpest, most cruel pain is overcome. I feel a kind of anxiety rising within me, a beneficial numbness, a torpor generating deep ecstasy. My eyes do not leave the splendid mistress who searches me mercilessly. My pleasure is at its peak.

- You're coming, you dirty dog! cries the beautiful woman in fury. I'm going to make you cum for real!

She straddles my body, slides her panties down her legs and squats over my sweaty face. I receive on my mouth the black and humid cavern of her femininity. Her gaping penis crushes my nose and lips, my tongue plunges into her delicious vagina and licks the hot juice that escapes. Her dress has fallen on me and I can no longer see anything. Nothing but this pale, warm belly, this brown fleece, the beginnings of her nervous thighs which squeeze my temples. I move my hands up his chest. I slip them under her dress and I feel the two cool hemispheres of her buttocks which tremble at this contact. My fingers caress her shiny slit, tickling the opening of the anus. My tongue tickles and sucks the tense fruit of her clitoris. My finger scratches her adorable little asshole. My chin is sticky with cum. Suddenly, I push my finger into her anus and my tongue into her vagina. She stiffens, her thighs crushing my temples. She moans and I drink from the hot spring escaping from her belly.

She leans back. His hand grabbed my erect penis. She tears off her lower abdomen and impales herself on my burning penis. I see his face covered in sweat, his eyes wide with ecstasy, his lower lip lifting in a smile of cruel contempt. She still clutches the pommel of her riding crop in her hand.

- I forbid you from cum, whore! she said, stinging my cheek with a whip. I want to be the only one to cum, because I am the mistress. You are just an instrument! The instrument of my enjoyment!

She performs a devilish belly dance on me. I feel my penis swelling, ready to burst, but I hold myself back from enjoying until the extreme limit of my strength. Finally, she goes limp and falls to the side. My penis remains trapped in her vagina and I slowly follow its fall.

She stays like this for a few minutes then pulls herself away from the purple blade that stuck her. She stands up and places the sole of her white boot on my member, crushes it against my stomach and mocks: - You can cum

now, you miserable dog! Cum, it's an order! Order that I have no trouble carrying out. My stomach is covered with cum. Miss Sylvie bursts out laughing. She throws away her riding crop, fixes her hairstyle and orders

- Don't wipe yourself! Get dressed and quickly!

I help her mount her horse behind her sister's corpse and we return to the castle without her deigning to speak to me.

This is how, nineteen months after having taken Miss Géraldine to her final resting place, we return to the cemetery. This time, I am more dejected, more sad, but I hold back from crying.

Miss Sylvie forbade me.

The days following this painful ordeal were marked by deep sadness on the part of Mrs. de Soltigen. She no longer appears at the table and I have to serve her meager meals in her room which she does not touch.

The hours pass, long and silent, the living room is deserted. Madame de Soltigen hardly leaves her room and Miss Sylvie prefers to lock herself, with or without me, in her late father's office. The two women have hardly spoken to each other since their last altercation which took place in the dining room, three days after Miss Caroline's funeral. It was Miss Sylvie who, a little insolently it is true, threw the first stone: - So, now that you have the misfortune of finding yourself face to face

with me, will you finally consent to my marriage?

- How dare you talk to me about marriage, Madame de Soltigen was indignant, when your poor sister...

- ...Is dead, I know, and I will add, in essence, that I am deeply touched by it. But I live and am not decided to stay like this to watch over the dead.

- Little bitch!

And Madame de Soltigen slapped her daughter. I saw Miss Sylvie turn pale. His eyes became hard and a glint of hatred crossed them. She scoffed: - You will pay me for this, you ridiculous woman! She turned on her heel and went up to her room, while tears streamed down her mother's face.

- I relieve you of your obedience towards this unworthy girl, Ernest. She is no longer part of the family.

Alas! poor insulted mother, the oath that my father took on his honor, which I did not perjure on mine, is no longer anything. It no longer has any value. I have committed my life ever since. I donated it. I am no longer the master of it and the one on whom I spend entirely is precisely Miss Sylvie. It is my duty to obey her, to serve her but also to accept her side against you without question. Miss Sylvie is ready to do anything to take revenge for this humiliation and to marry her captain. She is ready for the most horrible crimes.

- Come in, slave! I have an order to give you, a mission of complete confidence that you will carry out immediately... It's time to prove to myself that you are truly my slave. Do you accept?

I kneel in front of her, as I do every time she speaks to me.

Without knowing what order it is, I reply: - Yes, revered mistress, I accept all your orders. You hold my life and my freedom. I choose to obey you. Order, I am at your disposal.

- Perfect, she continues with a half-smile, do you see this necklace?

- Yes, mistress, it is your mother's gold necklace.

- Very good ! You will manage to slip it, without being seen, into the maid's handbag. Then in front of my mother, you will do your best to accuse this woman without pushing too hard. Is this very clear?

- But I...

- Shut up slave! you do not have to argue but to obey. If you fail you will have to do it on your own.

I won't do anything to help you. If you betray me, I will kill you.

- What if I succeed?

- You will be allowed to shine my boots all night at the foot of my bed.

Now go!

And I leave... I go into the kitchen where, taking advantage of a moment of inattention on the part of the maid, I manage to throw the necklace at the bottom of her bag. I go out without her seeing me. The first part of my mission is accomplished but the second is, by far, the most delicate. Madame de Soltigen comes down at midday, while we are going to sit down at the table. She is pale and trembling.

- My necklace was stolen! she said in a dry voice. It can only be someone from the house. Sylvie, what do you think?

- Nothing, and I don't care! replies the person concerned without even looking at her mother.

Mrs de Soltigen will respond. I don't give him time: - Your necklace, madam? But which one?

- My gold necklace with emeralds. It costs a fortune.

I pretend to think.

- I seem to understand something.

- What ? What does she do?

- The eagerness that Madame Marguerite showed in closing her bag and the embarrassment of her attitude when I entered the kitchen this afternoon.

I said this in the most natural and frank tone possible. Madame Marguerite is right behind me. She almost drops the dish she is holding: - Oh! ... Sir...

She can't say more. Madame de Soltigen looked at her with a severe eye.

- Marguerite, is it true what Mr. Ernest says?

- Oh ! Madam... replies the servant, confused, as scarlet as if she were guilty.

Madam is not going to believe these lies... I don't understand...

Sir... I didn't see Monsieur this afternoon in the kitchen.

The unfortunate woman no longer knows where to go. I respond

imperturbably: - You are lying, Marguerite, and you know it as well as I do. Besides, it's very simple, all you need to do is check the contents of your bag.

Please note that I'm not accusing you in the slightest, I'm saying what I saw, that's all.

- But how, sir, can he say such a thing? It's not true, my word... I swear to madame...

- Bring me your bag! Mrs. de Soltigen decides.

The poor maid comes and returns without Madame de Soltigen losing her view for a moment. She hands him her bag. She trembles and her confusion is such that I am certain to win and confuse her in the eyes of her mistress. Madame de Soltigen turns the bag over on the table and the first object that appears is the magnificent necklace. The servant remains there, stunned, her face flushed, her dilated eyes fixed on the necklace. Two resounding slaps fell on her cheeks and Madame de

Soltigen blurted out: - I would never have thought that you were a thief Marguerite!

The innocent woman fell to her knees. Tears flow down her weathered face:

- I beg madame to believe me... it's not me, I swear... I don't understand...

And suddenly, the flash of lucidity that his boss lacks crosses his mind.

She turns towards me, points at me with a vengeful index finger and begins to scream, ready to

pounce on me: - ...He alone knew that this necklace was there...he alone...It's him. .. it's him... he's the one who put it there? He's the thief.

I maintain an indifferent and disdainful calm. Madame de Soltigen found her necklace in the maid's bag. The latter's attitude is more compromising. She does not seek to deepen her investigation. Besides, when you think about it, what advantage would I have had in stealing the necklace to accuse this timid, insignificant woman? What advantage would I have had? I don't know anything about it myself. I obeyed like a mercenary, like a slave, to the order given to me. I didn't look for the why of things. Only Miss Sylvie, who, without saying a word, regards the maid with a smile of contempt, knows.

- I understand your hatred towards Mr. Pinacci who made me discover your infamy, says Madame de Soltigen, but that you try to attribute your wrongs to him, that goes beyond the limits of decorum... Ernest, my boy, punish this thief of her bad intentions towards you.

Raise her dress and whip her in a nice way.

At the utterance of this sentence, the unfortunate Marguerite stopped shouting and insulting. She collapses, and begins to cry, her head in her hands: - No, I beg you, madam, not that... not that.

- Obey! said Madame de Soltigen to me.

I'll go get some rope and a dog whip lying around in the living room and come back. I lift the prostrate woman. Although she struggles, I come to

end. I take off her apron, dress and overalls. I bind his ankles and wrists. I take the whip, Madame de Soltigen has sat down and Miss Sylvie looks at the scene, smiling. My victim is standing, connected to the door by the rope. All she has left of her clothes is a nasty bra and a pair of used and mended white panties. She cries and begs to be left in peace.

- Go for it ! orders Madame de Soltigen.

I raise the whip. The strap bites the white, fat back of the poor woman who lets out a heartbreaking cry. A furrow, initially livid, begins to turn pink little by little. A second bite then a third leaves the same marks. The unfortunate woman screams, begs, stamps on the spot, ready to confess anything as long as her torture stops. His back swells. Blood seems to want to flow from the wounds. Finally, her legs give way beneath her.

She collapses, on her knees, her face pressed against the door, her arms suspended by the rope. Madame de Soltigen gets up, comes towards her, grabs her hair and throws her head back: - Do you admit to having stolen this necklace? she asks.

- Yes... yes... Madam. I... I stole it, she breathes, totally exhausted. I beg your pardon, don't beat me again... I'm in too much pain, too much...

I won, she admitted.

- It's okay, resumes Madame de Soltigen, untie her, Monsieur Ernest. Let her get dressed while you go get the police.

Before the representatives of the law, Marguerite Bonchâton repeats her confession and Madame de Soltigen, lenient, decides not to file a complaint and to keep the woman in her service. The gendarmes take note of this and force the servant to humbly ask her boss for forgiveness. The woman goes through all the wills and does everything that is ordered to her. By withdrawing, the brigadier believes it is his duty to warn Madame de Soltigen against possible revenge on the part of the servant... for the few lashes that were inflicted on her. Madame de Soltigen just smiles...

A month has passed since the necklace affair, a month during which I wondered if Mlle Sylvie had not invented all this out of pure distraction, for the simple pleasure of punishing the too honest Marguerite.

She calls me into her room and hands me a bottle filled with white powder:

- Look, slave, it's a bottle of poison: arsenic. Death is instantaneous, or almost, with this!

I turn pale. I grabbed the bottle, trembling.

She

laughs: - Don't worry, I'm not going to demand that you eat it on bread. My desire is much more serious...

She pauses, considers me. I'm still shaking.

- Tomorrow noon, she continues, you will pour half of this bottle into the dish of puree intended for my mother. As she is on a diet, it will not seem strange that we did not have lunch like her... You will then arrange to leave traces of arsenic on objects belonging personally to Marguerite. Once this is done, you will throw this bottle into the "bed of hell" so that it cannot be found.

I could refuse, get up, return this bottle to my demonic mistress, threaten to denounce her ignominy, her criminal plans. Well no ! I don't do any of that. I lower my head. I put the bottle in my pocket and simply said: - Your orders will be carried out, mistress!

I swore to obey him whatever his orders.

I will obey him, even if I cover myself with the most cowardly, most repugnant of crimes.

She smiles at this response and, as I am about to withdraw with this hideous weapon, she adds, cynically: - And above all, don't be afraid to take the dose. Tomorrow evening she must be dead.

I see Madame Marguerite heading towards the toilets. I slip into the kitchen, open the oven, and throw half the deadly vial into the mash dish. I dilute everything. I've barely closed the oven door when I hear the maid's footsteps in the hallway. I climb over the window. I didn't have time to slip traces of arsenic onto Marguerite's personal effects, so I can't get rid of the product. I will report my mission to my mistress. She seems satisfied.

At noon, I see the unfortunate Marguerite come out of the kitchen with a tray on which the dish of mash is placed. She heads towards Madame de Soltigen's room. I am about to get up, to shout: - Stop, unhappy girl, stop, I beg you! Throw this dish away. He's poisoned!

I would shout it but Miss Sylvie's pointy heels click on the floor. His implacable eyes stare at me, lodge in mine, ordering me to stay still. Marguerite had barely disappeared when I received two resounding slaps on the cheeks. Miss Sylvie curses: - Stupid slave!

Miss Sylvie lunches with a good appetite. She is in an unusually good mood. My throat tightens thinking that up there, a woman I've known for five years is eating a puree in which I sowed death.

I think of the pain, the suffering that will soon torture her. I also think of his terrible agony, of this proud and severe face which will twist and freeze forever in the throes of death.

I have to wait until the meal is over, and Marguerite leaves the castle, to enter the kitchen again. It's three o'clock. I take the apron that she left hanging on the tea towel hook. I pass it around my waist, then after having wet my hands, I pour a little arsenic on it and I wipe it all on the blue cloth, the future piece of evidence for the prosecution. I wash my hands thoroughly and let them dry to be safe. I run to the stable, I saddle Calari and I gallop up to the "hell bed" where I crush the bottle with a big stone. I hide the broken glass in a hole where no one will find it.

My mistress is in the living room, I find her radiant: - That's it, she says to me, smiling, she's starting to writhe and it's not joking, you can believe me... And you, what's it like? what was it?

- Very good, mistress, I left marks on Marguerite's apron then I broke the bottle and hid the pieces in "the bed of hell".

- Well, it's wonderful... Ah! let's go up and see our dear mother. It's a very interesting spectacle that should not be missed, I assure you.

I lower my head: -

If you allow me, mistress, I prefer... She looks at me: - I said: come!

I have to follow her into the room where poor Madame de Soltigen is rolling around in pain. Miss Sylvie closes the door, leans against it, her hands behind her back.

She contemplates the horrible spectacle with a cruel smile. Her mother, her mask convulsed, her fingers clenched on the sheets, sees her: - Sylvie...

I beg you, my little Sylvie... a doctor... Oh! my God, my God...

Miss Sylvie always smiles. She does not answer.

I turn to her: - Mistress,

we need a doctor...

I had barely made my request when she slapped me, indignant:

- Take care of what concerns you, slave. It is still too early. This damn doctor would be able to save her... And then, I want her to know, this bitch, to know why I did this, why she's going. die like a female dog.

I would like to cover my ears, close my eyes and disappear in that moment. Yes, disappear rather than witness this horror. Miss Sylvie, disheveled, her eyes sparkling with hatred, her breath short, rushed against her mother's bed. She kneels on the bedside and confesses to him in a flood of words the full extent of her abjection, from the theft of the necklace to the bottle of arsenic.

- You see, ridiculous old woman, where your kind of obstinacy is leading you. I told you that I would marry the captain of Rouy in spite of you. That I would be his wife and that he would live in this castle. You, dead, I am the only heiress of this domain. Everything is mine, everything, you hear, witch, everything.

The unhappy, flouted mother looks at her daughter in horror. She finds the strength to overcome her pain: .

- It's not possible... Tell me it's... not true... You didn't... do that, say... you didn't...

- Yes, I did it. If I did. If...

- Little crazy girl... the castle... will never... be yours... it belongs... to...

Véronique Du Poutil.

A cry of rage comes from my mistress's throat. She stands up and hits the dying woman with odious violence: - Witch...

whore... Ah! you'll pay me for that... well, bitch... well!

I am horrified. I hide my face behind my hands. I can not stand it anymore. A scene as shameful, as odious as this revolts me. Can it be that so much beauty, so much grace veils so much venom, perversions and darkness? Could it be that I stay there, without making the slightest gesture to defend the dying woman, to extract her from the clutches of her furious daughter? Could it be that, despite everything I discover, I still love this woman? that I worship her, idolize her? Yes, it can be because it is.

Disheveled, pale with anger, Miss Sylvie stands up, leaving her mother half passed out on her bed:

- You can go get the doctor, slave. She no longer has any

for a long time... and... don't go too fast.

I withdraw, leaving her alone with Madame de Soltigen. I'm going to get Doctor Campillo in the village. I blame myself for not having intervened, for not having belted Miss Sylvie to prevent her from hitting her mother. I am nineteen years old and it would have been easy for me to overpower this young girl. Control her for a moment, just long enough to let her direct her anger towards me, then release her. But no, I didn't do it. I couldn't do it. I am her slave, I must submit and support her whatever she does. I had no right to intervene. I am trying, through these reflections, to prove to myself that I did not take pleasure in seeing the severe Madame de Soltigen, crushed by her daughter, but it is in vain: I reveled in her torture.

I'm coming back with Doctor Campillo, Madame de Soltigen is on the verge of death. Miss Sylvie, collapsed near the mother's bed, cries. Admirable actress! Doctor Campillo has some words of comfort for her. He doesn't know why this energetic girl is crying. I know: the castle belongs to Mrs. Véronique Du Poutil and she finds herself alone, ruined.

Madame de Soltigen died in the arms of Doctor Campillo without being able to utter a word. The poor man is livid: - Miss Sylvie, he said, I offer you my most sincere condolences.

- Oh ! my mother, my poor mother... no... it's not possible!

Seeming mad with pain, she rushes to her mother's corpse and kisses it. Moved, Doctor Campillo wipes away a tear. He raises Miss Sylvie: - Mademoiselle, he said, I have to speak to you in particular.

- You can speak, doctor, "that" doesn't count.

The "it" that she points to with the tip of her chin is me. I lower my head.

The doctor searches for words and, after some hesitation, decides to speak: - Miss... I wanted to tell you that the death of your mother is not a natural death.

Miss Sylvie sat up, surprised. Her tears no longer flow.

- How do you explain this, doctor?

- Yes, I mean that all the symptoms of death are those of... poisoning.

- From poisoning? But how is this possible?

- It is a question, Miss Sylvie, of knowing whether there was suicide or a crime... Do you understand?

- To tell the truth, doctor, I'm afraid I don't really understand... everything happened so quickly.

- Yes, very quickly indeed. The poison was administered in a devastating dose... which makes one think of suicide... In your opinion, did your mother have any reason to make an attempt on her life?

- Absolutely none... She was very affected by the accidental death of our poor Caroline, but from there to... no, I don't think so.

- Yes, of course... in this case... the criminal would be a layman because one must ignore the power of the poison used to use such a dose... Whatever the case, my poor young lady, despite your pain, I must notify the police... Justice must be done... Madame de Soltigen was so good...

Miss Sylvie lowers her head.

- Do your duty, doctor.

Half an hour later, two men in civilian clothes appeared, escorted by two gendarmes. Fortunately, the latter are precisely the ones who have already come for the theft of the necklace. The oldest of the men in civilian clothes introduces himself to Miss Sylvie: - Commissioner Le Prieur, mademoiselle, I offer you my sincere condolences. This is Inspector Coretino, Brigadier Lamoussa, Constable Valentin.

- Thank you, gentlemen.

- I told this brave Madame de Soltigen that she would take revenge one day or another. It was fatal, forget Brigadier Lamoussa.

Miss Sylvie looks at him, surprised:

- ...That she would take revenge? But who are you talking about, brigadier?

- Hey ! Marguerite Bonchâton, parbleu! After the story of the necklace, you think...

- Let's see, brigadier, it's impossible, asserts my young mistress.

- Who is this Marguerite Bonchâton? and where is she staying? questions the commissioner.

- She is our maid, Mr. Commissioner.

She only comes at lunchtime and in the evening for meals.

- For the meal, you say? hum! ...

He turns to the police:

- Brigadier, go get me this woman. I want to see her here as soon as possible... Good! Coretino, during this time, you are going to snoop around the house and especially in the kitchen... Mademoiselle, please take me to your late mother...

Ah! I forgot, who is this young man?

Miss Sylvie smiles: -

It's Ernest Pinacci. His father worked with us as a stable master.

When he died, my mother believed it was her duty to take in little Ernest who was only fourteen years old at the time. For five years he has lived with us as stable master...

But he is almost part of the family.

- Of course... Good. Let's go up, if you want.

I sneak up behind them and manage to put my ear to the door of the death chamber and listen to their conversation.

- At what time, asks the commissioner, did the first pains begin?

- Around four p.m., approximately.

- After lunch, then?

- Yes, Mr. Commissioner.

- And ; what did she eat? .

- I think, leeks with vinaigrette, veal escalope, puree and fruit. I can't be sure but I think it was a mistake.

- So you took the same foods, I suppose?

- No, commissioner. Doctor Campillo had prescribed a diet for my mother... Mme Marguerite brought her lunch here. - Was she unwell eating lunch in her room?

- No, but since the accidental death of my sister Caroline, she liked to stay alone in her room... She was very sad.

- You don't think she could have?...

- No, commissioner, no. I do not believe. She was a very strong-willed and very strong woman.

- Tell me, where were you when your mother's pain began?

- But... downstairs, in the living room. I was reading and I heard screaming so I went upstairs and there... it was terrible!

- It will probably not be possible to find the dishes that were used for lunch.

- Oh ! I think that if. Madame Marguerite never does the dishes at lunchtime.

She leaves it for the evening.

- That's a very good idea... And this young man, what do you call him again?... Ernest... Brushes.

- Pinacci, corrects Miss Sylvie, Ernest Pinacci!

- Yes, that's it... Where was he when the pain started?

- He was... at the stable.

- What time did he come back?

- Around 5 p.m. This explains why I couldn't warn the doctor sooner.

- Tell me, so you stay alone? You inherit the castle and the estates surrounding it, right?

- No, Mr. Commissioner, this castle and this estate belong to my cousin, Mrs. Véronique Du Poutil.

She said this most naturally. As if she had known it all along. The commissioner seems to think, then: - Véronique Du Poutil? This woman who...

- Yes... who poisoned her husband with the complicity of her lover...

- Well... well, the commissioner is content to add.

- Is that all, Commissioner?

- Yes, miss, yes... for now!

I only have time to slip into the next room. Inspector Coretino runs up the stairs holding a rag in his hand. He calls: - Commissioner, Mr. Commissioner!

- I'm here, what's wrong?

Inspector Coretino enters and does not close the bedroom door, which allows me to hear him say: -

This is what I found, Commissioner. The maid's apron. I seem to have seen some suspicious spots there?

- Candy. Put this aside as well as the dishes that were used for lunch.

- Dirty dishes? ...I'm sorry, Mr. Commissioner, but everything in the kitchen is carefully washed, dried and put away.

There is a little silence. I hear the door close. I take the opportunity to slip outside and join the living room. At this moment, the two gendarmes return escorting poor Marguerite Bonchâton, totally bewildered.

She tries to question me, to ask me for explanations. The gendarmes impose silence on him and we wait for long minutes for him to

return of Miss Sylvie and the police, I am satisfied to have been able to hear this interrogation. Miss Sylvie responded very frankly. I just need to model my answers after his. The truth has only been chipped twice. When she affirmed that the first pains had occurred at four p.m. then, that in reality, it was ten past three p.m. and then maintaining that Marguerite Bonchâton never did the dishes at midday, but in the evening, which was absolutely false.

- This is Marguerite Bonchâton, Mr. Commissioner. It wasn't easy to keep her quiet.

The brigadier is so convinced of Madame Marguerite's guilt that he becomes fiercely bad faith.

- Oh! well... I would like to have a private conversation with this lady... Coretino, ask this young man to take you to the stables... Take gendarme Valentin... You, brigadier, temporarily at the disposal of Miss de Soltigen.

I get into the police car and guide the investigators to the stables.

On the way, we talk about this and that. Especially horses. Of the terrible accident that happened to Miss Caroline, about which Constable Valentin is full of praise. But, as far as I'm concerned, I'm vaguely worried. There, at the castle, the commissioner must be grappling with Marguerite Bonchâton proclaiming her innocence, swearing, getting tangled up in confusing explanations. Everything must point to her as guilty. I know everything, and yet I'm afraid. If, by some miraculous chance, she manages to reveal her innocence, who will suspicion immediately fall on? On whom, if not on me, and me alone? I will have no other resource than to confess my crime. I am certain that Miss Sylvie will not risk seeing me come to my senses in prison. She will refuse to live in terror.

If I'm arrested, I know she will do everything in her power to demand my head. For my part, I know that I should try everything to make myself odious and to obtain my execution. Sentenced to death by her, I will be able to do nothing more. I will have the duty not to defend my life and to submit to its sanction.

Under the pretext of visiting the stable, Inspector Coretino and Constable Valentin search every corner. What they are looking for, I know as well as they do; It's the bottle of arsenic. After a good half hour of investigation, they decide to return to the castle: - You have beautiful olive tree plantations! says the inspector, throwing a

vague glance at the trees.

- Yes, they are very beautiful.

-And how far do they go?

- Until the "hell bed"... I said. - "the

bed from hell" What a funny name! And we return to the castle.

Commissioner Le Prieur has finished with Marguerite Bonchâton. We find him in the living room, leafing through a book. In a corner of the room, under the close surveillance of Brigadier Lamoussa, Marguerite Bonchâton is prostrate. She hides her face streaming with tears in her rough hands.

- Oh! exclaims the commissioner as we enter, I was waiting for you.

He places the book on a tablet and gets

up: ...So, how did this walk go? The inspector comes to him, whispers something in his ear. The other smiled and said: - Very well, we'll see about that. Please take Madame Bonchâton and leave me alone with this young man. Ah! ... Mademoiselle de Soltigen, come in. You can stay. I have a few details to ask of your protégé.

Miss Sylvie has just appeared on the doorstep, impassive. She sits down and her strange, cynical eyes settle on me, giving a boost to my failing will. His attitude tells me that everything is going well. All that is missing is my testimony to overwhelm the unfortunate servant. Unaware that I was listening behind the door, Miss Sylvie insisted on being present during my interrogation to guide my answers with a sign.

Besides, it is a poor understanding of Commissioner Le Prieur who stands in front of the fireplace so that he can see both of us.

- So, young man, it was you who first heard Madame de Soltigen complaining of pain in her stomach?

The trap is placed point blank but a little big though. I rectify

- I apologize, Mr. Commissioner, but you must be mistaken. It was Miss Sylvie who told me this horrible thing when I came back from the stable.

- Oh! yes, that's right... What are your horses' names? ...I myself am very fond of horse riding and I think I would have great pleasure riding in the lands of your estate.

- We only have one horse left, Mr. Commissioner, his name is Calari.

- Oh! yes... And what time was it when you came back from the stable?

I pretend to hesitate: - In

truth, I don't know exactly anymore: five p.m.... Five fifteen p.m.

- Tell me ? When does Madame Bonchâton usually do her dishes? Do you know ?

I see Miss Sylvie turn pale.

- She does it every night, without exception.

Miss Sylvie must breathe a sigh of relief.

- And at lunchtime? questions the commissioner again.

- Noon ? never to my knowledge!

- HM hm ! Tell me, is 5 p.m. your normal time for returning from the stables?

- Uh! ... No... sometimes... Usually I come home earlier.

- Could you tell me what you did during this... overtime?

- Uh!... yes... I... I daydreamed near the horse... Forgive me, Miss Sylvie.

She smiles kindly.

- These daydreams are very annoying. Very unfortunate for Madame de Soltigen.

- I'm confused, I said, but could I have known?

- No, of course... At what time did you tell me that Madame de Soltigen's pain had started?

- I don't know, Mr. Commissioner, I already told you that it was Miss Sylvie who...

- Oh! yes, am I stupid... Good! Well, that will be all... It is really annoying for Madame Bonchâton that she did her dishes this afternoon, unlike usual... Ah!

Allow me, Mr. Pinacci, one more little question... routine!

- You are welcome !

- What if we spoke, dear sir... about the BED OF HELL?

- From the... "bed from hell", but...

I need to go green, purple and white. The commissioner does not fail to notice this.

- Hey! well, what do you have? You know this place, I suppose?

- Yes Yes of course.

- It would be easy to hide something there.

For example a bottle of poison? Is not it ?

- Without doubt, Mr. Commissioner.

- Is that why you went to the "hell bed" this afternoon?

Inspector Coretino noted fresh tracks of your horse heading in that direction.

- Hey! well yes, yes... I went to the "hell bed"... But it's not for what you think.

- So, tell us why?

The policeman's voice becomes harsh. I feel like I'm losing points and also his sympathy. I have to catch up, find something.

- I beg you, Mr. Commissioner, I cannot tell you why I went to the "hell bed".

- I demand it.

- No it's impossible.

This time he gets angry, he gets

angry. - Listen my friend, you are going to tell me immediately why you went to the "hell bed" this afternoon, otherwise I will have you arrested immediately for complicity in murder. Is that clear ?

- Very clear, indeed. In this case, Mr. Commissioner, I would like it to be confidential.

The commissioner turns to Miss Sylvie to ask her to leave us alone. Is she suddenly afraid that I will confess? I don't know, but she turns pale and declares dryly: - No need, I'll stay here! It was my

mother who was murdered and I have a right to know, I suppose!

- I beg you, said the commissioner, suddenly sullen, do not hinder the course of my investigation, mademoiselle... we are nearing the goal.

That's what worries him. She gets up, looks at me with a hateful look and sort.

- SO ? says the commissioner, when she closes the door.

- There you have it, Mr. Commissioner, I said, you have undoubtedly heard of Miss Caroline. Madame de Soltigen's second daughter... It will soon be two months since she accidentally killed herself in the "bed from hell."

We were riding together and she fell off her horse... I had a secret passion for Miss Caroline. I was deeply in love with it. Since then, every day, I gallop to this place where, in my arms, she breathed her last... I say a prayer and I lay flowers. You can go

see, the bouquet that I put for him must still be there... You understand now, Mr. Commissioner, why I wanted to keep quiet. I am only a humble servant and my deep passion for the noble Miss Caroline would perhaps seem sacrilegious to Miss Sylvie. Maybe she would chase me away?

I'm crying. The commissioner shrugs his shoulders and simply murmurs: -
Excuse me, I didn't think... Anyway, we will check your statements.
Besides, my conviction is made.

We go out. Miss Sylvie seems surprised at the tears still streaming down my face. She is on the verge of bursting out, throwing herself at me and hitting me because she is so convinced that I betrayed her, that I confessed. Fortunately, the commissioner declares, stopping him in his tracks.

- Brigadier, you are going to keep this lady Bonchâton in sight for me. When we have been able to establish with certainty that the stains found on the apron are indeed poison, I will send you an arrest warrant for her.

He greets Miss Sylvie and leaves with Inspector Coretino. The gendarmes take away poor Marguerite Bonchâton in tears.

I confess to Miss Sylvie the story of my "passion" for Miss Caroline. We both laugh like children. Joyful, she sends me to the cellar to get a bottle of good wine. We toast to the health of Mrs. de Soltigen.

The next day, the news spread: Mme Marguerite Bonchâton, whose apron contained traces of arsenic, is the hideous murderer of the Baroness de Soltigen. She was charged and taken to Montélimar prison. She will be judged in about a month.

At the castle, life is organized. Miss Sylvie makes me sell the horse and gets Captain du Rouy interested in her business. I have become his slave again and, now that we are alone, I feel it even better. I replace Mrs. Bonchâton in the kitchen and carry out her various functions. I no longer have any freedom and hardly leave the castle. Captain du Rouy often comes to spend the day with my mistress. I must obey him as well as her. Every evening, before he leaves, I have to polish his shoes. My nights become long meditations that I address to the too beautiful and too cruel girl who is bleeding my soul.

" Can anyone, mistress, be more of a slave than me? Can we annihilate every trace of human feeling in ourselves as I have done? Can we, without blushing, win over the lowest sects of cowardice, crime, cynicism and

cruelty ? Can we have evil and be proud of it? Can we know we are abject and congratulate ourselves for being so ? Yes, mistress, I tell you, we can! We can when we love as I love you. Ah! what am I saying I love? The word is so weak, so small. It's adoring that I wanted to write, it's venerating, it's deifying...

“ And you punish me every day for this sacrilege, mistress, by receiving under this roof a man you love and who loves you. As if I didn't exist, you throw yourself into his arms. You hug him. O cruel adored one, did you not one day push your cruelty so far as to force me, on my knees, to polish your boots, while your lips were joined... Your kiss did not cease until my task was completed.

“ I should hate this man and yet I love him. I should curse him and I bless him. It is enough for me to know that you love him to thank him for the happiness he gives you. It should be repugnant to me to serve and obey him. However, I do it with joy since this is your will. He is a second You, since he is loved by you... ”

My time in the service of Miss Sylvie and, I can say, in the service of Captain du Rouy, has lasted for almost a year. I only hear about their upcoming wedding. My divine mistress is the happiest of women. Joy embellishes it even more. She spends her time dreaming while listening to a few records or the stories that I read to her, sitting at her feet. Sometimes I interrupt my reading to contemplate her, this wonderful woman, and whisper to her a hymn of veneration. She doesn't notice anything. His life is elsewhere, in the heart of Captain du Rouy.

“ Mistress, I hardly dare whisper a few words of love to you. Oh ! certainly, not an interested, sensual and carnal love. It is not this love that I am thinking of when I discover you in all the extent of your splendor. It is an idealized love. A love to which few beings are accessible. One, love which knows how to be content with contemplation, with interior veneration. This love that was born in me the first time I saw you, that I discovered what beauty, grace, perfection was, that the reason to serve you became a reason for living. This love, mistress, I raise towards you today. I offer it to you. I immolate him at your feet. Nonchalantly seated on your armchair, legs extended, feet placed on a cushion, dress pulled up to your stomach, shamelessly showing off your lace slippers to my submissive gaze, you pose from time to time

your foot on my back to relax. What beauty, more than yours, mistress, can receive the homage of such love?

"I read at your feet an unimportant tale and my voice serves as a stepping stone for the flight of your dreams. Your joy expands or my despair is born. Your heart betrays me and I only have the right to rejoice. My thoughts are all soaked with you. I owe them all to you. If you take them away from me I will be just a poor puppet, an automaton. But none of your thoughts, mistress, come to me. I'm just a familiar object that we don't bother to think about. Perhaps it is this situation that gives me the strength of my love. Would you have the slightest feeling for me that my heart would be mutilated as much. We love a human who shows an interest in you, but we know they are human. We worship a god who never appears to us, who does not care about us and seems very fickle, for the simple reason that we know him to be god. Therefore, knowing myself to be human, I believe you to be God from the moment you prove to me that I am so unworthy of you..." "

Mars 1967.

I'm surprised. to see a car approaching in the alley which is not that of Captain du Rouy. I run to tell my mistress. I see her turn pale. She leans out of the window.

- Come down quickly, she said to me, and receive this person!

I do so and am at the bottom of the stairs when the car stops. The door opens. A woman comes down.

- Finally, I thought I would never succeed!

More than the woman, more than her red hair, it was the warm voice that I recognized. My blood boils and I think I faint looking at her. It's her ! It's indeed Véronique Du Poutil. What does she want? What is she doing in this castle? In his castle...

Her laughter didn't leave her.

- But, my word, it's my boot shiner! Eh eh ! the cute one has become a good little piece of choice! Who am I dealing with? To the lackey? To the shoeshine? To the butler? To the family friend?... Unless you have become the lover of our dear Sylvie?

- You are dealing with my slave!

The sentence fell sharply, sharply. Miss Sylvie stands haughtily at the top of the stairs. The visitor seemed surprised. She considers me for a brief moment and looks up. The two young women look at each other and the horrible laughter bursts out again.

- Hey! well, for example, I wasn't expecting that one. Forgive me, my dear, I should have suspected that this splendid specimen of the male sex had the disposition to become the slave of a young, beautiful and superiorly intelligent woman. Since that is so, take my luggage, slave!

I take her bag and suitcase, climbing the stairs behind her. She wants to clean up a bit. I take her to her room and go back down to prepare them an aperitif. An hour later, they are sitting in the living room. Miss Sylvie wore a black velvet dress. Generously necklined, a black lace fabric held at the shoulders by two gold brooches half veils the white and naked flesh.

- I will not go so far, my dear Sylvie, as to offer you condolences about your mother.

They would be late, therefore inappropriate, and, what's more, you know that far from regretting the death of this odious woman, I can only rejoice in it. If I had been in the place of the jury, be sure that I would have acquitted this Ms. Bonchâton, and that I would have awarded her the medal of National Merit.

Fifteen years of imprisonment! It's too much for a benefit!

Miss Sylvie just smiles and the redhead with the warm voice continues: - I did not consider it necessary to send you my condolences in due time. However, I thought there were some business issues that needed to be addressed. This is the essential purpose of my visit today.

Miss Sylvie lowers her head. She is obviously very embarrassed. Her opponent notices this but, far from taking advantage of her advantage, she becomes softer and her voice trembles: - Listen,

Sylvie, she says. After your mother died, I could have come here and claimed this castle that belongs to me, thrown you out without a penny... I didn't do it. I preferred to wait almost a year, giving you time to recover from these tragedies, to start a new life, to get married perhaps...

- And I should probably be grateful to you for that? squeaks my mistress.

Madame Du Poutil smiles: -

Who talks to you about recognition? I don't even want a thank you. Everything I did was natural between... But admit that we need to clarify the situation once and for all.

- In a word, you are coming to settle in your castle and I must prepare to leave the premises! That's it, isn't it? Unless you want a tenant who will also act as a servant?
No

Don't worry, I'd rather leave!

- Come on, my dear Sylvie, calmly continues Madame Du Poutil, calm down. There was never any question of me coming to live in this area. I own a castle in Seine-et-Oise, in Dampierre, a hundred times more beautiful than this one and, believe me, Parisian life has so many attractions that provincial life hardly tempts me. No, we can arrange things as best as possible for you... I was told that you were seeing a certain captain from Rouy. Is it true ?

- That's correct, indeed, but I don't quite understand the connection.

- I am ready to get rid of the castle even for a price significantly lower than its real value. It would be a magnificent gift if Mr. du Rouy managed to slip it into your wedding basket.

- Effectively ! replies my mistress. But it's impossible, Mr. du Rouy believes me to be the sole heiress of these lands. I made the mistake of hiding from him that I was poor. How can I tell him now without him taking offense?

Madame Du Poutil makes a gesture of

impatience: - In short, my dear Sylvie, to do the right thing, I would have to give you this castle. You understand that it is impossible!

Miss Sylvie stood up. His blazing eyes lock into those of his interlocutor. His features freeze. I guess she will fight a final battle, playing her last trump cards, those on which the rest of her life will depend.

- You did say, didn't you, that you are ready to get rid of the castle for a price significantly lower than its real value?

- I said it, indeed. However...

- Do you remember, Véronique, continues my mistress, red in the cheeks, of that day when you came here, three years ago?

- I remember it very well, so what?

- I can repeat to you verbatim what you said, close to the source, about Ernest...

-And what did I say that was so important? questions Ms. Du Poutil, raising her eyebrows.

- You said this: "I think I would pay dearly, very dearly, for it to belong to me. If you part ways one day, Sylvie, think of me. »

- It's true that I said that, agrees the pretty redhead. You have an excellent memory, my dear, but... - Are you still determined to pay dearly, very dearly?

- Obviously ! However...

- Hey! well, for my part, I have decided to get rid of it.

I am stunned, scared, horrified. Eyes bulging, mouth open, I stand there, oblivious to everything going on around me. The cold, decisive, cruel sentence resonates in my poor head, shatters my temples. So, my mistress does not hesitate to speculate on me, to sell me, to barter me for this castle. I am nothing more than a value that will change hands, if the two women manage to come to an agreement.

- Admit that to exchange a man for a castle, said Madame Du Poutil, is to have the latter for nothing!

- I do not agree with you, Véronique, because I suppose that in the 20th century, owning a slave over whom you have the right of life or death is a very rare situation, even among the most immensely rich. A castle is still a more common thing. You already have the castle, all you need is the slave.

Madame Du Poutil's eyes sparkle. I know she'll take the lousy deal. However, she thinks it is good to still put up weak resistance: - This is very pretty, she said, but which assures me that your "slave", when he is with me, will not run off like an Englishman, stopping there to come and join you or, quite simply, to free themselves completely. What will I have left then?

- Insurance, here it is!

Miss Sylvie takes a sheet of paper from her blouse and hands it to Madame Du Poutil. I recognize with horror the act of slavery that Miss Sylvie made me sign the day after I gave myself to her. Madame Du Poutil reads and places the paper on her knees. She declares: - This seems correct to me!

It is time to reveal in a few words the terms of this commitment:

"I, Ernest Pinacci, stable master and footman, at the Soltigen estate, declare on my honor to ratify the commitment made by my father and confirmed by myself, to remain until the day I turn twenty-one in the service of Madame de Soltigen and her daughters.

"This commitment is replaced by the present by which I declare myself and undertake on my honor to be the slave for life of Miss Sylvie de Soltigen.

"I undertake to be totally submissive to him, to obey him without discussion, whatever the extent of actions to which his orders may involve me.

“I will also be submissive and obedient to anyone appointed by her to submit and command me.

“Having of my own free will give my life to the said Miss Sylvie de Soltigen, I will in no case be able to release myself from this commitment.

“I undertake to recognize that the young lady Sylvie de Soltigen holds the right of life and death over me. »

Everything is dated, signed by my hand and approved by a signature from Miss Sylvie.

- It is enough, continues my mistress, to add to this act a second paragraph according to which Ernest Pinacci becomes your property. In exchange for this paper, you give me the title deeds to the castle. Are you now completely reassured?

Madame Du Poutil smiles and, radiant, extends her hand to my mistress.

- Perfect, my dear, deal done. All that remains is to draw up the papers and I will take care of it.

I am stunned, prostrate in the kitchen. I have a crazy desire to beg, to throw myself at Miss Sylvie's knees, to scream my despair and my distress.

But that too is forbidden to me. I'm sold. This is the will of my mistress. I have nothing to object to that. I must now submit and obey my new mistress. That's all I'm asked.

Despite my despair, I am happy, because through my sacrifice, the castle is now Miss Sylvie's. I save her from distress, from misery. My poor flesh will make her “the chatelaine of Soltigen”. What slave would be fat enough not to feel any pride in it?

This pride that swells my heart when I see Miss Sylvie handing Madame Du Poutil the act of slavery which she writes in these terms: ***“This day, I, Sylvie de Soltigen, owner for life and death of the slave Ernest Pinacci, declares on his honor to have exchanged the said slave for the***

buildings and lands known as “Du Poutil” with Véronique Du Poutil, owner of these buildings and lands.

“Madame Du Poutil hereby becomes the owner, with the same rights as previously, of the slave Ernest Pinacci who will have the same obligations towards them. »

The two women date this act and sign it. Madame Du Poutil slips the paper into her bag and gives the title deeds to the castle and land to Miss Sylvie. I stand there, stunned. I have just been bartered like any other object. Not for a single moment did anyone care about me. No look is

came to surprise my pitiful attitude. My signature was not even requested. Miss Sylvie's was enough. Mine no longer has any value.

- Go and gather your clothes, slave, we are going to leave!

The warm voice speaks to me, but the face does not look at me. I go up to my room where I gather with a heavy heart a few personal effects, a few souvenirs. I take one last look at this decor that has been mine for five years. I see the divine silhouette of Miss Sylvie appear in the dark rectangle of the door. She smiles, but her smile, for the first time, reflects a kind of sadness and a slight compassion. His eyes lost their hardness. I see them covered in tears. She considers me, gives a slight shrug, as if to apologize for her betrayal of me, then hands me a pair of small ankle boots, beautiful brown kid ankle boots lined at the toe, heel and top with leather. black varnish.

- Here, she said to me, take a pair of my boots, you will keep them as a souvenir and you will love them as you loved me myself. Promise me to polish them every day and think of me a little...

She leans against the wall and turns three-quarters, avoiding my gaze full of reproaches and tears.

- You must find me very unfair to you, she continues, to hand you over to this woman... Perhaps you are a little angry with me, but I assure you I have no other resource . By losing the castle, I lose everything, and you too at the same time. What can I do ? To work ? I don't know and...

I approach her and place my hand on her arm: - Miss

Sylvie, I gave myself to you. You are using me to save your life, your situation. I'm not complaining, no, on the contrary, I'm happy to be able to be useful to you. Your hands are too beautiful to work. Don't think about me anymore, please. My happiness is at its peak. I am doing for you what no man, no lover, would ever do, and have no fear, I will obey Madame du Poutil as I obeyed you. I will serve her with the same eagerness because in doing so, it is you that I will think of. Above it, it is your will, it is your voice that will command me. I will never forget you, Miss Sylvie, never. My heart is full of you and it is closed around you.

- You are very kind, Ernest. I will miss you very much, you know. I will miss you...

- No, Miss Sylvie, you will marry Captain du Rouy and you

will be happy, very happy, you have to. It's the only desire I can express.

She comes closer, puts both her hands on my shoulders and, suddenly, her lips are on my face. She holds me against her breast for a moment, then gently pushes me back: - Well, we have to go now!

I'm going to leave, she's still holding me back.

- Wait, I would like to make a wish: to command you my will one last time... Promise me to only accept death with my face against my boots...

- I promise you, mistress.

- No, Ernest, I am no longer your mistress!...

Here she is calling you, your mistress!

Down below, in fact, the imperious voice of Madame Du Poutil is heard: - Slave! Slave ! But where are you then?

- Here I am, mistress, I am at your orders.

- Ah well ! Take this bag and carry it to the car, we're going to leave. I want to be in Paris as soon as possible. My dear Sylvie, I don't know if we will see each other again one day, but in any case we will always have a... common good. Slave, come and greet your former mistress.

I will be back. I kneel before Miss Sylvie and respectfully kiss her knees. She doesn't make a move. She resumed her indifference and her assurance.

My new mistress makes me ride alongside her in the car which will take us back to Paris. As I listen to the wheels squealing on the gravel of the driveway, I feel my heart tighten even more. I struggle desperately to hold back the sobs that choke me. Madame Du Poutil notices this. She looks at me with a half-smile and says: - So you love him that much?

I can't lie. I nod and burst into tears.

- You really have strange tastes, she says, dreamily. I'm sure she was very harsh and very strict with you. Well, you'll see, I'll try to surpass her.

I don't answer, Mrs. Du Poutil continues: - Do you know who Sylvie de Soltigen really is? I look at her, surprised.

"She's my half-sister," she says.

My astonishment is not feigned.

- Your half-sister! I said. But how is this possible?

- Oh ! it's very simple... Here, I'll tell you my story and you will understand a lot of things. Time will also pass faster.

“Soltigen's grandfather wasn't very rich from what I know.

Of old noble stock, he had accepted the job of assistant director in a perfume manufacturing factory. He had two sons. The eldest, Alexandre de Soltigen, the second, Arthur de Soltigen. Both of them, I tell you straight away, were as lazy as they were misguided, as drinkers as they were fighters.

Alexandre, however, was lucky enough, one evening when he was drunk, to be hit by a car and have his leg broken. The owner of the car, the young Duchess of Larsignac, took the injured man to her castle and treated him.

She was a widow. She fell in love with the young thug and married him. She made life so hard for him that he almost became an honest man. They had two children, two girls. Me first, then Geraldine. As for Arthur, Soltigen's second son, he impregnated a very modest girl and had to marry her. Her name was Amédée Saton. A few months after their marriage, Germaine de Soltigen was born. My uncle and my aunt came to live at my father's castle. But this Saton girl was so wicked, so diabolical, that my mother died from her harassment. I was then four years old and Géraldine was two. Quite naturally, this woman took care of us as well as our unfortunate father. As enterprising and adventurous as these whores are, she soon became my father's mistress. She found herself pregnant again. Now, it had been more than a year since Arthur de Soltigen had touched his wife. There was a violent altercation between the two brothers.

My uncle left the castle with his wife and children. Needless to say, this womanizing monster didn't see it that way. The possibility of returning to the muck from which she emerged hardly enchanted her. She swore to her gods that my father had taken her by force, that he owed her reparation and that he was unworthy to live among them. My uncle allowed himself to be convinced and, between them, they captured my father. They locked him in an iron cage in the cellar. This fury frequently came to see him to make fun of him, to taunt him. Two months of this treatment was enough to kill him. It is concluded rather lightly that he died of grief after the death of his wife. I was six years old, Géraldine four, and Sylvie, who was therefore my half-sister, was only two months old. I therefore became the legitimate heir of the castle with my sister Géraldine. But, as a chatelaine, I offended the sight of this

cantankerous woman. She made me her victim and I was treated in this house like a servant, both by this woman and by Germaine and Caroline. Alone, little Sylvie was always kind to me. As I got older, I tried to interest young boys in my sad fate, but men are stupid animals. They only care about carnal pleasures. Many abused my trust. There was only one who truly took me under his protection, without asking me for anything in return. It was the old Count Théodore Du Poutil. Madame de Soltigen wanted to throw him out but the count got angry. He knew that she had granted her favors to the Marquis du Rouy. He revealed his misfortune to my uncle. He surprised the woman and the lover in the marital bed. A duel ensued during which the lover killed the husband. Arrested, he was overwhelmed at trial by the widow. So I remained at sixteen years old in the clutches of this panther. Count Du Poutil understood that the only way to get out of this was to marry me. He demanded my hand and I became the Countess Du Poutil. But this shrew had made plans. She wanted the castle at all costs. My marriage scared him. Emancipated, she knew that I was going to claim my property. She therefore sent to the count's castle, in Valréas, an adventurer: Isaac Mensenberg, who was in her pay. This man did so much that in a month he became my husband's close friend and it was he who poisoned him. Arrested, he claimed to be my lover, which was false. I was charged. The murderer, with money from Madame de Soltigen, managed to bribe a guard and escape. The only mistake this devil made was to think that justice would sentence me to death.

Fortunately, this was not the case. She then understood that she had lost the game. The rest, you know it. I could, obviously, have taken revenge on this torturer, thrown her out with her daughters. I did not do it for my sister Géraldine and especially for Sylvie, because I knew that poor Géraldine would not live long. Having sold the count's castle in Valréas to buy another in Dampierre, my intention has always been to leave the Soltigen residence to Sylvie. But how can I give it to him without having to provide him with an explanation for my actions? Fortunately, you were there and your presence made everything easier. I didn't seem to be making a gratuitous gesture and, I also admit, having you as a slave delights me to the highest degree. I intend to enjoy you in a beautiful way. »

I definitely go from amazement to amazement, but Ms. Du Poutil's good faith is obvious.

We stop in Chalon to spend the night. My mistress wants

I have dinner with her and share her room.

I'm a little scared at the idea of spending the night with this woman I barely know, who can demand anything from me and who I must obey blindly.

The meal passed without incident. Madame Du Poutil insisted that I drink wine and smoke a cigarette. Miss Sylvie had always forbidden me these excesses, and I admit that I was no worse off for it.

After closing the bedroom door, Mme Du Poutil sits in the armchair and looks at me for a few seconds.

- Take off your clothes ! she commands.

I comply and take off all of my clothes under his smirking gaze. I remain standing, naked in front of her who has joined her legs.

- Get on your knees and come lick my boots! I obey and run my tongue over the muddy leather and rough soles. She is wearing high black thigh high boots and she demands that I lick the whole boot up to mid thigh.

She has spread her legs and is no longer moving. From time to time, I feel the hot ashes of his cigarette falling on my back.

When she judges that my task is finished, she nudges me with her foot, gets up and opens the suitcase that I have put together. She takes out a short white nylon nightie which she throws carelessly on the bed. She approaches me who remains on my knees and, without a word, she takes off her leather belt, places it on my shoulder, unzips her skirt and slides it to her feet. She picks it up and throws it on the belt. Quietly, she unbuttons her blouse, takes it off and sends it to join the skirt. Her nylon suit rises, goes over her head and lies against my neck. She is only wearing her bra, her underwear and her high boots. - Take off these boots! she said, kicking me in the stomach.

I slide the thigh high boots down her legs and remove the stockings she is wearing underneath. She puts her arms behind her back and unhooks the bra which she throws over my second shoulder. Her fingers grab the panties which she slides down and which she picks up with her toes to lodge them between my teeth. She is naked. A smile floats on her sensual lips. She takes a step towards me. His brown fleece and his love nest are right against my face. I feel her feminine scent rising inside me.

- I hate washing my penis, she said. Since I'm lucky enough to have you, I'm going to free myself from an unpleasant chore. Put those clothes on and go run the water in the bidet!

I obey. Madame Du Poutil sits astride the edge of the bidet. She makes me kneel next to her and forces me, by regularly dipping my tongue in water, to carefully clean her sexual parts.

- This is a glove of extreme softness and work worthy of a slave's tongue, she said, taking my head and slipping it between her thighs to wipe on my hair.

She returns to the bed, puts on her nightie and slips into the sheets which I open for her. - Turn

off the light, take my boots and go shine them in front of the door. When you're done, you can come back. I give you permission to sleep on my bedside rug.

I thank him, bid him good night and leave with his high boots under my arm.

As soon as we arrived in Dampierre, my mistress took me to the room intended for me. Not a bedroom but an almost unsanitary attic. I leave my few little belongings there, and the first task I undertake is to polish my dear Miss Sylvie's divine little boots. To polish them, to kiss them and to cry over them, then I write them a ballad:

" Little kid boots of my mistress, do you know to what extent I adore you? No, it is not possible, you cannot know, because my love for you is idolatrous. I love you more than myself, more than my life, more than I loved my father a few years ago. Had you been in distress with him on this scaffolding, it was you I would have tried to save. Had you fallen with him, on the ground, near his dislocated body, it would have been your twisted leather that I would have cried for.

" Little kid boots of my mistress, I swore before her (which is worth swearing before God!) that, whatever the hour, the day, the year of my death, I will give up the ghost with one of you on the lips, and the other under my neck. I will keep my word. It is only between the two adored boots of my revered mistress that I can taste eternal rest. you are the link that connects me to her. When she gave me the gift of you, it was the most beautiful gift anyone had given me and could ever give me. I will make you a box to put you in. This box will never leave me and, as others press their jewels, I will carry you close to my heart. Aren't you the most beautiful jewel? Are you not better than these cold and vulgar stones that we call emeralds or rubies ? You in your brown and black dress, shining discreetly, you are

majestic, and in your bowels there still remains the warm memory of the divine feet of my mistress.

“ Little kid boots of my mistress, you have become my companions, my mistresses. Whenever I have a moment of leisure, I rest my cheek against you and I dream. I see again the one who so sovereignly shod you. The one who conquered my heart to knead it, to chain it. I see her again so delicately pleasant, so insolently beautiful, so indifferent to my despair, so far from me in her freedom and in mine that she has alienated herself, that I cry with happiness. I only have to close my eyes to imagine myself still being, humble and vile, prostrate under its prodigious splendor.

“ Little kid boots of my mistress, you will watch over me as I will watch over you. You will guarantee my total submission to the one I must now serve.

“ Little kid boots of my mistress, if one day I fail in my duty, deny me the right to never see you again. you are the seal of his power, of his infinite power. »

I live alongside Mrs. Véronique Du Poutil, a true slave's life.

This woman who allowed herself to indulge in friendly confidences in the car, becomes in Dampierre a despot of the lowest order, a tyrant such as it is hardly possible to meet. I know all the pain, all the humiliation, all the torture that one can imagine. This time, I am really the dog, the object that I had dreamed of being with Miss Sylvie. I am led with the whip, forced to do the hardest work without respite or rest. My mistress put bracelets on my ankles and connected my two legs together with a chain long enough to allow me to walk. She does the same with my wrists. She put a dog collar around my neck and sometimes she walks me on a leash in the castle grounds, my face covered with a muzzle.

At lunch and dinner, I have to eat at his feet, under the table, or kneeling behind his chair. At night, after having undressed her, I sleep on the bedside rug attached by the leash to one of the bedposts, unless she forces me to stay on my knees the whole night, her clothes placed on my arms outstretched.

Ms. Du Poutil seems delighted with my constancy and my total submission.

She never fails, during the evenings she gives, to show me off with my slave and dog paraphernalia. Each guest demands from me a small

service. On the days when my mistress is absent to go to Paris, I am left in the care of two young servants of around eighteen years old. I must also obey them. They do not hesitate to treat me despicably. Not content with making me do all the domestic work, they force me to only walk on all fours. They make me lie down under the table and put their feet on me while they eat lunch. At night, they tie me up and lock me in the broom closet or even in the wardrobe, under my mistress's dresses with all the boots and shoes placed on my naked body.

Despite all these horrors, I say nothing. I just obey without ever asking for anything. I promised Miss Sylvie. The most excruciating pain does not affect me. don't break my promise. When I'm about to faint, I immediately think of the delicious little boots over there in their box and I get an incredible boost of vitality.

April 1968.

My ordeal has lasted exactly thirteen months. Thirteen months during which I never took off the chains or the necklace, except to dress and undress myself. I'm getting used to this new life if you can call it living. Far from forgetting the one to whom I owe my subjection, my love for her only grows. With separation and time, his image becomes unreal, as if from a wonderful dream. I address her as if she were a god. I pray to her, I confess to her, and her delicate little boots, which I never fail to polish every day, have become my priestesses, my intermediaries between her and me.

Thirteen months have passed and today, as I usually do, I go up to my attic. I take the little boots, I place them in front of me, I prostrate myself three times before them and I remain on my knees. I wax them with love, with passion. I am engaged in my sacred office when the door opens. Madame Du Poutil's warm voice surprises me, terrifies me.

I raise my head. I place the boots behind me, as if to defend them.

I run and throw myself at the feet of my mistress.

- I beg you, mistress, forgive me!

- Who owns these boots? Whose are they? Answer!

She screams and her whip comes down on my back.

- They are... Miss Sylvie's, I said.

- To Miss Sylvie! Do you see that! So you don't have it

forgotten yet? Didn't you understand that you belonged to me, that it was me you had to worship?

- No, mistress, I said fiercely, raising my head. No, I cannot worship you. I only obey you because that is Miss Sylvie's will, but not for anything else, no!

She is pale and indignant.

- Give me these boots! I forbid you from keeping them!

This time it's too much. I'm getting up. Anger, this feeling that I have learned to ignore, takes hold of me. I step back towards the little boots.

- No, mistress, whatever you want but not that! I won't obey you, no!

She is so surprised by my reaction that she stays for a few seconds without saying a word, then: - Well,

that's very good. Pick up your gear and get ready, we're going to leave.

She turns on her heel without saying more.

- Leave... leave!

I put my few things in an old briefcase that I found in the attic and I go downstairs.

Mrs. Du Poutil is already ready. The car is waiting at the door... She hooks a leash to my collar and pulls me out, following her. She takes me into the car and makes me lie down under the back seat so that I can't see the landscape. She places the soles of her boots on me and very often forces me to suck them. We drive non-stop all day. In the evening, as night fell, my mistress tied me to the back of the car. I can't move or lift my head. The vehicle enters a garage, stops. She gets out and walks away with the driver.

An unbearable anguish grips me. Since we left, my mistress has not said a word to me. Why this rushed trip? Where are we going? What punishment will be mine? What destiny perhaps? The craziest thoughts cross my mind. I see her selling me to some sadistic monster who would be happy to possess me. Or... Having the right of life or death over me, she decided, faced with my reluctance, to use it. Won't she throw me, ringed and shod, into the sea from the top of a cliff? So many questions that remain unanswered all night. The next morning, she takes her place again and the journey continues. Towards the South, I am tied up again at the bottom of the car and my mistress covers me with a blanket, probably wanting to avoid being seen. One hour later,

she comes back, takes off the blanket, unties me and throws me a bad piece of meat which I devour having not eaten anything since we left. If she feeds you, I tell myself, she's probably not going to kill you, so expect to be sold. But to whom? After driving for a few more hours I realize that we are finally arriving. The car slows down, leaves the national road, and turns onto a stony path. We are arriving, but where?

After turning slightly, the car stops, Madame Du Poutil checks the shackles that bind my wrists and ankles, the chains that connect them together, then she hooks the leash to my collar and follows after her. .. O joy, o delight! I know the enormous building in front of me, having left my life there. Soltigen! It's Soltigen Castle! And there, the delicious, magical silhouette of Miss Sylvie appears at the top of the stairs, smiling, more ravishing than ever in her pink mini-dress. It is not possible. I must be dreaming. Yes, that's it, I'm dreaming. I'm pulling on my leash a little too much. I receive a sharp order: - Heel, dog!

This is the first word Madame Du Poutil has said to me since we left. I crouch down, unable to take my eyes off this wonderful apparition silhouetted against the setting sun. I climb the stairs, towards her, still held on a leash by my redhead mistress.

- And there you have it, my dear, says the warm voice when it joins my divinity; the experiment is over and I admit that it is more than conclusive. You alone occupy his thoughts. He only loves you, he only sees through you and you can be sure of his attachment and his love like the apple of your eye. He bore everything with astonishing submission. Yet we did not spare him, neither my young servants nor me.

I listen without understanding, prostrate before Miss Sylvie, lips resting on the toes of her little boots.

- And... the boots? questions the wonderful idol of my heart.

- He polished them every day without exception, replies Mme Du Poutil. I watched for him each time and it was two days ago that I discovered myself. I tried to take away his relics. He showed his teeth for the first time and, if I had insisted, he would have killed me.

So what is this new betrayal? What does this good understanding mean?
This sudden familiarity?

- Get up, Ernest, Miss Sylvie says gently to me, bending down to me.

I get up with a clanking of chains.

- I beg you Véronique, take all this away from him.

You carried the cruelty to the point of revealing nothing to him throughout the journey and considering him as your slave, always.

The other has a little

laugh: - It's because, my goodness, I had to take advantage of it, these chains having fallen, he is no longer my slave.

There is a dull impact on the cement. The chains, the bracelets, the necklace, the leash have just fallen at my feet. I am unable to make a move. I do not understand anything anymore. A thick fog engulfs my soul. Miss Sylvie's two arms come to wrap around my neck. Her beautiful face approaches mine. Her eyes, so large, so luminous, reflect kindness, love, desire. She places her lips on mine, and it's like I lose consciousness. I have never been so weak as in this moment. Our lips separate. I feel my mistress' fresh breath blowing in my face: - I love you, Ernest, I love you.

Ah! I've dreamed enough! The joy of finding myself at Soltigen Castle makes me lose my mind. I slide down to get back on my knees, where I belong. Miss Sylvie stops me, she keeps me standing.

- Mistress ! I say, as if to protest.

- No, Ernest, she said, smiling, there is no longer a mistress. Call me Sylvie and, if you want later, tell me "Sylvie darling".

There is laughter behind me. A laugh that I had always considered unpleasant but, all things considered, this laughter is not unpleasant at all, not in the least All...

- Don't you think we could explain it to him, said Madame Du Poutil, that would be the least we could do, right?

They both laugh.

- Hey! let's go in, says Miss Sylvie.

And she pushes me in front of her into the living room. Nothing has changed. The armchairs are always in the same places and the library still packs its blackish mass at the back, to the left of the entrance. We sit. Miss Sylvie's eyes sparkle with joy. Intense happiness is reflected on his forehead. A broad smile reveals a row of superb teeth.

- You don't seem to realize, Ernest, and your tenderly bewildered look is delightful to see, isn't it, dear?

- He looks like an angel. It is true that he is quite poorly prepared for such a welcome. Come on, let's be good, let's not make him suffer any longer, sneers Madame Du Poutil, carelessly leaning back in her chair.

Miss Sylvie's voice becomes serious:

- Do you know what Love is?... It is not to you, Ernest, that I am asking this insidious question. Yes, you know it, More than me, than anyone perhaps. You have drunk from all the chalices. You have only lived, until now, for Love and through Love... He has been your God, your guide. Love is a series of different, winding, complex, dangerous paths. You have to choose yours with certainty, commit to it and never go back. In this case, we are sure to find, sooner or later, success and happiness. But, under no circumstances should you hesitate, falter, lack imagination and will. Any concessions made outside of the path we have set out for ourselves is a weapon in the hands of the adversary. We must not forget that Love is a fight, a fierce fight where one of the two adversaries triumphs, dominates and devours the other. Love is often represented as a tender feeling, a call to sweetness and happiness. It was considered the supreme harmony of the couple. There is no deeper error.

I chose, as you can imagine, the path of domination. I understood, as soon as you entered my service, that you had opted for submission.

I admit that I have become very in love with the captain of Rouy. This was my experience. We thought we loved each other with an eternal love, but the first time I slapped him, that jerk got angry. I chased him away and that's when I realized that your absence made me more unhappy than his absence. And you, my dear Ernest, I wanted to know if your submission was real, if even separated from me, you would continue to be faithful to me, to obey only by my will, to love only me. I placed you under the control of Véronique Du Poutil, recommending that she be more fierce with you than I had been myself. I wanted you to think you'd never see me again. Any man other than you, Captain de Rouy, for example, would have transferred all his love, all his admiration to Véronique.

But this love, ours, is too powerful, too celestial to pass from one to the other in this way. We are exclusives. We only love once because we know the secrets of true love.

I am amazed. I listen to her, speechless, fascinated by her beauty, her eloquence and this incredible adventure that she ordered me to experience. So, to ensure that my loyalty was foolproof, she voluntarily

given to another woman, also beautiful, and very tyrannical. She ordered me to obey her and submit as to herself. Everything was tried to direct my love and my veneration to Madame Du Poutil. However, I never thought of it. Miss Sylvie has always remained the object of my worship and my passion. "My false mistress" quickly realized this when she spied on me every morning, fulfilling the religious duties that I performed for the little boots of my goddess. Some points remain obscure.

- But the contract? ...The exchange?... The castle ? ...

They laugh harder. It's Mrs. Du Poutil who answers me: - Sylvie was informed of my arrival. She wrote to me to inform me of her intention to hand you over to my service soon. The contract, you understand, was more serious. As for the castle, I had decided to leave it to him. Too many bad memories were attached to it for me.

- But then you knew that...

...That Véronique and I are half-sisters? Miss Sylvie continues. I learned it on my nineteenth birthday. It was from that day that the fierce hatred that I devoted to Madame de Soltigen was born in me.

- On your nineteenth birthday, but how?

- After you polished our boots, near the spring, Véronique took me to a discreet place and told me a whole truth, which alas! I didn't suspect.

- Sylvie, I said suddenly, you are convinced of my loyalty, of my total submission to you. You have already demanded a lot from me and I am very happy to have been able to satisfy you. Now what do you expect from me? What do you want me to do? I am at your orders.

- My dear Ernest, declares the one I adore, another man than you, a free man would have thrown himself at my knees long ago. He would have asked for my hand. You do not have this right but I order you to marry me and you have no right to refuse, sir!

- Sylvie... Sylvie... I...

- Don't say anything and kiss me right away!

What a delicious order! I never thought it would one day fall from those wonderful lips. O creature of dreams. Goddess who knows how to spread torment as well as happiness...

June 1968.

In the church of Nyons, I put the wedding ring on the finger of Miss Sylvie de Soltigen. In the wedding basket we find an envelope

white. This is the combination of my name and that of my wife, a gift from Mrs. Véronique Du Poutil. She refused to see her half-sister lose her title of nobility. She paid dearly for this juxtaposition of names. My name is now Ernest de Soltigen-Pinacci.

I am twenty years old and my divine wife is twenty-three. A life rich in promises opens before us on the path of a love forged in the most bizarre way possible. It is an unalterable, unwavering love.

December 1969.

Alas! our happiness was short-lived. Eighteen months: that's not a long time to be happy. But it was eighteen months of sweetness, of ecstasy, of unparalleled joy. We never quarreled. She was always right and I never upset her. She commanded: I obeyed. She demanded I submit. If I made the slightest mistake, she took down the whip and punished me. When his anger subsided, we laughed, we kissed and we loved each other. She always demanded that I shine her shoes and boots. On this point, she remained intractable.

Last month, my dear Sylvie was struck down by a terrible illness. A devastating and incurable disease.

In a few days she went from bad to worse. The best doctors in Provence and the specialists from Paris whom I had brought were disarmed, powerless to save her. Despite the fortune that I offered to anyone who would rescue her from death, she was to succumb on December 19 around 4 p.m. Pleurisy? Leukemia? I never knew and never will.

Around three o'clock, feeling at her worst, she had the strength to smile and say to me calmly, while stroking her hair:

- It's the end, Ernest, my darling. Today I won't see the day set, you know. You have to be very courageous, worthy of me.

I burst into tears, took the two little boots that I had always kept and armed myself with a revolver. I came back to her: - I will be courageous, as soon

as I have taken your last breath, I will kill myself on you and our souls will fly away together towards a new life. We will not leave each other... my beloved Sylvie, even in death.

She had a sad look: -

No Ernest, no, you have to live, I want that!

- How can you ask me to live? And how could I obey you since my life is linked to yours.

- Ernest, replied the dearest, Ernest, you must obey me, obey me one last time, as you have always obeyed me.

- I can obey you, I said, lowering my head, but not survive you, not that.

- You have to, Ernest! Forgive me, I have a secret to tell you that you must live for.

- A secret?

- Yes, before marriage, you know that I met Captain du Rouy, he was... my lover.

- Sylvie, I said to reassure her, pressing her hand in mine, Sylvie I love you!

- I was pregnant. He always ignored it. We separated soon after.

- But, Sylvie darling, I continued, surprised, and... the child?

- I abandoned him as soon as he was born, a fortnight before your return with Madame Du Poutil.

- Oh ! Why ? ...Why didn't you say it? Why not keep it?

...

- You have to find her, Ernest! It was a girl! Her first name is Myrna. I indicated it on a medal that I left on his neck...

You have to find her. Don't tell her who she is when she's older. No, don't tell her anything but protect her. Make sure she is happy and make a will in her favor.

I lowered my head and kissed the beautiful tearful face: -

I will obey you, Sylvie my love, I will obey you.

- Thank you, thank you, my love. I knew you loved me enough to do this...

I can die peacefully now since you have forgiven me.

- No, Sylvie, no! ...I don't want you to die, no...

- And don't forget... when you come to join me... the boots... one under your mouth and... Ah! ...kiss me, quickly...quickly...

She exhaled as our lips had barely sealed. I stayed for an hour, two, ten, perhaps flooding the remains of the one I had loved so much with my tears. Even in death she was beautiful, extraordinarily beautiful. She had kept that little cynical smile, that disdainful and haughty pout that had ruled my life. Her long brown hair slid past her ear to her beautiful bare shoulders and

frozen. Never, never again will I see the cruel fire in his big eyes
green...

January 1970.

*I searched for little Myrna for a whole month, from orphanage to orphanage... And I
found... in a cemetery, a small grave that I decorated with flowers.*

I have nothing left. Just this manuscript, my memories and two adorable little boots.

*The manuscript, I entrust it to you, Miss Moreski. Publish it and release the unfortunate
Marguerite Bonchâton who is innocent of the crime for which she is guilty. been
condemned.*

The memories, I take them with me.

*The two little boots will be found near my corpse. One will be slipped under my lips
and the other placed on the back of my neck.*

Farewell, Ernest

*Pinacci I reread one last time the news item which made me decide to publish this strange
confession: "January*

*20, 1970. - Mysterious suicide at Soltigen Castle - A twenty-one year old man Ernest de
Soltigen-Pinacci was discovered dead with a bullet to the temple at Soltigen Castle. There
is no doubt about suicide, the victim having been very affected by the death of his young
wife Sylvie de Soltigen-Pinacci on December 19.*

*One fact, however, intrigues the police. A pair of ladies' boots were found near the
body. One of the boots was slipped under the victim's mouth and the second was
placed on the back of his neck and tied to his
cou.*

*The two servants of the castle did not recognize these boots as having belonged to
Madame de Soltigen-Pinacci. »*

*Nothing is holding me back from publishing Ernest Pinacci's memoirs and demanding,
for Marguerite Bonchâton, freedom and reparation.*

END

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ePub format: ISBN 978-2-86688-366-9 Legal

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