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SF PERUSALS

The Scarlet Pimpernel

A play by
Baroness Orczy

adapted by
Beverley Cross

Samuel French – London
New York – Sydney – Toronto – Hollywood



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CHARACTERS

England

HRH the Prince of Wales
Lord Anthony Dewhurst
Lord Grenville, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
Sir Percy Blakeney, Bt
Sir Andrew ffoulkes, Bt
Jellyband, landlord of *The Fisherman's Rest*
Marguerite Blakeney, née St Just
Sally Jellyband

France

Comte de Tournai
Comte de Fayence
Chevalier Paul de Grignon
Robespierre, leading member of the Committee of Public Safety
Chauvelin, envoy to England
Armand St Just
Lambert
Brogard, landlord of the *Lion d'Or*
Guillotine Sergeant
Citizen Captain
Executioner
Henriette Bavay, whore to the former Duc de St Denis
Tricoteuses, Soldiers, Beggars, Sailors, Passengers, Flunkeys, Servants, Aristocrats, Citizens etc.

The action takes place in France and England

Time—the Autumn of 1792

THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL

First produced at the Chichester Theatre on 31st July, 1985, with the following cast of characters:

England

HRH the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV — Rowland Davies
Lord Anthony Dewhurst — Iain Mitchell
Lord Grenville, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs — Christopher Birch
Sir Percy Blakeney, Bt — Donald Sinden
Sir Andrew ffoulkes, Bt — Michael Simkins
Jellyband, landlord of *The Fisherman's Rest* — David Lloyd Meredith
Marguerite Blakeney, née St Just — Joanna McCallum
Sally Jellyband — Jaye Griffiths

France

Comte de Tournai — Peter Stockbridge
Robespierre — Tim Yealland
Chauvelin, envoy to England — Charles Kay
Lambert — Andrew Wickes
Armand St Just — Julian Wadham
Brogard, landlord of the *Lion d'Or* — Desmond Barrit
Citizen Captain — Alex Jennings
Sergeant — Carl Oatley
Old Man (Paul de Grignon) — Michael Grandage
Suzanne de Tournai — Chairman Gradwell
Old Woman — Jane Salter
Aristocrats, Citizens, Servants — Janet Behan, Brett Fancy, Amanda Mainard, Jenny Michelmore, Jane Snowden

Italy

The voice of Signorina Bosca — Ann Murray

Directed by Nicholas Hytner
Décor by Mark Thompson

It was subsequently presented by Duncan C Weldon with Paul Gregg, Lionel Becker and Jerome Minskoff for Triumph Apollo Productions Ltd in association with Court Productions Ltd and by arrangement with Louis Benjamin for Stoll Moss Theatres at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, on 11th December, 1985, with the following cast of characters:

England

HRH the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV — Rowland Davies
Lord Anthony Dewhurst — Iain Mitchell
Lord Grenville, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs — Christopher Birch
Sir Percy Blakeney, Bt — Donald Sinden
Sir Andrew ffoulkes, Bt — Michael Simkins
Jellyband, landlord of *The Fisherman's Rest* — Desmond Barrit
Marguerite Blakeney, née St Just — Joanna McCallum
Sally Jellyband — Amanda Mainard

France

Comte de Tournai — Peter Stockbridge
Chevalier Paul de Grignon — Michael Grandage
Robespierre, leading member of the Committee of Public Safety — Alex Jennings
Chauvelin, envoy to England — Charles Ray
Armand St Just — Michael Grandage
Lambert — Andrew Wicks
Brogard, landlord of the *Lion d'Or* — Desmond Barrit
Guillotine Sergeant — Carl Oatley
Barricade Sergeant — Alex Jennings
Executioner — Mike Gallant
Princesse Blanche de Vaugard — Jane Salter
Suzanne de Tournai — Charmian Gradwell
Henriette Bavay, whore to the former Duc de St Denis — Sophia Winter
Prioress of the convent of St Hermine Les Vignes — Gaynor Sinclair
Tricoteuse — Hattie Arkwright

Italy

The voice of Signorina Bosca — Ann Murray

Directed by Nicholas Hytner
Designed by Mark Thompson

ACT I

Paris, the place of execution. October, 1792

All is cold, sinister, bleak and wreathed in evening mist

Crowd
(*recorded chanting*) Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, sinon La Mort!
Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, sinon La Mort!
Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, sinon La Mort!

They cheer wildly

Sergeant's voice (*quelling the noise*) The former Abbé of Montbazon.

Loud jeering from the crowd is followed by silence as the Abbé mounts the scaffold

Crowd (*recorded*) À bas les curés. (*etc. etc.*) Sssh, silence! (*etc.*)

The noise of the guillotine followed by cheering, giving way to:

(*Recorded chanting*) Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, sinon La Mort!
Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, sinon La Mort!
Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, sinon La Mort!

More wild cheering

Sergeant's voice (*quelling the noise*) The former Marie-Simone, Comtesse de Villefranche.

All Tricoteuses suddenly slam open their windows onstage

The Crowd jeer again followed by silence for the noise of the guillotine. Then the Crowd cheer, giving way to another chant

Crowd (*recorded chanting*) Mort aux tyrans!
Mort aux tyrans!
Mort aux tyrans!

Then another chant of "Liberté" etc., and during this chant the guillotine trucks on, and, as it does so, the crowd noise comes, deafeningly, into the auditorium

On the guillotine are the two Executioners (one is holding up a severed head) and the Sergeant, who is throat-miked, so he sounds the same as he did when on the sound track. As he speaks the noise is quelled as usual

Sergeant Louis Paul, former Comte de Fayence.

The Comte enters, prodded by two Sansculottes

Crowd (*recorded chanting*) À bas les traîtres! (*etc.*) Ssh, silence!

The Crowd are silent as the Comte mounts the scaffold. The execution takes place. The Executioner holds up the head. The Crowd cheer wildly giving way to the chant

(*Recorded chanting*) Mort aux tyrans!
Mort aux tyrans!
Mort aux tyrans!

More cheering

Sergeant (*quelling the noise*) The former Henriette Bavay, whore to the former Duc de Saint-Denis.

Henriette Bavay enters

Crowd (*recorded chanting*) À mort! À mort! (*Etc.*) Silence! (*Etc.*)

The usual sequence; they cheer until she reaches the scaffold; she is guillotined; they cheer wildly

(*Recorded chanting*) Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, sinon La Mort!
Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, sinon La Mort!
Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, sinon La Mort!

More cheering

Sergeant Suzanne de Tournai, daughter of the former Comte de Tournai.
Crowd (*recorded chanting*) À bas les aristos! (*Etc.*)

The Crowd scream louder as Suzanne does not appear, but their noise is quelled by the appearance of:

Chauvelin, the special agent of the Committee of Security of the Paris Commune. All in black, he is a sinister, ruthless and dangerous man—a fanatic

Chauvelin Suzanne de Tournai ... ! Move yourselves there! Fainted has she? Then drag her out of the cart. Madame La Guillotine wants to be finished before dark!
Lambert (*off*) Citizen Chauvelin!
Chauvelin What is it, Lambert? Get her up there to the scaffold. The Committee want her head! And the mob wants to see it before the light fades!

Lambert appears. He is in the uniform of a captain in the National Guard. A moustached, muscular man—henchman to Citizen Chauvelin. Lambert is followed by a Soldier dragging a grotesque limp figure—a scarecrow caricature of straw in a girl's dress. It crumples like a broken doll at Chauvelin's feet

Lambert She *was* there, I swear it! I saw her in the tumbril as we left the Conciergerie—the same dress, citizen!
Chauvelin Damn the dress!

Lambert Somewhere along Saint Honoré . . . It was getting dark . . . There was a fight in the crowd . . . Someone shouting "Long live the King!" and the soldiers tried to sort it out . . . They must have switched her then . . . I thought she'd fainted . . . couldn't see her face . . . *Its* face!
Chauvelin Damn the face! I wanted her head!
Lambert This was pinned to the skirt . . . (*He passes the note to Chauvelin*)
Chauvelin The Devil . . .
Lambert Just the drawing of a flower.
Chauvelin (*hurling the note away*) Get to the West Barricade!
Lambert Citizen?
Chauvelin The West Barricade. We'll shut Paris up like a rat trap! Move! Move!

Chauvelin hurries away. Lambert and the Soldier clatter away

The mist swirls, the Lights fade. A dog howls and we hear the hiss of the wind

A moment, then we gradually make out the flicker of a brazier and the shape of a stout iron gate. It is night at the West Barricade

A Captain and a group of Soldiers are gathered around the brazier. Before them stands a man in ragged working-man's clothes. The Citizen Captain is trying to decipher a document. A Beggar and couple of Drunks are huddled in sleep in a corner near the gate

The unseen dog continues to howl and bark

Lambert enters

The Citizen Captain attempts a salute

Citizen Captain All right, let this one through.
Lambert Just a minute.
Citizen Captain Citizen Lambert.
Lambert Have you passed anyone through in the last hour?
Citizen Captain No-one. Nothing. Not even a dog!
Lambert Well, who's this one then?
Citizen Captain Says he's a carpenter. Got documents to prove it.

Lambert studies the passport

Lambert (*amiably*) Hallo. You're a carpenter are you?

The Man nods

Travelling to Dieppe, eh? Got a job lined up? You have got relations there? I'm right, aren't I?

The Man nods again

Good . . . Good. (*He suddenly seizes the Man by the wrist*) Show me your hands . . . Ah. You're a bit deaf. I said show—me—your—hands.

Trembling, the Man holds out his hands. Grinning, Lambert examines them. He rubs his fingers over the Man's open palms

But they're soft, soft as a woman's thighs ... they don't look like a carpenter's hands, not worker's hands. No, they're more like a gentleman's hands—aristocratic ... (*He suddenly reaches forward and tears open the Man's shirt, then reaches to his throat and produces a crucifix*) Ah! A priest, are we? Or something grander perhaps ... An Abbé perhaps? By the belly on you you've enjoyed a rich, soft life. Take him away! (*He throws the passport into the brazier*)

Soldiers move in to seize the Priest and drag him away

(*To the Citizen Captain*) Just as well I turned up isn't it!

Citizen Captain Yes.

Lambert I've got a nose for them, you know! That one reeked of incense and roast duck—not an *English* smell.

Citizen Captain English?

Lambert Haven't you heard?

Citizen Captain Nobody ever tells us anything.

Lambert There's a bunch of Englishmen helping these damned aristocrats out of the country, headed by a devil, whose name nobody knows, but who goes by the title of the Scarlet Pimpernel. Only last week, we learned that he was in Paris, the guard was doubled at all the gates and still he got through.

Citizen Captain How?

Lambert How? Ha! It makes me spew to think of it! It was at Bibot's gate. This Captain of the Guard turns up with a troop of soldiers, and asks Bibot has he passed a wine-vendor through with a cart load of empty barrels. "Yes, I have," said Bibot, "but don't you worry because I sounded every one of them." "You idiot," says the Captain, "of course they were empty, but the wine-vendor was the Scarlet Pimpernel, and his boy was the woman Montrichard! Which way did they go?" "On the Calais road," says Bibot. "Your head will pay for this treachery," says the Captain, "after them boys", and away they go through the gates.

Citizen Captain Why didn't he examine the wine-vendor?

Lambert But the wine-vendor wasn't the Scarlet Pimpernel!

Citizen Captain No!

Lambert No. The Captain of the Guard was the Scarlet Pimpernel, and every one of his soldiers a stinking aristocrat.

The unseen dog barks furiously

Blakeney, dressed as an old hag, enters pulling a cart

Citizen Captain Hey! Mother Renaud. What happened to your horse today?

Blakeney Oh terrible. Dropped dead of the staggers.

Citizen Captain Where's your passport?

Blakeney What's that?

Citizen Captain Where's your passport?

Blakeney I've got twenty-three locks of hair, all colours, darlings, all gathered today from the Garden of Madame la Guillotine. Ooh! They

smell so nice! Here's what's left of the Bavay woman and the Villefranche bitch! I'll be back tomorrow to gather some more.

Lambert Where's your documents?

Blakeney Documents?

Citizen Captain Yes. Passport!

Blakeney Oh, oh! He takes me for an aristocrat! That's rich that is . . . I'm a real duchess!

Blakeney laughs and coughs and spits

Lambert We want your passport, if you've got one.

Blakeney Of course, I've got one, darling.

Lambert Well then, hand it over.

Blakeney Here it is.

Lambert snatches at it and misses

Don't be impatient.

Lambert Insult the Republic and I'll have you flogged!

Blakeney Watch your temper now, dearie.

Lambert You watch your tongue. Get rid of this old cow.

Blakeney Eh! Eh! (*Starting the cart*) Don't you go insulting me! We're all supposed to be equal now!

Citizen Captain Pass Mother Renaud and her grandson.

Lambert Just a minute. Where's your grandson?

Blakeney He's sick, very, very sick.

Lambert Where is he?

Blakeney In here.

Lambert Let's have a look.

Blakeney Careful now, darling.

Lambert lifts the cover. A limp, bare white arm flops out

Lambert Is that him?

Blakeney Careful, I said. Wouldn't touch him if I were you.

Lambert Why not?

Blakeney See those sores, darling. All black and red, and the pus seeping out . . .

Lambert (*moving backward*) What . . . ? What's he got then?

Blakeney The plague.

Lambert Death and hell! Get him out of here!

Blakeney Just put his arm back will you?

Lambert I'm not touching him. On your way—and take the plague with you!

Blakeney All right, all right. Afraid of catching it are you? You ought to show more sympathy for a poor old woman.

Citizen Captain On your way!

Blakeney Don't shout. I'm taking him to his mother in Corbeaux, but I'm afraid he'll die before he gets there, poor boy. His whole body covered in sores . . . the pus. (*He reaches out at the Citizen Captain*)

Citizen Captain Get on with you, and when you come back in the morning, try another gate, for you're not coming back through this one!

Blakeney Ha, ha, ha! You men are all alike! It takes a woman to have true courage. You're a bold one, Captain, you are! A real hero! Ça ira! Ça ira!

Blakeney pulls the cart away through the gate

The Soldiers close the gate behind her

Lambert God, what a hag! Evil old bitch!

The Chevalier Paul de Grignon enters disguised as an old man, limping and leaning on a stick

Where are you bound for, Grandad?

De Grignon For Nordesque. I'm too old for all this change and want peace and quiet. I've not long to live, and nothing to live for, since my boy was killed on the night they stormed the Bastille.

Citizen Captain Where's your passport?

De Grignon What's that?

Lambert Can we have a look at your passport?

De Grignon I didn't know an honest citizen needed a passport. Best be off home then.

Lambert reaches out and pulls off the old Man's hat. The wig comes away to reveal a young man

Lambert You'll have to do better than that to fool me. You should have tried the North Gate. Bibot might have been taken in! What's your name?

De Grignon The Chevalier Paul de Grignon.

Lambert Oh! Well, Chevalier Paul, tomorrow you will be introduced to Madame la Guillotine. Her salon is very well patronized and I have no doubt you will find many of your friends and acquaintances there.

De Grignon No doubt—no doubt. Take me to Madame la Guillotine, and believe me, I shall be proud to make the acquaintance of the only decent Republican in France. Long live the King!

The Citizen Captain knocks the Chevalier to the ground

He is dragged away by the Soldiers

Citizen Captain They are hard to crush, these aristocrats, but I never grudge them their little jokes.

Lambert I hate the lot of them.

Chauvelin (*off*) Who's in charge here?

Lambert Citizen Chauvelin . . .

Chauvelin enters

Chauvelin Lambert! An old hag of a woman may pass this way with a cart. You are to stop her and bring her before the Committee of the Commune——

Lambert An old hag with a cart! Why, she passed through—only just now!

Chauvelin What! Passed this way?

Citizen Captain She went towards Corbeaux.
Chauvelin Idiots! Towards Calais more like! Where were your eyes? Did you search the cart?
Lambert Not me. Her grandson was inside with the plague. The passport was all correct enough.
Chauvelin Forged! And in the cart was a girl—the aristocrat Suzanne de Tournai—condemned to death by the Tribunal of the Republic!
Lambert But the old woman? The old hag?
Chauvelin That God-damned Englishman—the Scarlet Pimpernel!

The unseen dog barks furiously

General confusion. The Lights fade

Everyone exits

Music. There is the sound of wind through trees. An owl hoots. Then moonlight comes up

Blakeney, still disguised as the old hag, enters supporting the half-conscious figure of a young girl, Suzanne de Tournai. She is muffled in a long, ragged cloak over boy's clothes

Blakeney gives the signal

Other men enter and surround Blakeney. They are the League of the Scarlet Pimpernel. They wear long cloaks and brandish pistols

Blakeney Here she is, lads. Suzanne de Tournai. Take her through Calais to the schooner. We'll meet in Dover for a council of war. To England!
All To England! (*They take Suzanne*)

Blakeney exits. Everyone exits

The wind howls louder now and we hear the sound of a rough, swelling sea. There is a sudden crash of lightning and a crash of thunder. The rigging drops. Ropes whip through the air, a single lantern swings to a ship's slow roll

We are on board ship. there are passengers with luggage and sailors in oil-skins

Chauvelin and Lambert appear, wearing long sea-cloaks. Lambert is green and horribly seasick. They shout above the wind

Lambert (*groaning*) How much longer?
Chauvelin You'll see the lights of Dover soon enough.
Lambert I want to die . . .
Chauvelin Courage, man. Where's your patriotism?
Lambert I never volunteered to be a sailor—and I don't think much of spying either.
Chauvelin Nonsense, Citizen. We're not at war. Not yet! But if you're nervous, if anyone asks what we are just say "Long live the King!".
Lambert It'll stick in my throat!
Chauvelin So much the better. Nothing much else has these past few hours.

Lambert groans and retches again. The fastidious Chauvelin turns his head away

The following song is sung to the traditional air of "Tom Bowling" by Charles Dibden, during which, Lambert and Chauvelin exit

All Hands Aloft

Sailor (*singing*) All hands aloft! The long day's over
The white cliffs loom in sight,
And soon we'll see the lights of Dover
A'gleaming through the night.
The storm is done, the tempest dying,
The bright stars shine once more—
The castle on high, the brave flag flying
And soon we'll be ashore.

The Lights change as we move from the ship into the comfort of an inn at Dover

All (*singing*) All hands on deck! The long day's over—
The ensign slowly falls,
And welcome gleam the lights of Dover
Beneath the castle walls.
Hot steaming punch! Log fires to greet us—
We'll go to sea no more!
England at last! And friends to meet us
Now we are safe ashore . . .
For now we are safe ashore.

The Lights come up to reveal the interior of The Fisherman's Rest—*an inn at Dover. All is snug and comfortable and warmly lit by oil-lamps. In contrast to France, it is a vision of prosperity and good order*

Jellyband, the landlord, waddles about

A door bangs open and the noise of the wind crescendoes

Chauvelin and Lambert enter. Both men are still wrapped in their long, dripping sea-cloaks

Jellyband A dirty night, gentlemen.

Chauvelin And a rough crossing. My man here was as sick as a dog all night.

Lambert (*with effort*) Long live the King!

Jellyband Soon find his legs and his appetite back now he's safe ashore, soon get his colour back once he's warm. From France are we, sir?

Chauvelin Brussels.

Jellyband Ah! That's all right then!

Chauvelin You're the landlord?

Jellyband I am, sir. And you've come to the right place, I promise you. None better in all Dover than *The Fisherman's Rest*. What can I get for you gentlemen?

Chauvelin Brandy and water for my companion here. And something to eat for me.

Jellyband Nothing to drink, sir?
Chauvelin I never drink.
Jellyband As you wish, sir. (*He turns to go*)
Chauvelin Thank you.

Jellyband exits

Lambert This England is as cold as a virgin's grave. Where's the fire?
Chauvelin Not yet, citizen, for the moment you'll just have to shiver and drip—over here in the corner where it's dark.

The door sounds again as Chauvelin and Lambert move into the shadows

Jellyband returns with the brandy

Jellyband Here we are, sir. The food won't be long.

Lambert takes the brandy. Jellyband moves away

Chauvelin Are you expecting more company tonight, landlord?
Jellyband Most likely, sir. More than likely.

The young and elegant Lord Anthony Dewhurst enters

Lord Anthony! Good-evening to you, sir. Come in out of the rain.
Lord Anthony All well, Mr Jellyband?
Jellyband All except the weather, my lord.
Lord Antony And all clear? (*He points to Chauvelin and Lambert in the corner*)
Jellyband (*confidentially*) All clear, just two travelling gentlemen. Come in out of the rain, they have . . . from Brussels . . . No problem, my lord.
Lord Anthony Very good. (*He removes his cloak and hat and gives them to Jellyband*) You have no-one else staying here, have you?
Jellyband Not *staying*. Just a couple of passengers waiting for the boat to France, my lord, and no-one coming, either, except Lady Blakeney, and she isn't agoing to stay.
Lord Anthony Lady Blakeney?
Jellyband Yes, my lord, Lady Blakeney's brother is crossing over to France before midnight, in the *Daydream*, and she is coming here, just to say goodbye to him.

Sir Andrew ffoulkes' voice is heard from outside

Sir Andrew (*off*) Take care now . . . Mind I don't bang your head on the doorpost.

The dashing and handsome Sir Andrew enters carrying Suzanne in his arms. She is dressed as a boy

Give a chap a hand here, Dewhurst.
Lord Anthony My pleasure, ffoulkes.
Jellyband Evening, Sir Andrew.
Sir Andrew Evening, Jelly. We'll set her down in the chair there—the poor girl's in a pitiful state.

Jellyband I'll get some help.

Jellyband exits

Lord Anthony and Sir Andrew hover around Suzanne. Lord Anthony looks over his shoulder towards Chauvelin in the corner and then turns back to Sir Andrew

Lord Anthony What happened? All safe this journey?

Sir Andrew Absolutely splendid! The chief brought Mamselle de Tournai through the gates of Paris in a market cart, right under the Republicans' very noses, disguised as an old woman this time!

Lord Anthony Good work. Where did you leave him?

Sir Andrew Outside Calais, but he'll be here damn soon.

Lord Anthony That's devilish awkward! Jelly tells me they're expecting Lady Blakeney here tonight.

Sir Andrew Lady Blakeney! The chief's called a council of war. How can we have it with her hanging about?

Lord Anthony I suppose it'll have to wait.

Sir Andrew There's no time. We've got things to discuss. Lady Blakeney's brother has joined the band and is going over to Paris tonight to get the young girl's father out.

Lord Anthony Her father?

Sir Andrew The Comte de Tournai.

Suzanne I should not have left him.

Sir Andrew You had no choice. But have no fear, my dear, our chief can work miracles.

Suzanne Your chief, monsieur? Who is he?

Lord Anthony The Scarlet Pimpernel works in the shadows, my dear, and his identity is only known, under a solemn oath of secrecy, to his immediate followers.

Suzanne What is a Pimpernel, monsieur?

Sir Andrew A humble English wayside flower; it is also the name chosen to hide the identity of the best and bravest man in all the world.

Suzanne But why should your leader—why should you all risk your lives for us, who are nothing to you?

Lord Anthony Sport, my dear mademoiselle—sport! You know we are a nation of sportsmen, and just now it is the fashion to pluck the fox from the teeth of the hound. 'Od's life! I shall give up hunting this winter. This is the finest sport I have ever encountered. Hair's-breadth escapes! The devil's own risks! Tally-ho and away we go!

Suzanne How many are there of you, monsieur?

Sir Andrew Twenty all told, mademoiselle. One to command, and——

Lord Anthony Nineteen!

Sir Andrew —nineteen to obey.

Suzanne May God protect you all. It is noble work.

Sir Andrew You flatter us, mademoiselle.

Suzanne No. I am ashamed . . . to think that among Frenchmen and women only treachery is supreme—in the name of Liberty and Fraternity!

Lord Anthony And some of the women have been more bitter and savage than the men.

Sir Andrew That's very true.

Suzanne There was Marguerite St Just.

Sir Andrew Marguerite St Just?

Suzanne Yes, she denounced the Marquis de Mont Forte and all his family to the Tribunal.

Lord Anthony Surely not!

Suzanne Yes! She was a leading actress at the Comédie-Française and recently, I believe, she married an Englishman . . . You know her?

Lord Anthony Know her? Know Lady Blakeney? She's the most fashionable woman in London!

Sir Andrew Just a moment, Dewhurst. There must be some mistake. Lady Blakeney's husband, Sir Percy Blakeney, is a personal friend of the Prince of Wales.

Suzanne Then I pray that while I am in this beautiful country I may never meet Lady Blakeney.

Jellyband enters followed by Sally

Jellyband My Lord Anthony, Lady Blakeney's coach has just arrived in the courtyard.

Sir Andrew That's torn it.

Lord Anthony (*to Jellyband*) Try and keep her talking for a moment.

Jellyband Yes, my lord. Quick, Sally.

Jellyband and Sally exit

Suzanne I will not see her!

Sir Andrew You must.

Suzanne I will not speak to her! Never!

Lord Anthony She can help you. You must remember—you are an exile now.

Suzanne I'll remember that *she* sent the family of Mont Forte to the guillotine.

Music crescendoes again from the bar

Sally appears and Jellyband leads on Marguerite. She is wrapped in a magnificent cloak, carries a tall cane and wears a gigantic hat. Jellyband is in her way and dances about, bowing and puffing

Marguerite Dieu! I'm as wet as a herring! Has anyone ever seen such a contemptible climate? Alors, my good man! What are you standing in the way for, dancing about like a turkey with the gout! Let me get to a fire! I am perished with cold! My Lord Tony and Sir Andrew! How wonderful!

They kiss her. Marguerite sees Suzanne. Suzanne turns her back

And who . . . ? No. It cannot be . . .

Lord Anthony Suzanne de Tournai, my Lady . . . daughter of the Comte de Tournai . . .

Marguerite Hoiti toiti, Citizeness, what flies sting you, pray? But what on earth are you doing here—and dressed like that? Bizarre—positively Shakespearean . . . We'll *have* to do something about your hair.
Sir Andrew She was rescued from Paris yesterday.
Marguerite (*sitting*) Indeed?
Suzanne My hair was cropped before I left the prison—to make it easier for the guillotine.
Marguerite You poor child . . . and your father?
Sir Andrew Still in prison.
Suzanne Expecting execution within the week—denounced by a friend . . . A form of treachery with which *you* are not unfamiliar!
Marguerite I shall ignore that, my dear. Your tragic experience must have contaminated your manners! Mon dieu—what times we live in! Barbaric, gentlemen. And my beautiful Paris—will I ever see it again? Ever enter my beloved Theatre? Ever play Molière or Racine again?

Again there is the sound of the main door slamming open. Jellyband hops about

Jellyband My lord, it's Sir Percy.
Marguerite God forbid. Is he expected?
Jellyband I believe so, madam.
Marguerite Then no more politics, I beg you. My husband won't understand a word we're saying!

Sir Percy Blakeney, immaculately elegant, strolls in

Blakeney (*entering*) What a delightful surprise! (*He looks round the room*)
Jellyband Sir Percy Blakeney.
Blakeney (*finally producing his quizzing glass and seeing Marguerite*) Sink me, but I thought it must be your voice, my dear. What a delightful surprise. And how do, Tony. How do, ffoulkes. Did you ever see such beastly weather. And who's your young friend?
Sir Andrew An exile from France, Sir Percy.
Blakeney Monsieur.
Marguerite Monsieur has been exceedingly rude to me.
Blakeney Good lord! Can't have that, can we?
Suzanne (*stepping forward*) Monsieur, I have offended madame, your wife, but I am ready to offer you the usual reparation between persons of honour.

Blakeney looks at Suzanne in complete bewilderment for a moment or two through his quizzing glass

Blakeney (*laughing*) Lor! Now my dear, where the cuckoo did you learn to speak English so frightfully well?
Suzanne Monsieur?
Blakeney 'Tis marvellous! Damned marvellous! I vow I can't speak the French lingo like that! Can I, ffoulkes?
Sir Andrew No! I'll vouch for that!
Suzanne (*rather bewildered*) Monsieur! I fear that you do not understand

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