

*Chauvelin enters his office. He is visibly upset.*

*Girard quickly limps towards Chauvelin's office and knocks on Chauvelin's door.*

CHAUVELIN

I said I was not to be disturbed!

*Girard opens the door.*

GIRARD

Armand, it is me.

CHAUVELIN

What are you doing here?

GIRARD

I was supposed to be leaving this afternoon, but... oh, it does not matter.  
Do you know if Madame Cadieux has been arrested?

CHAUVELIN

*Snapping.*

I know exactly who has been arrested.  
It will be a matter of public record very soon. Yes...Madame Cadieux has been taken to jail.

GIRARD

But how can that be?

CHAUVELIN

It is obviously a misunderstanding, and I will see to it that it is cleared up. I have already sent a memo to Citizen Robespierre.

GIRARD

But...

CHAUVELIN

I will handle this. Madame Cadieux will be home by the end of the week. This mistake will be corrected.

GIRARD

What are the charges?

CHAUVELIN

It was reported that she made treasonous statements against a public official.

GIRARD

And it was probably done so anonymously?

CHAUVELIN

Yes. The report was anonymous.

GIRARD

Of course it was. This bears all the signs of someone settling an old score. Perhaps she uttered an offhand comment about the cut of Citizen Robespierre's coat and someone jumped at the chance to get their revenge.

CHAUVELIN

Really, Baudouin...

GIRARD

It certainly seems that the freedoms of thought and speech no longer have a place in this enlightened democracy in which we live.

CHAUVELIN

Pardon?

GIRARD

When this all began, we lived and breathed the ideals of the revolution. Liberty. Equality. Fraternity. That is what drove us. Where has that gone?

CHAUVELIN

You dare to question my devotion to the cause?

GIRARD

I am not questioning your devotion.

Oh, my friend...we have moved so far from those ideals. Now all that matters is the opinion of Citizen Robespierre. And he is so damned enigmatic, no one is sure what he truly thinks or believes. But...if there is a suspicion that a citizen is not in alignment with what Citizen Robespierre thinks is proper, well...their days are numbered.

*Disgusted*

Why don't we just make him king and be done with it.

CHAUVELIN

You do realize that what you are saying is considered treason?

GIRARD

Forgive an old man. So much French blood has been shed...I simply do not have the stomach for it. It is time for me to go.

CHAUVELIN

Perhaps it is time for you to go.

MADAME CADIEUX

Keep the faith, child.

GIRARD

Yes. Madame Cadieux has powerful friends. Keep the faith...I have it on good authority that she will be home by the end of the week.

GUARD ONE

I hope you are right.

I will be at the end of the hall. I will come fetch you in a few minutes.

*Guard exits.*

*Madame Cadieux and Girard hug.*

MADAME CADIEUX

Now. I am sure you are here to cheer me. Who are these powerful friends of mine working on my behalf?

GIRARD

None other than Citizen Armand Chauvelin, Chief Agent of the Committee of Public Safety.

MADAME CADIEUX

Armand wishes to help me?

GIRARD

I just spoke with him a few hours ago. He is determined to get you home. Why are you so surprised?

MADAME CADIEUX

It saddens me to say that the last time he and I spoke...it did not end well. Armand has pledged his loyalty to that...creature Robespierre. I tried to reason with Armand, to point out the ways in which Robespierre has used his position to the benefit of no one but himself. But Armand would not hear of it. He stormed out. We have not spoken since.

GIRARD

Whatever words that passed between the two of you, Armand has nothing but the utmost respect for you. He is doing everything in his power to correct this miscarriage of justice.

*Starts to walk away from her*

And if Armand cannot accomplish that, well, there may be another way of liberating you from this prison.

MADAME CADIEUX

What on earth...? Oh! (*laughs*) I do not expect the League of the Scarlet Pimpernel to come to my rescue. In fact, I would prefer they not even try.

GIRARD

Why do you say this?

MADAME CADIEUX

Robespierre is jealous of my lingering influence. He will make an example of me. I will be carefully watched while in prison, and closely guarded when I am taken to the guillotine.

*Girard starts to protest*

My dear Baudouin.... I am under no illusions.

I know the League has done some truly fantastic things. But if they were to attempt to rescue me, I fear there would be bloodshed.

*Madame Cadieux looks Girard squarely in the face*

The League has been a bright light in this terrible darkness. I would not be able to bear it if one of them were injured or arrested on my account.

GIRARD

But...

MADAME CADIEUX

No. I would be more than I could endure.

If Armand is able to do right this wrong, I will race out that door to freedom. If not... I only hope that history is kind to me.

*Guard One enters the stage and walks towards the cell.*

GIRARD

Upon my honor, I will see to it that history will be kind.

Oh Madame...how much you are beloved.

MADAME CADIEUX

Because I love.

GUARD ONE

You thought the League of the Scarlet Pimpernel were going to save you!

GUARD TWO

*Grabs Guard One by the shoulder.*

They were expecting to be saved by the League! They could be close by!

MARGUERITE

*Standing up to her full height, Marguerite says to the Guards.*

The League of the Scarlet Pimpernel is closer than you could possibly imagine.

*The guards pull out their swords and turn towards Marguerite.*

GUARD ONE

You are under arrest!

MARGUERITE

As if I have not heard that before!

*Percy steps forward next to Marguerite.*

PERCY

Sink me! There is no need for all that.

GUARD TWO

We are arresting you for treason.

PERCY

*As an aside.*

Ooh...bad choice of words, old chum.

MARGUERITE

We? We are the traitors here? I have done everything in my power to help you achieve equality in this society. As did these Citizens! They have been members of the National Convention and have worked tirelessly to elevate the rights of the Third Estate. They have done nothing to merit the death penalty.

*The Guards scoff at this.*

Are you even aware of the charges leveled against these men?

*The Guards show they do not know what the charges were.*

The charges were that they were partisans of tyranny.

GUARD TWO

*To Guard One.*  
What does that mean?

MARGUERITE

My point exactly! And whoever reported them did so anonymously. The court proceedings were a mockery of justice.

The Committee of Public Safety has branded the League of the Scarlet Pimpernel as enemies of France. Yet the real enemies are the ones who have turned their backs on the ideals of the Revolution. I hope you will never be in need of our services.

GUARD ONE

Enough! You are under arrest.

*The Guards attack. While Marguerite and Percy fight the guards, the other League member runs to Citizens Droit and Ozanne to untie them. Naturally, the Guards lose; they are tied up and gagged. Before Guard One can be gagged, he says to Percy and Marguerite:*

You will never get away with this!  
*Marguerite bonks him on the head.*

MARGUERITE

*In a calm, firm voice.*  
We will divide up and make for the South Gate. Do not draw attention to yourselves. We will meet by the catacombs. Tonight, you will be smuggled out of Paris and taken to England.  
*Beat.*  
Now go!

*Percy and one of the Citizens exit one way. The other League member and remaining Citizen exit opposite them.*

*Marguerite pulls a cloth with a scarlet pimpernel painted on it and ties it around the neck of one of the guards. Marguerite quickly walks off the stage.*

*End scene.*

MARGUERITE

Is it true that Madame Cadieux has been arrested?

GIRARD

Yes.

*Marguerite reacts*

Now Marguerite, I have spoken with Armand. To quote him, "She will be home by the end of the week."

I have been to visit Madame Cadieux in prison. I took the opportunity to investigate the situation. I even asked the guards some discreet questions. She will be watched very closely at all times. The best hope for her is Armand.

MARGUERITE

If anyone could convince Robespierre of anything, it would be Armand.

Now...does he still believe a League member is working inside of the Committee of Public Safety?

GIRARD

He does. He said it again to me on the day of my retirement.

*Marguerite reacts to this.*

But now that I am gone, I have an idea. Leave this with me.

MARGUERITE

But you will be leaving France very soon.

GIRARD

My plan is nearly in place and will be completed within a few days. Please...leave this with me.

*Marguerite nods her head in agreement. Girard starts to turn to leave.*

MARGUERITE

Oh, we are not finished.

*Girard turns back around.*

I hope you know I am very cross with you.

*Girard starts to protest.*

Ah-ah! Let me finish! Why have you not left France?

GIRARD

I had to try one more time to reason with Armand...

MARGUERITE

But it is pointless!

I know how hard this must be for you. The two of you were like brothers...

GIRARD

The three of us swore to each other that we would not rest until there was true justice...that everyone was treated as equal...in society, in the eyes of law...Those feelings must still be inside of him somewhere. I just keep thinking...or hoping...that Armand...

MARGUERITE

...will realize that he is giving his loyalty to a madman who is using intimidation and threats to push his own agenda? A madman who considers people to be his enemies if they dare to speak out against him and then takes steps to eliminate them?

GIRARD

Marguerite...

MARGUERITE

Armand has convinced himself that Robespierre can do no wrong...that this is the enlightened form of government for which we have been fighting.

As much as we feel that Armand has abandoned the morals of the revolution, and, by extension, abandoned you and me...he feels the same way about us. He believes that we are no longer true believers...and that we have abandoned him.

He is no longer the same Armand Chauvelin we used to know. We have lost our friend.

*They hug.*

Let us join the others. Once this is over, we will all get back to England.

*They exit.*

*End scene.*

## Act One, Scene 5

*The drawing room in the home of Marguerite and Percy. There are places for everyone to sit. Percy, Alexandra and the Guillaumes enter.*

PERCY

I am so glad you were able to see Marguerite tonight. She was so beautiful and is such an amazing talent. I hope you enjoyed the play...?

*Pruet, Edeltraud and Alexandra look at each other, look back at Percy and nod their heads.*

PERCY

Excellent. Please, let us sit down.

*They all sit in the chairs.*

Are your rooms to your liking?

*Pruet, Edeltraud and Alexandra all nod.*

England is quite different from France. Is there anything that would make you feel more comfortable?

*Pruet, Edeltraud and Alexandra all shake their heads to indicate "no."*

Well...as you continue to settle in, please do not hesitate to let Marguerite or myself know if there is anything that would make you feel more at home.

PRUET

Oui, monsieur.

PERCY

Please excuse me. I believe I hear Marguerite and the Lamberts.

*Percy stands up and goes to the door. Marguerite enters first.*

PERCY

My darling.

*He gives her a kiss and helps her to remove her wrap.*

Let me take that.

## Act One, Scene 7

*The drawing room in the home of Percy and Marguerite. Percy is standing, reading a letter, and Marguerite is sitting in a chair. Pruet and Edeltraud enter.*

PERCY

Ah! Monsieur and Madame Guillaume...

PRUET

Excusez-moi, Monsieur Blakeney. My wife prefers *Frau* Guillaume.

PERCY

A thousand pardons, Frau Guillaume.

As you may possibly imagine, Marguerite and I have...questions.

This is the letter I received from a solicitor. Upon reading it, I learned that my cousin Charles had passed away, and that he had requested I look after a child I did not even know existed. Ever since I had made arrangements for her to come to England, I have wondered what Alexandria was going to be like. Would she look like Charles? Would she speak English? I wondered if she enjoyed painting, or dancing, or poetry.

*Percy's voice changes from its usual lazy drawl to something more forceful.*

It never crossed my mind to wonder how well she would be able to handle herself in hand-to hand combat.

*Percy gives them a hard look and then reverts back to his lazy drawl*

May I offer you some tea?

*Pruet and Edeltraud sit by the table that has been set with tea. They look at each other and silently acknowledge that the time has come for some explanations.*

PRUET

Monsieur? Madame? May we explain?

PERCY

I think that would be best.

PRUET

Alexandrea was the only child of Sir and Lady Blakeney. Lady Blakeney died when Alexandria was ten. After Lady Blakeney passed away, Xander and Sir Blakeney became very close.

EDELTRAUD

He loved her so very much... he doted on her. Alexandria has a very keen mind, and he personally oversaw her education. And then...he became ill and he died. Our kleinen...she was devastated. We had to move from our home to a place where everything was unfamiliar to her.

PRUET

While we were unpacking her father's things, she showed an interest in his fencing swords.

*Incredulous, Percy and Marguerite look at each other and mouth the word  
"Fencing?!"*

EDELTRAUD

Even when she was very small, her Vater [Father] had let her handle them. And she would swish-swish-swish all around the room.

PRUET

Every day she would ask to see them. There was finally something for her to focus on besides all the death that had visited her in her life. Obviously, she has pursued other interests as well, but fencing...that is her first and truest love.

EDELTRAUD

We knew nothing of Sir Blakeney's family. We would find papers and write to people, but never received any responses until (motioning to Percy's letter) this solicitor wrote back to us. We had no idea what would happen to our Xander, but we were determined that she should be able to keep herself safe.

MARGUERITE

But why should you fear for Alexandria's safety?

EDELTRAUD

Madame Blakeney...

MARGUERITE

Please...call me Marguerite.

EDELTRAUD

Thank you, Marguerite. We all know how the world works. Women of every class should be able to walk alone and not be concerned about their safety. In a perfect world, fathers and mothers would teach their sons not to assault women. But we do not live in a perfect world. We made sure Xander would be able to protect herself.

PERCY

Rather...but really... this afternoon she was doing more than just protecting herself...

ALEXANDREA

*Storms into the room. Furious, but holding herself together.*  
Excuse me! Do you believe I am not worthy of respect?

PERCY

I beg your pardon?

ALEXANDREA

I am fully capable of speaking for myself. If you wanted to speak with someone about my conduct, you should have come to me. Instead of showing me this consideration, this courtesy, you go behind my back, causing great turmoil to my beloved companions.

PERCY

Gadzooks, my girl...

ALEXANDREA

I am NOT your GIRL.

PERCY

No. Thank the heavens for that. But I am the person your father recommended as your caretaker.

ALEXANDREA

Even now...do you really think I need a caretaker?

MARGUERITE

Alexandrea, we know nothing about one another. We were...surprised...by your reaction to the men who halted your carriage.

PERCY

I...stupidly... sought out Monsieur and Frau Guillaume so we could make some sense of what we witnessed today. Pray, what do you have to say about your...behavior... this afternoon?

ALEXANDREA

*Pauses.*

I would say that I needed to keep my weight more evenly distributed between my right and left legs.

PRUET

I am glad you noticed that. As a woman, you don't have to worry as much about becoming off balance when leaning forward, but it is still important to keep yourself centered.

*Alexandrea and Pruet take various stances to demonstrate what they are saying. Edeltraud shakes her head with annoyance*

PERCY

Did you not approve of this afternoon's mischief, Frau Guillaume?