

Works by the Marquis de Sade
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*Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom,
and Other Writings*

The 120 Days of Sodom and Other Writings

Juliette

The Marquis de Sade

*Justine,
Philosophy in the Bedroom,
and other writings*

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Foreword

That the Marquis de Sade also wrote books is a fact now known to almost everyone who reads. And knowledge of Sade as a writer ordinarily ends there. For of his immense and incomparable literary achievement, and of his capital importance in the history of ideas, hardly a suspicion has been conveyed by occasional collections of anodyne fragments culled from his writings or by more frequent and flagrantly spurious "adaptations." (Of the two, cheap-paperback pastiche and more tastefully contrived anthology of excerpts, the latter, equally meretricious, is hardly the less dishonest.) To date, this is Sade bibliography in the United States. To date, Sade remains an unknown author.

For this, censorship, Puritan morality, hypocrisy, and lack of cultivation may be blamed, although not very usefully, since Sade sought condemnation. Ultimately, the fault for it is all his own, and the fate of his books is his triumph. Strange? To be and to stay an unknown author, that has always been his status and his destiny, that was the status he coveted, that was the destiny he created for himself, not by accident or unwittingly, but deliberately and out of an uncommon perversity. To write, but to go unread—this has happened to many writers. To write endlessly and under the most unfavorable conditions and as though nothing mattered more than to write, but to write in such a way, at such length, upon such subjects, in such a manner and using such language as to render oneself unapproachable, "unpublishable," "unknown," and yet upon succeeding generations to exert the most intense and enduring influence—this, it will be admitted, is rare indeed.

Secrets cannot survive their disclosure; to bare Sade to the public would seem to be rendering him a disservice. Against this "betrayal"—a graver one by far than any accomplished by the obscure tradesmen who from time to time get out a child's version of *Justine*—Sade has a defense: it consists in maintaining the reader at a distance, not merely at arm's length but at a remove one is tempted to call absolute. Or, to put it more simply, in forcing every reader—every so-called reasonable reader—to reject him.

Thus, the present attempt—which is the first to be made in the United States—to provide the basis for a serious understanding of Sade is in a certain sense bound to fail. In this sense: the "reasonable" man (we repeat) can come to no understanding with this exceptional man who rejects everything by which and for which the former lives—laws, beliefs, duties, fears, God, country, family, fellows—everything and the human condition itself, and proposes instead a way of life which is the undoing of common sense and all its works, and which from the point of view of common sense resembles nothing so much as death; and which is, of course, impossible. Such must be the judgment of the "reasonable" man—of him who builds, saves, increases, continues, and thanks to whom the world goes round.

Even so, however firmly he be established in the normality that makes everyday life possible, still more firmly established in him and infinitely more deeply—in the farther reaches of his inalienable self, in his instincts, his dreams, his incoercible desires—the impossible dwells, a sovereign in hiding. What Sade has to say to us—and what we as normal social beings cannot heed or even hear—already exists within us, like a resonance, a forgotten truth, or like the divine promise whose fulfillment is finally the most solemn concern of our human existence.

Whether or not it is dangerous to read Sade is a question that easily becomes lost in a multitude of others and has never been settled except by those whose arguments are rooted in the conviction that reading leads to trouble. So it does; so it must, for reading leads nowhere but to questions. If books are to be burned, Sade's certainly must be burned along with the rest. But if, ultimately, freedom has any meaning, any meaning profounder than the facile utterances that fill our speeches and litter the columns of our peri-

odicals, then, we submit, they should not. At any rate, it is not our intention to enter any special plea for Sade. Nor to apologize for one of our civilization's treasures. Disinterred or left underground, Sade neither gains nor loses. While for us . . . the worst poverty may be said to consist in the ignorance of one's riches.

* * *

Great writing needs no justification, no complex exegesis: it is its own defense. Still, the special nature of Sade's work, the legend attached to his name, and the unusual length of time intervening between the writing and the present publication seemed to call for some introduction, both critical and biographical. Thus, Part One of the present volume aims at situating Sade in his times and among his familiars. For the brief biography in the form of a Chronology, the editors have relied primarily upon, and are indebted to, Maurice Heine's outline for a projected *Life* contained in Volume I of his *Œuvres choisies et Pages Magistrales du Marquis de Sade*. We also owe a particular debt to Gilbert Lely, Heine's close friend and heir to the great scholar's papers. The extent of both their contributions to the establishment of a valid Sade biography, and to a fuller understanding of both the man and his work, is detailed elsewhere.

Sade's letters are particularly revealing. We have included seven, ranging over an almost thirty-year period from the year of his marriage when he was twenty-three to the time of his release from the Monarchy's dungeons by the Revolutionary government, when he was over fifty. Letter I is from an unpublished manuscript, and is cited in Volume I of Lely's biography; Letters II, III, IV, and V are from *L'Aigle Mademoiselle* . . .¹ Letters VI and VII are from Paul Bourdin's *Correspondance*.

We have included two exploratory essays on Sade. The first, by Jean Paulhan, was written in 1946 as the Preface for a second edition of *Les Infortunes de la Vertu* published that year. The second, by Maurice Blanchot, forms part of that author's volume

¹ For full details of publication, see the Bibliography.

The year 1795 was a fruitful and auspicious one for Sade. Almost miraculously, he had survived the Reign of Terror and, just six weeks after the execution of Robespierre, was once again set free, on October 15, 1794. Sade's printer, Girouard, who had published *Justine* and, before his arrest under the Terror had been preparing *Aline et Valcour* for publication, had not been so lucky: on January 8, 1794, he went to the guillotine.

After Sade regained his freedom, he managed to retrieve that portion of *Aline et Valcour* which Girouard had already printed prior to his arrest, and by mid-summer of 1795 the first edition of this four-volume work, which Sade acknowledged, was published.

This same year there also appeared a small format, two-volume work, of anonymous authorship, enticingly entitled *La Philosophie dans le boudoir*. Although anonymous, it was offered as a "posthumous work by the author of *Justine*," a subterfuge Sade was to utilize two years later for the publication of *La Nouvelle Justine*. The place of publication of the original edition was given as Londres, aux dépens de la Compagnie, and besides an allegorical frontispiece, it contained four erotic engravings. The epigraph of the original edition is *La mère en prescrira la lecture à sa fille* (Mothers will make this volume mandatory reading for their daughters). A second edition, in two octavo volumes of 203 and 191 pages respectively, appeared ten years later, in 1805, with the added subtitle—for which Sade, then in the Charenton asylum, can scarcely have been responsible—*ou les Instituteurs immoraux* (or *The Immoral Teachers*). Curiously, the epigraph of this second

edition appeared—whether the change was intentional or not is a moot point—as *La mère en proscriera la lecture à sa fille* (*Mothers will forbid their daughters to read it*).

Together with the *Dialogue between a Priest and a Dying Man*, the *Philosophy in the Bedroom* is the only other nontheatrical work of Sade's written in the form of dialogue. Consisting of seven "Dialogues," in which philosophical speculations and dissertations on morality, history, and religion commingle with typical Sadean sexual fantasies, this work is one of the most specific, eloquent, and least redundant of Sade's major fictions. The four protagonists are Eugénie de Mistival, a chaste fifteen-year-old, a virgin and neophyte who is to be initiated into the mysteries of sensual pleasure; twenty-six-year-old Madame de Saint-Ange, a woman "of extreme lubricity"; her brother, the Chevalier de Mirvel, also a debauchee of considerable talents but who, unlike his sister and the fourth protagonist, Dolmancé ("The most corrupt and dangerous of men"), draws the line at the boundary of cruelty. All three of the initiators, with the possible exception of the Chevalier, who is still wrestling with his soul on the question of inflicting cruelty, would qualify as Sade's Unique Beings, of whom Maurice Blanchot makes mention in his Introduction. And, by the end of the day, Eugénie too, the aptest of pupils, is well on her way along the path of libertinage, that is (in Sade's canon), of freedom.

The economy and disposition of the four principal characters enable Sade to expound his views both positively and negatively, for teaching, initiating the neophyte, is not only instructing but also disabusing: one must rid Eugénie's pretty little head of all the false notions of religion, morality, and virtue which a hypocritical mother and false society have instilled in her since birth.

The long "Fifth Dialogue" of this work contains the well-known "Yet Another Effort, Frenchmen, If You Would Become Republicans," which Le Chevalier reads aloud. Although it may detract from the otherwise considerable unity of the work, this "pamphlet"¹ is a work of

considerable force, and perhaps the most eloquent refutation to those who accuse Sade of, or simplistically assimilate him to, the forces of evil and darkness which our century has spawned: fascism. The scope and complexity of Sade's ideas—independently of their individual merit or lack of merit—are such that they abound in contradictions and paradoxes, and may be quoted to prove or demonstrate a vast spectrum of opinion. But one thing is certain: Sade was for fewer laws, not more; for less restrictive social restraints on the individual, not more oppressive ones. As Maurice Heine has noted:

It is with the individual, with the countless individuals who go to make up human societies, that Sade has placed the only organic strength these societies may possess. . . . He offers a withering criticism of any social restraints which reduce to whatever slight degree the activity of the incoercible human element. In his eyes, the only thing which will lead him to accept not a social pact but a social compromise—which can be denounced and renewed at any time—is the self-interest of the individual. For him, any society which fails to understand this fundamental truth is destined to perish.

In the light of Kraftt-Ebing, Freud, or the detailed case histories of Wilhelm Stekel, the *Philosophy in the Bedroom* may appear somewhat less audacious than it did to previous generations (or those select few of the earlier generations who clandestinely were able to read it). That it is one of Sade's most seminal and compelling works there can be no doubt. It possesses another virtue: from one end to the other, there reigns a humor—a black and often grotesque humor, admittedly—which one looks for in vain in his strictly theatrical productions, and which perhaps exists nowhere else in his writing with such éclat, save in his extraordinary letters.

¹ During the Revolution of 1848, it was detached from the larger work and widely disseminated as a stirring work of great patriotic import.

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TO LIBERTINES

Voluptuaries of all ages, of every sex, it is to you only that I offer this work; nourish yourselves upon its principles: they favor your passions, and these passions, whereof coldly insipid moralists put you in fear, are naught but the means Nature employs to bring man to the ends she prescribes to him; harken only to these delicious promptings, for no voice save that of the passions can conduct you to happiness.

Lewd women, let the voluptuous Saint-Ange be your model; after her example, be heedless of all that contradicts pleasure's divine laws, by which all her life she was enchained.

You young maidens, too long constrained by a fanciful Virtue's absurd and dangerous bonds and by those of a disgusting religion, imitate the fiery Eugénie; be as quick as she to destroy, to spurn all those ridiculous precepts inculcated in you by imbecile parents.

And you, amiable debauchees, you who since youth have known no limits but those of your desires and who have been governed by your caprices alone, study the cynical Dolmancé, proceed like him and go as far as he if you too would travel the length of those flowered ways your lechery prepares for you; in Dolmancé's academy be at last convinced it is only by exploring and enlarging the sphere of his tastes and whims, it is only by sacrificing everything to the senses' pleasure that this individual, who never asked to be cast into this universe of woe, that this poor creature who goes under the name of Man, may be able to sow a smattering of roses atop the thorny path of life.

DIALOGUE THE FIRST

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE,
LE CHEVALIER DE MIRVEL

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Good day, my friend. And what of Monsieur Dolmancé?

LE CHEVALIER—He'll be here promptly at four; we do not dine until seven—and will have, as you see, ample time to chat.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—You know, my dear brother, I *do* begin to have a few misgivings about my curiosity and all the obscene plans scheduled for today. Chevalier, you overindulge me, truly you do. The more sensible I should be, the more excited and libertine this accursed mind of mine becomes—and all that you have given me but serves to spoil me. . . . At twenty-six, I should be sober and staid, and I'm still nothing but the most licentious of women. . . . Oh, I've a busy brain, my friend; you'd scarce believe the ideas I have, the things I'd like to do. I supposed that by confining myself to women I would become better behaved. . . ; that were my desires concentrated upon my own sex I would no longer pant after yours: pure fantasy, my friend; my imagination has only been pricked the more by the pleasures I thought to deprive myself of. I have discovered that when it is a question of someone like me, born for libertinage, it is useless to think of imposing limits or restraints upon oneself—impetuous desires immediately sweep them away. In a

word, my dear, I am an amphibious creature: I love everything, everyone, whatever it is, it amuses me; I should like to combine every species—but you must admit, Chevalier, is it not the height of extravagance for me to wish to know this unusual Dolmancé who in all his life, you tell me, has been unable to see a woman according to the prescriptions of common usage, this Dolmancé who, a sodomite out of principle, not only worships his own sex but never yields to ours save when we consent to put at his disposal those so well beloved charms of which he habitually makes use when consorting with men? Tell me, Chevalier, if my fancy is not bizarre! I want to be Ganymede to this new Jupiter, I want to enjoy his tastes, his debauches, I want to be the victim of his errors. Until now, and well you know it, my friend, until now I have given myself thus only to you, through complaisance, or to a few of my servants who, paid to use me in this manner, adopted it for profit only. But today it is no longer the desire to oblige nor is it caprice that moves me, but solely my own pendants. I believe that, between my past experiences with this curious mania and the courtesies to which I am going to be subjected, there is an inconceivable difference, and I wish to be acquainted with it. Paint your Dolmancé for me, please do, that I may have him well fixed in my mind before I see him arrive; for you know my acquaintance with him is limited to an encounter the other day in a house where we were together for but a few minutes.

LE CHEVALIER—Dolmancé, my dear sister, has just turned thirty-six; he is tall, extremely handsome, eyes very alive and very intelligent, but all the same there is some suspicion of hardness, and a trace of wickedness in his features; he has the whitest teeth in the world, a shade of softness about his figure and in his attitude, doubtless owing to his habit of taking on effeminate airs so often; he is extremely elegant, has a pretty voice, many talents, and above all else an exceedingly philosophic bent to his mind.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—But I trust he does not believe in God!

LE CHEVALIER—Oh, perish the thought! He is the most notorious atheist, the most immoral fellow. . . . Oh, no; his is the

most complete and thoroughgoing corruption, and he the most evil individual, the greatest scoundrel in the world.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Ah, how that warms me! Methinks that I'll be wild about this man. And what of his fancies, brother?

LE CHEVALIER—You know them full well; Sodom's delights are as dear to him in their active as in their passive form. For his pleasures, he cares for none but men; if however he sometimes deigns to employ women, it is only upon condition they be obliging enough to exchange sex with him. I've spoken of you to him; I advised him of your intentions, he agrees, and in his turn reminds you of the rules of the game. I warn you, my dear, he will refuse you altogether if you attempt to engage him to undertake anything else. "What I consent to do with your sister is," he declares, "an extravagance, an indiscretion with which one soils oneself but rarely and only by taking ample precautions."

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—*Soil oneself! . . . Precautions! . . .* Oh, how I adore the language those agreeable persons use! Between ourselves, we women also have exclusive words which like these just spoken, give an idea of the profound horror they have of all those who show heretical tendencies. . . . Tell me, my dear, has he had you? With your adorable face and your twenty years, one may, I dare say, captivate such a man?

LE CHEVALIER—We've committed follies together—I'll not hide them from you; you have too much wit to condemn them. The fact is, I favor women; I only give myself up to these odd whimsies when an attractive man urges me to them. And then there's nothing I stop at. I've none of that ludicrous arrogance which makes our young upstarts believe that it's by cuts with your walking stick you respond to such propositions. Is man master of his penchants? One must feel sorry for those who have strange tastes, but never insult them. Their wrong is Nature's too; they are no more responsible for having come into the world with tendencies unlike ours than are we for being born bandy-legged or well-proportioned. Is it, however, that a man acts insultingly to you when he manifests his desire to enjoy you? No, surely not; it is a compliment you are

paid; why then answer with injuries and insults? Only fools can think thus; never will you hear an intelligent man discuss the question in a manner different from mine; but the trouble is, the world is peopled with poor idiots who believe it is to lack respect for them to avow one finds them fitted for one's pleasures, and who, pampered by women—themselves forever jealous of what has the look of infringing upon their rights—, fancy themselves to be the Don Quixotes of those ordinary rights, and brutalize whoever does not acknowledge the entirety of their extent.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Come, my friend, kiss me. Were you to think otherwise, you'd not be my brother. A few details, I beseech you, both with what regards this man's appearance and his pleasures with you.

LE CHEVALIER—One of his friends informed Monsieur Dolmancé of the superb member wherewith you know me provided, and he obtained the consent of the Marquis de V*** to bring us together at supper. Once there, I was obliged to display my equipment: at first curiosity appeared to be his single motive; however, a very fair ass turned my way, and with which I was invited to amuse myself, soon made me see that penchant alone was the cause of this examination. I had Dolmancé notice all the enterprise's difficulties; he was steadfast. "A ram holds no terrors for me," he said, "and you'll not have even the glory of being the most formidable amongst the men who have perforated the anus I offer you." The Marquis was on hand; he encouraged us by fingering, dandling, kissing whatever the one or the other of us brought to light. I took up my position. . . . "Surely some kind of priming?" I urged. "Nothing of the sort," said the Marquis, "you'll rob Dolmancé of half the sensations he awaits from you; he wants you to cleave him in two, he wants to be torn asunder." "Well," I said, blindly plunging into the gulf, "he'll be satisfied." Perhaps, my dear sister, you think that I met with a great deal of trouble . . . not at all; my prick, enormous as it is, disappeared, contrary to all my expectations, and I touched the bottom of his entrails without the bugger seeming to feel a thing. I dealt kindly with Dolmancé; the extreme ecstasy he tasted, his wriggings and quiverings, his enticing utterances, all this soon made me happy too, and I inundated him. Scarcely was

I withdrawn when Dolmancé, turning toward me, his hair in disarray and his face red as a bacchante: "You see the state you've put me in, my dear Chevalier," said he, simultaneously presenting a pert, tough rogue of a prick, very long and at least six inches around, "deign, O my love, deign to serve me as a woman after having been my lover, and enable me to say that in your divine arms I have tasted all the delights of the fancy I cherish supremely." Finding as little difficulty in the one as in the other, I readied myself; the Marquis, dropping his breeches before my eyes, begged me to have the kindness to be yet a little of the man with him while I played wife to his friend; and I dealt with him as I had with Dolmancé, who paid me back a hundredfold for all the blows wherewith I belabored our third; and soon, into the depths of my ass, he exhaled that enchanted liquor with which, at virtually the same instant, I sprayed the bowels of V***.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—You must have known the most extreme pleasure, to find yourself thus between two; they say it is charming.

LE CHEVALIER—My angel, it is surely the best place to be; but whatever may be said of them, they're all extravagances which I should never prefer to the pleasure of women.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Well, my chivalrous friend, as reward for your touching consideration, today I am going to hand over to your passions a young virgin, a girl, more beautiful than Love itself.

LE CHEVALIER—What! With Dolmancé . . . you're bringing a woman here?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—It is a matter of an education; that of a little thing I knew last autumn at the convent, while my husband was at the baths. We could accomplish nothing there, we dared try nothing, too many eyes were fixed upon us, but we made a promise to meet again, to get together as soon as possible. Occupied with nothing but this desire, I have, in order to satisfy it, become acquainted with her family. Her father is a libertine—I've enthralled him. At any rate, the lovely one is coming, I am waiting

for her; we'll spend two days together . . . two delicious days; I shall employ the better part of the time educating the young lady. Dolmancé and I will put into this pretty little head every principle of the most unbridled libertinage, we will set her ablaze with our own fire, we will feed her upon our philosophy, inspire her with our desires, and as I wish to join a little practice to theory, as I like the demonstrations to keep abreast of the dissertations, I have destined to you, dear brother, the harvest of Cythera's myrtle, and to Dolmancé shall go the roses of Sodom. I'll have two pleasures at once: that of enjoying these criminal lecherries myself, and that of giving the lessons, of inspiring fancies in the sweet innocent I am luring into our nets. Very well, Chevalier, answer me: is the project worthy of my imagination?

LE CHEVALIER—It could not have risen in another: it is divine, my sister, and I promise to enact to perfection the charming role you reserve for me. Ah, mischievous one, how much pleasure you are going to take in educating this child; what pleasure you will find in corrupting her, in stifling within this young heart every seed of virtue and of religion planted there by her tutors! Actually, all this is too roué for me.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Be certain I'll spare nothing to pervert her, degrade her, demolish in her all the false ethical notions with which they may already have been able to dizzy her; in two lessons, I want to render her as criminal as am I . . . as impious . . . as debauched, as depraved. Notify Dolmancé, explain everything to him immediately he gets here so that his immoralities' poison, circulating in this young spirit together with the venom I shall inject, will in the shortest possible time wither and still all the seeds of virtue that, but for us, might germinate there.

LE CHEVALIER—It would be impossible to find a better man: irreligion, impiety, inhumanity, libertinage spill from Dolmancé's lips as in times past mystic unction fell from those of the celebrated Archbishop of Cambrai. He is the most profound seducer, the most corrupt, the most dangerous man. . . . Ah, my dear, let your pupil but comply with this teacher's instructions, and I guarantee her straightway damned.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—It should certainly not take long, considering the dispositions I know her to possess. . . .

LE CHEVALIER—But tell me, my dear sister, is there nothing to fear from the parents? May not this little one chatter when she returns home?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Have no fears. I have seduced the father . . . he's mine. I must confess to you, I surrendered myself to him in order to close his eyes: he knows nothing of my designs, and will never dare to scan them. . . . I have him.

LE CHEVALIER—Your methods are appalling!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Such they must be, else they're not sure.

LE CHEVALIER—And tell me, please, who is this youngster?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Her name is Eugénie, daughter of a certain Mistival, one of the wealthiest commercial figures in the capital, aged about thirty-six; her mother is thirty-two at the very most, and the little girl fifteen. Mistival is as libertine as his wife is pious. As for Eugénie, dear one, I should in vain undertake to figure her to you; she is quite beyond my descriptive powers . . . satisfy yourself with the knowledge that assuredly neither you nor I have ever set eyes on anything so delicious, anywhere.

LE CHEVALIER—But at least sketch a little if you cannot paint the portrait, so that, knowing fairly well with whom I am to deal, I may better fill my imagination with the idol to which I must sacrifice.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Very well, my friend: her abundant chestnut hair—there's too much of it to grasp in one's hand—descends to below her buttocks; her skin is of a dazzling whiteness, her nose rather aquiline, her eyes jet black and of a warmth! . . . Ah, my friend, 'tis impossible to resist those eyes. . . . You've no idea of the stupidities they've driven me to. . . . Could you but see the pretty eyebrows that crown them . . . the extraordinary lashes that border them. . . . A very small mouth, superb teeth, and, all of it, of a freshness! . . . One of her beauties is the elegant manner

whereby her lovely head is attached to her shoulders, the air of nobility she has when she turns. . . . Eugénie is tall for her age: one might think her seventeen; her figure is a model of elegance and finesse, her throat, her bosom delicious. . . . There indeed are the two prettiest little breasts! . . . Scarcely enough there to fill the hand, but so soft . . . so fresh . . . so very white! Twenty times have I gone out of my head while kissing them; and had you been able to see how she came alive under my caresses . . . how her two great eyes represented to me the whole state of her mind. . . . My friend, I ignore the rest. Ah! but if I must judge of her by what I know, never, I say, had Olympus a divinity comparable with this. . . . But I hear her . . . leave us; go out by way of the garden to avoid meeting her, and be on time at the rendezvous.

LE CHEVALIER—The portrait you have just made for me assures my promptness. . . . Ah, heaven! to go out . . . to leave you, in the state I am in . . . Adieu! . . . a kiss . . . a kiss, my dear sister, to satisfy me at least till then. (*She kisses him, touches the prick straining in his breeches, and the young man leaves in haste.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *kissing her*—Dear love, how many things are we going to do and say to one another! But, by the way, do you wish to take lunch, my queen? For the lesson may be prolonged.

EUGENIE—I have no need, dear friend, than to listen to you; we lunched a league from here; I'll be able to wait until eight o'clock this evening without feeling the least hunger.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Then let's go into my boudoir, where we will be more at our ease. I have already spoken to the servants. You may be certain no one shall take it into his head to interrupt us. (*They enter the boudoir, linked arm in arm.*)

DIALOGUE THE SECOND

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, EUGENIE

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Welcome, my pet! I have been awaiting you with an impatience you fully appreciate if you can read the feelings I have in my heart.

EUGENIE—Oh, my precious one, I thought I should never arrive, so eager was I to find myself in your arms. An hour before leaving, I dreaded all might be changed; my mother was absolutely opposed to this delightful party, declaring it ill became a girl of my age to go abroad alone; but my father had so abused her the day before yesterday that a single one of his glances was quite enough to cause Madame Mistival to subside utterly, and it ended with her consenting to what my father had granted me, and I rushed here. I have two days; your carriage and one of your servants must without fail take me home the day after tomorrow.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—How short is this period, my dearest angel, in so little time I shall hardly be able to express to you all you excite in me . . . and indeed we have to talk. You know, do you not, that 'tis during this interview that I am to initiate you into the most secret of Venus' mysteries; shall two days be time enough?

EUGENIE—Ah, were I not to arrive at a complete knowledge, I should remain. . . . I came hither to be instructed, and will not go till I am informed. . . .

DIALOGUE THE THIRD

*In a Delightful Boudoir*MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE,
EUGENIE, DOLMANCE

EUGENIE, *greatly surprised to find in this room a man whom she had not expected*—Great God! Dearest friend, we are betrayed!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *equally surprised*—Strange, Monsieur, to find you here. Were you not expected at four?

DOLMANCE—One always hastens the advent of that happiness which comes of seeing you, Madame. I encountered Monsieur, your brother—he anticipated the usefulness of my presence at the lessons you are to give Mademoiselle, and knew this to be the lyceum where they would be given. Unperceived, he introduced me into this chamber, far from imagining you might disapprove; and as for himself, aware his demonstrations will only be necessary after the dissertations on theory, he will not make his appearance until later.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Indeed, Dolmancé, this is an unforeseen turn. . . .

EUGENIE—By which I am not deceived, my good friend; it is all your work. . . . At least, you should have consulted me . . . instead of exposing me to this shame. It will certainly prejudice all our projects.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Eugénie, I protest—my brother is responsible for this, not I. But there's no cause for alarm: I know Dolmancé for a most agreeable man, and he possesses just that degree of philosophic understanding we require for your enlightenment. He can be of nothing but the greatest service to our schemes. As for his discretion, I am as willing to answer for it as for my own. Therefore, dear heart, familiarize yourself with this man who in all the world is the best endowed to form you and to guide you into a career of the happiness and the pleasures we wish to taste together.

EUGENIE, *blushing*—Oh! I still find all this most upsetting. . . .

DOLMANCE—Come, my lovely Eugénie, put yourself at ease. . . . Modesty is an antiquated virtue which you, so rich in charms, ought to know wonderfully well how to do without.

EUGENIE—But decency. . . .

DOLMANCE—Ha! A Gothicism not very much defended these days. It is so hostile to Nature! (*Dolmancé seizes Eugénie, folds her in his arms, and kisses her.*)

EUGENIE, *struggling in his embrace*—That's quite enough, Monsieur! . . . Indeed, you show me very little consideration!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Eugénie, listen to me: let's both of us cease behaving like pruders with this charming gentleman; I am not better acquainted with him than are you, yet watch how I give myself to him. (*She kisses him indecently on the mouth.*) Imitate me.

EUGENIE—Oh, most willingly; where might I find better examples? (*She puts herself in Dolmancé's arms; he kisses her ardently, tongue in mouth.*)

DOLMANCE—Amiable, delicious creature!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *kissing her in the same way*—Didst think, little chit, I'd not have my turn as well? (*At this point Dolmancé, holding first one in his arms, then the other, tongues both, each for a quarter of an hour, and they both tongue one another and him.*)

DOLMANCE—Ah, such preliminaries make me drunk with desire! Mesdames, upon my word, it is extraordinarily warm here; more lightly attired, we might converse with infinitely greater comfort.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—You are right, sir; we'll don these gauze negligees—of our charms, they'll conceal only those that must be hidden from desire.

EUGENIE—Indeed, dear one, you lead me to do things! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *helping her undress*—Completely ridiculous, isn't it?

EUGENIE—Most improper at the very least, I'd say. . . . My! how you kiss me!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Pretty bosom! . . . a rose only now reaching full bloom.

DOLMANCE, *considering, without touching, Eugénie's breasts*—And which promises yet other allurements . . . infinitely to be preferred.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Infinitely to be preferred?

DOLMANCE—Oh yes, upon my honor. (*Saying which, Dolmancé appears eager to turn Eugénie about in order to inspect her from the rear.*)

EUGENIE—No, I beg of you!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—No, Dolmancé . . . I don't want you yet to see . . . an object whose sway over you is so great that, the image of it once fixed in your head, you are unable thereafter to reason coolly. We need your lessons, first give them to us—and afterward the myrtle you covet will be your reward.

DOLMANCE—Very well, but in order to demonstrate, in order to give this beautiful child the first lessons of libertinage, we will require willing co-operation from you, Madame, in the exercise that must follow.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—So be it! All right then, look you here—I'm entirely naked. Make your dissertations upon me as much as you please.

DOLMANCE—Oh, lovely body! 'Tis Venus herself, embellished by the Graces.

EUGENIE—Oh, my dear friend, what charms! delights! Let me drink them in with my eyes, let me cover them with my kisses. (*She does so.*)

DOLMANCE—What excellent predispositions! A trifle less passion, lovely Eugénie, for the moment you are only being asked to show a little attention.

EUGENIE—Let's continue, I'm listening. . . . But how beautiful she is . . . so plump, so fresh! . . . Ah, how charming my dear friend is. Is she not, Monsieur?

DOLMANCE—Beautiful, assuredly . . . she is wondrous to see; but I am persuaded you yield to her in nothing. . . . Well, now, my pretty little student, either you pay attention to me or beware lest, if you are not docile, I exercise over you the rights amply conferred upon me by my title as your mentor.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Oh, yes, yes indeed, Dolmancé, I put her into your safekeeping. She must have a severe scolding if she misbehaves.

DOLMANCE—It is very possible I might not be able to confine myself to remonstrances.

EUGENIE—Great heaven! You terrify me . . . what then would you do to me, Monsieur?

DOLMANCE, *stammering, and kissing Eugénie on the mouth*—Punishments . . . corrections . . . I might very well hold this pretty little ass accountable for mistakes made by the head. (*He strikes the former through the gauze dressing gown in which Eugénie is presently arrayed.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Yes, I approve of the project but not of the gesture. Let's begin our lesson, else the little time granted

us to enjoy Eugénie will be spent in preliminaries, and the instruction shall remain incomplete.

DOLMANCE, *who, as he discusses them, one by one touches the parts of Madame de Saint-Ange's body*—I begin. I will say nothing of these fleshy globes; you know as well as I, Eugénie, that they are indifferently known as *bosoms, breasts, tits*. Pleasure may put them to profitable use: while amusing himself, a lover has them continually before his eyes: he caresses them, handles them, indeed, some lovers form of them the very seat of their pleasure and niche their member between these twin mounts of Venus which the woman then squeezes together, compressing this member; after a little management, certain men succeed in spreading thereupon the delicious balm of life whose outpouring causes the whole happiness of libertines. . . . But this member of which we shall be obliged to speak incessantly—should we not be well advised, Madame, to give our student a lecture upon it?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Verily, I do think so.

DOLMANCE—Very well, Madame, I am going to recline upon this couch; place yourself near me. Then you will lay hands upon the subject and you will yourself explain its properties to our young student. (*Dolmancé lies down and Madame de Saint-Ange demonstrates.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—This scepter of Venus you have before your eyes, Eugénie, is the primary agent of love's pleasure: it is called the *member*: there is not a single part of the human body into which it cannot introduce itself. Always obedient to the passions of the person who wields it, sometimes it nests there (*She touches Eugénie's cunt.*), this is the ordinary route, the one in widest use, but not the most agreeable; in pursuit of a more mysterious sanctuary, it is often here (*She spreads wide Eugénie's buttocks and indicates the anus.*) that the libertine seeks enjoyment: we will return to this most delicious pleasure of them all; there are as well the mouth, the breasts, the armpits which provide him with further altars upon which to burn his incense. And finally whatever be the place among all these he most prefers, after a few instants of agitation the member may be seen to vent a white and viscous

liquor, whose flowing forth plunges the man into a delirium intense enough to procure for him the sweetest pleasures he can hope to have in life.

EUGENIE—How much I should like to see this liquor flow!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I need but vibrate my hand—you see how the thing becomes irritated the more I chafe and pull on it. These movements are known as *pollution*, and in the language of libertinage this action is called *frigging*.

EUGENIE—Oh, please, dear friend, allow me to frig this splendid member!

DOLMANCE—Look out! I'll not be able . . . don't interfere with her, Madame, this ingenuousness has got me horribly erected.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—No good will come of this excitement. Be reasonable, Dolmancé: once that semen flows, the activity of your animal spirits will be diminished and the warmth of your dissertations will be lessened correspondingly.

EUGENIE, *fondling Dolmancé's testicles*—Ah, my dear friend, how sorry I am you resist my desires! . . . And these balls, what might be their purpose? What are they called?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—The technical term is *genitals, male genitals* . . . *testicles* belongs to art, the *balls* are the reservoir containing the abundant semen I have just mentioned and which, expelled into the woman's matrix, or womb, produces the human species; but we will not stress these details, Eugénie, for they relate more to medicine than to libertinage. A pretty girl ought simply to concern herself with *fucking*, and never with *engendering*. No need to touch at greater length on what pertains to the dull business of population, from now on we shall address ourselves principally, nay, uniquely to those libertine lecheries whose spirit is in no wise reproductive.

EUGENIE—But, dear friend, when this enormous member I can scarcely grip in my hand, when this member penetrates, as you assure me it can, into a hole as little as the one in your behind, that must cause the woman a great deal of pain.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Whether this introduction be wrought before or behind, if she is not yet accustomed to it a woman always suffers. It has pleased Nature so to make us that we attain happiness only by way of pain. But once vanquished and had this way, nothing can equal the joy one tastes upon the entrance of this member into our ass; it is a pleasure incontestably superior to any sensation procured by this same introduction in front. And, besides, how many dangers does not a woman thus avoid! Fewer risks to her health, and none at all of pregnancy. For the present I'll say no more about this delight—your master and mine, Eugénie, will soon award it a full analysis, and by uniting practice with theory will, I trust, convince you, my precious one, that amongst all the bedroom's pleasures, that is the only one for which you should have a preference.

DOLMANCE—I beg you to speed your demonstrations, Madame, for I can no longer restrain myself; I'll discharge despite my efforts, and this redoubtable member, reduced to nothing, will be unable to aid your lessons.

EUGENIE—What! It would be reduced to nothing, dear heart, if it were to lose this semen you speak of! . . . Oh, do allow me to help him lose it, so that I may see what happens to it. . . . And besides, I should take such pleasure in seeing it flow!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—No, no, Dolmancé, up with you. Remember that this is the payment of your labors, and that I'll not turn her over to you until you've merited her.

DOLMANCE—So be it; but the better to convince Eugénie of all we are going to relate concerning pleasure, would it be in any way prejudicial to Eugénie's instruction if, for instance, you were to frig her in front of me?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Why, doubtless not, and I shall do so all the more happily since I am certain this lubricious episode will only enrich our lessons. Onto the couch, my sweet.

EUGENIE—Oh dear God! the delicious niche! But why all these mirrors?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—By repeating our attitudes and postures in a thousand different ways, they infinitely multiply those same pleasures for the persons seated here upon this ottoman. Thus everything is visible, no part of the body can remain hidden; everything must be seen; these images are so many groups disposed around those enchained by love, so many delicious tableaux where-with lewdness waxes drunk and which soon drive it to its climax.

EUGENIE—What a marvelous invention!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Dolmancé, undress the victim yourself.

DOLMANCE—That will not be difficult, since 'tis merely a question of removing this gauze in order to discern naked the most appealing features. (*He strips her, and his first glances are instantly directed upon her behind.*) And so I am about to see this divine, this priceless ass of which I have such ardent expectations! . . . Ah, by God! What fullness of flesh and what coolness, what stunning elegance! . . . Never have I seen one lovelier!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Rascal! How clearly your initial homages betray your tastes and pleasures!

DOLMANCE—But can there be anything in the world to equal this? . . . Where might love find a more divine altar? . . . Eugénie . . . sublime Eugénie, let me overwhelm this ass of yours with the softest caresses. (*He fingers and kisses it, transported.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Stop, libertine! . . . You forget Eugénie belongs to me only. She's to be your reward for the lessons she awaits from you; but you'll not have your recompense before she has been given those lessons. Enough of this ardor or you'll anger me.

DOLMANCE—Scoundrel! It's your jealousy. . . . Very well. Pass me yours and I'll pay it a similar homage. (*He raises Madame de Saint-Ange's negligee and caresses her behind.*) Ah, 'tis lovely, my angel, 'tis delicious too! Let me compare them both. . . . I'd see them one next to the other—Ganymede beside Venus! (*He lavishes kisses upon each.*) In order to have the bewitching spectacle of so much beauty constantly before my eyes, Madame, could you not, by

interlacing yourselves, uninterruptedly offer my gaze these charming asses I worship?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Perfectly well! There . . . are you satisfied? . . . (*They intertwine their bodies in such a manner that both asses confront Dolmancé.*)

DOLMANCÉ—It could not be better: 'tis precisely what I asked for. And now agitate those superb asses with all the fire of lubricity; let them sink and rise in cadence; let them obey the proddings whereby pleasure is going to stir them. . . . Oh, splendid, splendid, 'tis delicious! . . .

EUGENIE—Ah, my dearest one, what pleasures you give me. . . . What is it you call what you are doing now?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Frigging, my pet, giving oneself pleasure. Stop a moment; we'll alter our positions. Examine my cunt . . . thus is named the temple of Venus. Look sharply at that coign your hand covers, examine it well. I am going to open it a little. This elevation you notice above it is called the *mound*, which is garnished with hair, generally, when one reaches the age of fourteen or fifteen, when, that is, a girl begins to have periods. Here above is a little tongue-shaped thing—that is the clitoris, and there lies all a woman's power of sensation. It is the center of all mine; it would be impossible to tickle this part of me without seeing me swoon with delight. . . . Try it. . . . Ah, sweet little bitch, how well you do it! One would think you've done nothing else all your life! . . . enough! . . . stop! . . . No, I tell you, no, I do not wish to surrender myself. . . . Oh, Dolmancé, stop me! . . . under the enchanted fingers of this pretty child, I am about to go out of my mind.

DOLMANCÉ—You might be able to lower the temperature of your ideas by varying them: frig her in your turn; keep a grip on yourself, and let her go to work. . . . There, yes, in this position, in this manner her pretty/little ass is between my hands, I'll pollute it ever so lightly with a finger. . . . Let yourself go Eugénie, abandon all your senses to pleasure, let it be the one object, the one god of your existence; it is to this god a girl ought to sacrifice everything, and in her eyes, nothing must be as holy as pleasure.

EUGENIE—Nothing in the world is so delightful, I do feel that. . . . I am beside myself . . . I no longer know what I am saying, nor what I am doing. . . . What a drunkenness steals through all my being!

DOLMANCÉ—Look at the little rascal discharge! And squeeze! . . . Her anus nearly nipped off the end of my finger . . . how splendid it would be to bugger her at such a moment! (*He stands and claps his prick to the girl's ass.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Yet another moment's patience. The dear girl's education must be our sole occupation! . . . How pleasant it is to enlighten her!

DOLMANCÉ—Well then, Eugénie, you observe that after a more or less prolonged pollution, the seminal glands swell, enlarge, and finally exhale a liquid whose release hurls the woman into the most intense rapture. This is known as *discharging*. When it pleases your good friend here, I'll show you, but in a more energetic and more imperious manner, how the same operation occurs in a man.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Wait, Eugénie, now I'm going to teach you a new way to drown a woman in joy. Spread your thighs. . . . Dolmancé, you see how I am adjusting her, her ass is all yours. Suck it for her while my tongue licks her cunt, and between the two of us let's see if we can get her to swoon three or four times. Your little mound is charming, Eugénie, how I adore kissing this downy flesh! . . . I see your clitoris more clearly now; 'tis but somewhat formed, yet most sensitive. . . . How you do quiver and squirm! . . . Let me spread you. . . . Ah! you're a virgin indeed! . . . Describe what you feel when our two tongues run at once into your two apertures. (*They do as they have said.*)

EUGENIE—Ah, my dear, it thrills me so; it is a sensation impossible to depict! I'd be hard put to say which of your tongues plunges me further into my delirium.

DOLMANCÉ—In this posture, Madame, my prick is well within your reach. Condescend to frig it, I beg of you, while I suck this heavenly ass. Thrust your tongue yet further, Madame; don't be content to suck her clitoris; make your voluptuous tongue penetrate into her womb: 'tis the surest way to hasten the ejaculation.

EUGENIE, *stiffening*—I cannot bear it any more! oh, I'm dying! Don't abandon me, dear friends, I am about to swoon. (*She discharges between her two initiators.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Well, my pet! What think you of the pleasure we have given you?

EUGENIE—I am dead, exhausted . . . but I beg you to explain two words you pronounced and which I do not understand. First of all, what does *womb* signify?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—'Tis a kind of vessel much resembling a bottle whose neck embraces the male's member, and which receives the fuck produced in the woman by glandular seepage and in the man by the ejaculation we will exhibit for you; and of the commingling of these liquors is born the germ whereof result now boys, now girls.

EUGENIE—Oh, I see; this definition simultaneously explains the word *fuck* whose meaning I did not thoroughly grasp until now. And is the union of the seeds necessary to the formation of the fetus?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Assuredly; although it is proven that the fetus owes its existence only to the man's sperm, this latter, by itself, unmixed with the woman's, would come to naught. But that which we women furnish has a merely elaborative function; it does not create, it furthers creation without being its cause. Indeed, there are several contemporary naturalists who claim it is useless; whence the moralists, always guided by science's discoveries, have decided—and the conclusion has a degree of plausibility—that, such being the case, the child born of the father's blood owes filial tenderness to him alone, an assertion not without its appealing qualities and one which, even though a woman, I should not be inclined to contest.

EUGENIE—It is in my heart I find confirmation of what you tell me, my dear; for I love my father to distraction, and I feel a loathing for my mother.

DOLMANCE—But there is nothing unusual about that predilection; I have always thought as you. I still lament my father's death;

when I lost my mother, I lit a perfect bonfire from joy. . . . I detested her. Be unafraid, Eugénie, and adopt these same sentiments; they are natural: uniquely formed of our sires' blood, we owe absolutely nothing to our mothers. What, furthermore, did they do but co-operate in the act which our fathers, on the contrary, solicited? Thus, it was the father who desired our birth, whereas the mother merely consented thereto. As regards sentiment, what a difference!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Yet a thousand more reasons in your favor, Eugénie, if it is a mother still alive. If in all the world there is a mother who ought to be abhorred she is certainly yours! Superstitious, pious, a shrew, a scold . . . and what with her revolting prudery I dare wager the fool has never in her life committed a faux pas. Ah, my dear, how I hate virtuous women! . . . But we'll return to that question.

DOLMANCE—And now would it not be fitting for Eugénie, directed by me, to learn to pay back what you have just done in her behalf? I think she might frig you before me.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I applaud the suggestion—and while she frigs me, would not you, Dolmancé, relish the sight of my ass?

DOLMANCE—Are you able to doubt, Madame, of the pleasure with which I will render it my gentlest homages?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *presenting her buttocks to him*—Do you find me suitable thus?

DOLMANCE—Wonderfully! I should never find a better manner to render you all the services Eugénie found so enormously to her liking. And now, my little wildcat, station yourself for a moment between your friend's legs, so, and with that pretty little tongue of yours, care for her as she has for you. Why, bless me! This way I shall be able to manage both your asses: I'll fondle Eugénie's while sucking her lovely friend's. . . . There, admirable . . . How agreeably we are all together.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *swooning*—Good God, I'm dying. . . . Dolmancé, how I love to handle your prick while I discharge. . . . I'd have it drown me in fuck, so frig it! Suck me! Oh,

heavenly fuck! How I love to play the whore when my sperm flows this way! . . . It's done, finished, I cannot go on. . . . You've ruined me, both of you. . . . I think I have never had so much pleasure in my life.

EUGENIE—And how happy I am to be its cause! But, dear friend, you have just uttered another unfamiliar word. What do you understand this expression *whore* to mean? Forgive me, but you know I'm here to learn.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—My most lovely one, in such wise are called the public victims of the debauchery of men, creatures prepared at all times to surrender their persons, whether from temperament or for reward; happy and deserving creatures common opinion assails but whom license crowns and who, far more necessary to the society which they strive to serve than are prudes, forgo the esteem an unjust society denies them. All hail to those in whose eyes this title is an honor! Such are truly lovable women, the only authentic philosophers! As for myself, dear heart, I, who for twelve years have endeavored to merit the laurel, I assure you that if I do not work as a whore, I always play as one. Better still, I love thus to be named when I am fucked: 'tis a vilification that fires my brain.

EUGENIE—My dear, I fancy I too should not be sorry to be called a whore, though 'tis true I scarcely merit the name; but is not virtue opposed to such misconduct, and does it not reproach us for behaving as we do?

DOLMANCE—Ah, Eugénie, have done with virtues! Among the sacrifices that can be made to those counterfeit divinities, is there one worth an instant of the pleasures one tastes in outraging them? Come, my sweet, virtue is but a chimera whose worship consists exclusively in perpetual immolations, in unnumbered rebellions against the temperament's inspirations. Can such impulses be natural? Does Nature recommend what offends her? Eugénie, be not the dupe of those women you hear called virtuous. Theirs are not, if you wish, the same passions as ours; but they harken to others, and often more contemptible. . . . There is ambition, there pride, there you find self-seeking, and often, again, it is a question of mere

constitutional numbness, of torpor: there are beings who have no urges. Are we, I ask, to revere such as them? No; the virtuous woman acts, or is inactive, from pure selfishness. Is it then better, wiser, more just to perform sacrifices to egoism than to one's passions? As for me, I believe the one far worthier than the other, and who heeds but this latter voice is far better advised, no question of it, since it only is the organ of Nature, while the former is simply that of stupidity and prejudice. One single drop of fuck shed from this member, Eugénie, is more precious to me than the most sublime deeds of a virtue I scorn.

EUGENIE—(*Calm being to some degree re-established during these expositions, the women, clad again in their negligees, are reclining upon a couch, and Dolmancé, seated in an armchair, is close by.*) But there is more than one species of virtue. What think you of, for example, pity?

DOLMANCE—What can it be for whosoever has no belief in religion? And who is able to have religious beliefs? Come now, Eugénie, let's reason systematically. Do you not call religion the pact that binds man to his Creator and which obliges him to give his Creator evidence, by means of worship, of his gratitude for the existence received from this sublime author?

EUGENIE—It could not be better defined.

DOLMANCE—Excellent! If it is demonstrated that man owes his existence to nothing but Nature's irresistible schemes; if man is thus proven as ancient in this world as is ancient the globe itself, he is but as the oak, as grain, as the minerals to be found in the earth's entrails, who are bound only to reproduce, reproduction being necessitated by the globe's existence, which owes its own to nothing whatsoever; if it is demonstrated that this God, whom fools behold as the author and maker of all we know there to be, is simply the *ne plus ultra* of human reason, merely the phantom created at the moment this reason can advance its operations no further; if it is proven that this God's existence is impossible, and that Nature, forever in action, forever moving, has of herself what it pleases idiots to award God gratuitously; if it is certain that this inert being's existence, once supposed, he would be of all things the most ridic-

ulous, since he would have been useful only one single time and, thereafter and throughout millions of centuries, fixed in a contemptible stillness and inactivity; that, supposing him to exist as religions portray him to us, this would be the most detestable of creatures, since it would be God who permits evil to be on earth while his omnipotence could prevent it; if, I say, all that is admitted to be proven, as incontestably it is, do you believe, Eugénie, that it is a very necessary virtue, this piety which binds man to an idiotic, insufficient, atrocious, and contemptible Creator?

EUGENIE, to *Madame de Saint-Ange*—What! Then you mean to say, dear friend, God's existence is an illusion?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—And without doubt one of the most deplorable.

DOLMANCE—To believe therein one must first have gone out of one's mind. Fruit of the terror of some and of the frailty of others, that abominable phantom, Eugénie, is of no use to the terrestrial scheme and would infallibly be injurious to it, since the will of God would have to be just and should never be able to ally itself to the essential injustices decreed by Nature; since He would constantly have to will the good, while Nature must desire it only as compensation for the evil which serves her laws; since it would be necessary that he, God, exert his influence at all times, while Nature, one of whose laws is this perpetual activity, could only find herself in competition with and unceasing opposition to him. Am I to hear in reply, that God and Nature are one? 'Tis an absurdity. The thing created cannot be the creative being's equal. Might the pocket watch be the watchmaker? Very well then, they will continue, Nature is nothing, it is God who is all. Another stupidity! There are necessarily two things in the universe: the creative agent and the being created; now, to identify this creative agent is the single task before us, the one question to which one has got to provide a reply.

If matter acts, is moved by combinations unknown to us, if movement is inherent in Nature; if, in short, she alone, by reason of her energy, is able to create, produce, preserve, maintain, hold in equilibrium within the immense plains of space all the spheres that stand before our gaze and whose uniform march, unvarying,

fills us with awe and admiration, what then becomes of the need to seek out a foreign agent, since this active faculty essentially is to be found in Nature herself, who is naught else than matter in action? Do you suppose your deific chimera will shed light upon anything? I defy anyone to prove him to me. It being supposed that I am mistaken upon matter's internal faculties, I have before me, at least, nothing worse than a difficulty. What do you do for me when you offer your God to me? Nothing but offering one more god. And how would you have me acknowledge as cause of what I do not understand, something that I understand even less? Will it be by means of the Christian religion that I shall examine . . . that I shall obtain a view of your appalling God? Then let us cast a glance upon the God Christianity propounds. . . .

What do I see in the God of that infamous sect if not an inconsistent and barbarous being, today the creator of a world of destruction he repents of tomorrow; what do I see there but a frail being forever unable to bring man to heel and force him to bend a knee. This creature, although emanated from him, dominates him, knows how to offend him and thereby merit torments eternally! What a weak fellow, this God! How able he was to mold all that we know and to fail to form man in his own guise! Whereunto you will answer, that had man been created so, man would have been little deserving of his author; what a platitude this is! and what necessity is there that man be deserving of his God? Had man been formed wholly good, man should never have been able to do evil, and only then would the work be worthy of a god. To allow man to choose was to tempt him; and God's infinite powers very well advised him of what would be the result. Immediately the being was created, it was hence to pleasure that God doomed the creature he had himself formed. A horrible God, this God of yours, a monster! Is there a criminal more worthy of our hatred and our implacable vengeance than he! However, little content with a task so sublimely executed, he drowns man to convert him; he burns him; he curses him.

Nothing in all that alters man one jot. More powerful than this villainous God, a being still in possession of his power, forever

able to brave his author, the *Devil* by his seductions incessantly succeeds in leading astray the flock that the Eternal reserved unto himself. Nothing can vanquish the hold this demon's energy has upon us. But picture, in your own terms, the frightful God you preach: he has but one son; an only son, begot of some passing strange commerce; for, as man doth *fuck*, so he hath willed that his Lord *fucketh* too; and the Lord didst detach and send down out of Heaven this respectable part of himself. One perhaps imagines that it is upon celestial rays, in the midst of an angelic cortege, within sight of all the universe this sublime creature is going to appear . . . not at all; 'tis upon a Jewish whore's breast, 'tis in a proper pigsty that there is announced the God who has come to save the earth! Behold the worthy extraction accorded this personage! But his mission is honorable—will he disabuse us? Let us have a close look at him for an instant. What does he say? What is it he does? What is his sublime mission? What mystery is he about to reveal? What is the dogma he is going to prescribe for us? What will be the act wherein at last his grandeur will shine?

I see, first of all, an obscure childhood, a few doubtless very libertine services this smutty fellow renders the priests at the Temple of Jerusalem; next, a fifteen years' disappearance during which the scoundrel goes to poison himself with all the reveries of the Egyptian school, which at length he fetches back to Judea. Scarcely does he reappear when his raving begins: he says he is the son of God, his father's peer; to this alliance he joins another phantom he calls the Holy Ghost, and these three persons, he swears, must be but one! The more this preposterous mystery amazes the reason, the more the low fellow declares there is merit in swallowing it . . . and danger in refusing it. It is to save us one and all, the imbecile argues, that he has assumed a fleshly shape, although he is *God*, mortally incarnate in the breast of a child of man; and the glittering wonders one is about to see him perform will speedily convince all the world of it. During a ribald supper, indeed, the cheat transforms, so they say, water into wine; in a desert he feeds a few bandits upon the victuals previously hidden there by his devoted confederates; one of his cronies plays dead, our impostor restores him to life again; he betakes himself to a

mountain and there, before two or three of his friends only, he brings off a jugglery that would cause the worst among our contemporary mountebanks to redden with shame.

Roundly damning, moreover, all those who do not accredit him, the scoundrel promises the heavens to whatever fools will listen. He writes nothing, for he is ignorant; talks very little, for he is stupid; does even less, for he is weak; and, finally, completely exhausting the patience of the magistrates with his seditious outbursts, the charlatan has himself fixed to the cross after having assured the rogues who follow him that, every time they invoke him, he will descend to them to get himself eaten. He is put to torture, he puts up with it. Monsieur his Papa, that sublime God whence he dares affirm he descends, succors him not in the least, and there you have him, this scoundrel, used like the last of the outlaws of whom he was such a fitting chief.

His henchmen assemble: "It's all up with us," they say, "and all our hopes are perished lest we save ourselves with a quick piece of cunning. We'll besot the guard set to watch over Jesus; then make off with his body, bruit it abroad he is risen: the trick's sure; if we manage to get this knavery believed, our new religion's founded, propagated; it'll seduce all the world. . . . To work!" The blow is struck, it succeeds. In how many blackguards has not boldness occupied the place of merit! The corpse is filched, fools, women, children bawl out "Miracle!" at the top of their lungs; nevertheless, in this city where such great prodigies have just been wrought, in this city stained with a God's blood, no one cares to believe in this God; not a single conversion is operated there. Better yet: so little worthy of transmission is the event that no historian alludes to it. Only this impostor's disciples think they have something to gain from the fraud; but not at the hour.

This detail is crucial; let's note it well. They permit several years to pass before exploiting their artifice; at length, they erect upon it the shaky edifice of their unwholesome doctrine. Men are pleased by any novelty. Weary of the emperors' despotism, the world agrees to the need for a revolution. These cheats are heard,

they make a very rapid progress; 'tis the story of every error. Soon the altars of Venus and Mars are changed to those of Jesus and Mary; the life of the impostor is published, the insipid fiction finds its dupes; he is represented as having said a hundred things which never came into his head; some few of his own drivings instantly become the basis of his morality, and as this romance is preached to the poor, charity becomes its foremost virtue. Weird rites are instituted under the name of *sacraments*; the most offensive and the most abominable of them all is the one whereby a priest, covered with crimes, has, notwithstanding, thanks to a few magical words, the power to bring God back in a morsel of bread. Let there be no mistake: at its very birth, this shameful cult might have been utterly destroyed had one but employed against it those weapons of the contempt it deserved; but men took it into their heads to employ persecution; the cult throve; 'twas inevitable.

Even today were one to cover it with ridicule, it would fall. The adroit Voltaire never used any other arm, and among all writers he is the one who may congratulate himself upon having the greatest number of proselytes. Such, in a few words, Eugénie, is the history of God and of religion; consider the treatment these fables deserve, and adopt a determined attitude toward them.

EUGENIE—My choice is unperplexed; I scorn the lot of these unhealthy reveries, and this God himself, to whom I lately clove through weakness or through ignorance, is henceforth nothing for me but an object of horror.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Swear to me to think no more of him, never to be concerned for him, never to invoke him at any moment in your life, and so long as breath be in you never to return to him.

EUGENIE, *flinging herself upon Madame de Saint-Ange's breast*—I pledge it in your arms! How readily I see that what you demand is for my own good, and that you would never have such reminiscences disturb my tranquillity!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—What other motive could I have?

EUGENIE—But, Dolmancé, it seems to me it was the analysis of virtues that led us to the examination of religions. Let us now return to the former. Might there not exist in this religion, completely ridiculous though it is, some virtues prescribed by it, whose cultivation could contribute to our happiness?

DOLMANCÉ—All right, let us see. Shall chastity be that virtue your own eyes destroy, Eugénie, although you and all about you are the very image of it? Are you going to respect the obligation to combat all Nature's operations, will you sacrifice them all to the vain and ludicrous honor of never having had a weakness? Be fair and answer me, pretty little friend: think you to find in this absurd and dangerous purity of soul all the pleasures of the contrary vice?

EUGENIE—No, I'm bound to declare I see nothing there; I do not feel the least inclination to be chaste, but rather the most compelling urge to the opposite vice. But, Dolmancé, might not charity and benevolence bring happiness to some sensitive souls?

DOLMANCÉ—Begone those virtues which produce naught but ingratitude! But, my charming friend, be not at all deceived: benevolence is surely rather pride's vice than an authentic virtue in the soul; never is it with the single intention of performing a good act, but instead ostentatiously that one aids one's fellow man; one would be most annoyed were the alms one has just bestowed not to receive the utmost possible publicity. Nor, Eugénie, are you to imagine that, as is the popular view, this action has only excellent consequences; for my part I behold it as nothing other than the greatest of all duperies; it accustoms the poor man to doles which provoke the deterioration of his energy; when able to expect your charities, he ceases to work and becomes, when they fail him, a thief or assassin. On all sides I hear them ask after the means to suppress mendicity, and meanwhile they do everything possible to encourage it. Would you have no flies in your bed chamber? Don't spread about sugar to attract them into it. You wish to have no poor in France? Distribute no alms, and above all shut down your poor-houses. The individual born in misfortune thereupon seeing himself deprived of these dangerous crutches, will fend for himself, summoning up all the resources put in him by Nature, to extricate him-

self from the condition wherein he started life; and he will importune you no longer. Destroy, with entire un pity, raze to the ground, those detestable houses where you billet the progeny of the libertinage of the poor, appalling cloacas, wherefrom there every day spews forth into society a swarm of new-made creatures whose unique hope resides in your purse. What purpose, I ask, is there in preserving such individuals with so much care? Does anyone fear France's depopulation? Ha! dread not.

One of the foremost of this nation's defects consists in a population by far too numerous, and much is wanting when such overabundances become considered the State's riches. These supernumerary beings are like unto the parasitical branches which, living only at the trunk's expense, always bring it to final decline. Remember that in no matter what political organization, whenever the size of the population exceeds what is strictly necessary to its existence, that society languishes. Examine France well, and you will observe that to be her situation. What results of it? 'Tis clear. The Chinese, wiser than we, are most careful to avoid the perils of excessive numbers. No asylum for the shameful fruit of debauchery: it is not preserved, it is abandoned, just as are the after-maths of digestion. No establishments for poverty: such a thing is totally unknown in China. There, everyone works: there, everyone is happy; nothing saps the poor man's energy and everyone can say, as did Nero, *Quid est pauper?*

EUGENIE, to *Madame de Saint-Ange*—Beloved friend, my father thinks exactly as Monsieur Dolmancé: never in his life has he performed a good work, and he is continually abusing my mother for the money she spends in such practices. She belonged to the *Maternal Society*, to the *Philanthropic Club*; I have no idea of what association she is not a member; he obliged her to stop all that by promising her he would reduce her to the narrowest pension were she to relapse into similar follies.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—There is nothing more ludicrous and at the same time more dangerous, Eugénie, than all these sodalities; it is to them, to free public schools, and to charitable establishments we owe the terrible disorder in which we presently live. Never give alms, my dear, I beseech you.

EUGENIE—Nothing to fear on that score; it was long ago my father put me under the same obligation, and I am too little tempted to benevolence to disregard his orders . . . my heart's impulses, and your desires.

DOLMANCÉ—Nature has endowed each of us with a capacity for kindly feelings: let us not squander them on others. What to me are the woes that beset others? have I not enough of my own without afflicting myself with those that are foreign to me? May our sensibility's hearth warm naught but our pleasures! Let us feel when it is to their advantage; and when it is not, let us be absolutely unbending. From this exact economy of feeling, from this judicious use of sensibility, there results a kind of cruelty which is sometimes not without its delights. One cannot always do evil; deprived of the pleasure it affords, we can at least find the sensation's equivalent in the minor but piquant wickedness of never doing good.

EUGENIE—Dear God, how your discourses inflame me! I believe I would now sooner suffer death than be made to perform a good act!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—And were the opportunity presented to do an evil one, would you be ready to commit it?

EUGENIE—Be still, temptress; I'll not answer that until you have completed my instruction. In the light of all you tell me, it seems, Dolmancé, that there is nothing on earth as indifferent as the committing of good or evil; ought not our tastes, our temperament alone counsel us?

DOLMANCÉ—Ah, be in no doubt of it, Eugénie, these words *vice* and *virtue* contain for us naught but local ideas. There is no deed, in whatever the unusual form you may imagine it, which is really criminal, none which may be really called virtuous. All is relative to our manners and the climate we inhabit; what is a crime here is often a virtue several hundred leagues hence, and the virtues of another hemisphere might well reverse themselves into crimes in our own. There is no horror that has not been consecrated somewhere, no virtue that has not been blasted. When geography alone decides whether an action be worthy of praise or blame, we cannot

attach any great importance to ridiculous and frivolous sentiments, but rather should be impeccably armed against them, to the point, indeed, where we fearlessly prefer the scorn of men if the actions which excite it are for us sources of even the mildest voluptuousness.

EUGENIE—But it would however appear to me that there must be actions in themselves so dangerous and so evil that they have come to be considered from one end of the earth to the other as generally criminal.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—There are none, my love, none, not even theft, nor incest, neither murder nor parricide itself.

EUGENIE—What! such horrors are somewhere tolerated?

DOLMANCE—They have been honored, crowned, beheld as exemplary deeds, whereas in other places, humaneness, candor, benevolence, chastity, in brief, all our virtues have been regarded as monstrosities.

EUGENIE—I would have you explain that to me; I ask for a succinct analysis of each one of those crimes, but I beg you to begin by exposing your opinions upon libertinage in young girls, then upon the adultery of married women.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Then listen to me, Eugénie. It is absurd to say that immediately a girl is weaned she must continue the victim of her parents' will in order to remain thus to her dying day. It is not in this age of preoccupation with the rights of man and general concern for liberties that girls ought to continue to believe themselves their families' slaves, when it is clearly established that these families' power over them is totally illusory. Let us consult Nature upon so interesting a question as this, and may the laws that govern animals, in much stricter conformance with Nature, provide us for a moment with examples. Amongst beasts, do paternal duties extend beyond primary physical needs? Do not the offspring of animals possess all their parents' liberty, all their rights? As soon as they are able to walk alone and feed themselves, beginning at this instant, are they any longer recognized by the authors of their days? And do the young fancy themselves in any sense beholden to those whence they have received breath? Surely

not. By what right, hence, are other duties incumbent upon the children of men? And what is the basis of these duties if not the fathers' greed or ambition? Well, I ask if it is just that a young girl who is beginning to feel and reason be submitted to such constraints. Is it not prejudice which all unaided forges those chains? And is there anything more ridiculous than to see a maiden of fifteen or sixteen, consumed by desires she is compelled to suppress, wait, and, while waiting, endure worse than hell's torments until it pleases her parents, having first rendered her youth miserable, further to sacrifice her riper years by immolating them to their perfidious cupidity when they associate her, despite her wishes, with a husband who either has nothing wherewith to make himself loved, or who possesses everything to make himself hated?

Ah! no. No, Eugénie, such bonds are quickly dissolved; it is necessary that when once she reaches the age of reason the girl be detached from the paternal household, and after having received a public education it is necessary that at the age of fifteen she be left her own mistress, to become what she wishes. She will be delivered unto vice? Ha! what does that matter? Are not the services a young girl renders in consenting to procure the happiness of all who apply to her, infinitely more important than those which, isolating herself, she performs for her husband? Woman's destiny is to be wanton, like the bitch, the she-wolf; she must belong to all who claim her. Clearly, it is to outrage the fate Nature imposes upon women to fetter them by the absurd ties of a solitary marriage.

Let us hope eyes will be opened, and that while we go about assuring the liberty of every individual, the fate of unhappy girls will not be overlooked; but should they have the great misfortune to be forgotten, then, of their own accord rising above usage and prejudice, let them boldly fling off and spurn the shameful irons wherewith others presume to keep them subjugated; they will rapidly conquer custom and opinion; man become wiser, because he will be freer, will sense the injustice that would exist in scorning whoever acts thus, and will sense too that the act of yielding to Nature's promptings, beheld as a crime by a captive people, can be so no longer amongst a free people.

Begin, therefore, with the legitimacy of these principles, Eugénie, and break your shackles at no matter what the cost; be

contemptuous of the futile remonstrances of an imbecile mother to whom you legitimately owe only hatred and a curse. If your father, who is a libertine, desires you, why then, go merrily to him: let him enjoy you, but enjoy without enchaining you; cast off the yoke if he wishes to enslave you; more than one daughter has treated thus with her father. Fuck, in one word, fuck: 'twas for that you were brought into the world; no limits to your pleasure save those of your strength and will; no exceptions as to place, to time, to partner; all the time, everywhere, every man has got to serve your pleasures; continence is an impossible virtue for which Nature, her rights violated, instantly punishes us with a thousand miseries. So long as the laws remain such as they are today, employ some discretion: loud opinion forces us to do so; but in privacy and silence let us compensate ourselves for that cruel chastity we are obliged to display in public.

Let our young maiden strive to procure herself a companion who, unattached and abroad in the world, can secretly cause her to taste the world's pleasures; failing of that, let her contrive to seduce the Arguses posted round her; let her beg them to prostitute her, and promise them all the money they can earn from her sale; either those watchdogs alone, or the women they will find and whom one calls *procuresses*, will soon supply the little one's wants; then let her kick up the dust into the eyes of everyone at hand, brothers, cousins, friends, parents; let her give herself to everyone, if that is necessary to hide her conduct; let her even make the sacrifice, if 'tis required of her, of her tastes and affections; one intrigue which might displease her, and into which she would enter only for reasons of policy, will straightway lead her to another more agreeable; and there she is, *launched*. But let her not revert to her childhood prejudices; menaces, exhortations, duties, virtues, religion, advice, let her give not a damn for the one or the lot of them; let her stubbornly reject and despise all that which but tends to her re-entry into thralldom, and all that which, in a word, does not hie her along the road to the depths of impudicity.

'Tis but folly in our parents when they foretell the disasters of a libertine career; there are thorns everywhere, but along the path of vice roses bloom above them; Nature causes none to smile along virtue's muddy track. Upon the former of the routes, the one snare

to fear is men's opinion; but what mettlesome girl, with a little reflection, will not render herself superior to that contemptible opinion? The pleasures received through esteem, Eugénie, are nothing but moral pleasures, acceptable to none but certain minds; those of *fuckery* please all, and their winning characteristics soon eclipse the hallucinatory scorn from which escape is difficult when one flouts the public's views at which several cool-headed women have so much laughed as therefrom to derive one pleasure the more. Fuck, Eugénie, fuck, my angel; your body is your own, yours alone; in all the world there is but yourself who has the right to enjoy it as you see fit.

Profit from the fairest period in your life; these golden years of our pleasure are only too few and too brief. If we are so fortunate as to have enjoyed them, delicious memories console and amuse us in our old age. These years lost . . . and we are racked by bitterest regrets, gnawing remorse conjoins with the sufferings of age and the fatal onset of the grave is all tears and brambles. . . . But have you the madness to hope for immortality?

Why, then, 'tis by fucking, my dear, you will remain in human memory. The Lucretias were soon forgot whereas the Theodoras and the Messalinas are subjects for life's sweetest and most frequent conversation. How, Eugénie, may one not elect an alternative which twines in our hair the flowers of this world and yet leaves us the hope of reverence when we are gone out of it? How, I say, may one not prefer this course to another which, causing us stupidly to vegetate upon earth, promises us nothing after our existence but scorn and oblivion?

EUGENIE, to *Madame de Saint-Ange*—Oh! my love, how these seductive words inflame my mind and captivate my soul! I am in a state hardly to be painted. . . . And, I pray, will you be able to acquaint me with some of these women . . . (*worried*) who will, if I tell them to, prostitute me?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—For the moment and until you have become more experienced, the matter is entirely my concern, Eugénie; trust me and above all the precautions I am taking to mask your excesses; my brother and this solid friend instructing you will be the first to whom I wish you to give yourself; after-

ward, we will discover others. Be not disturbed, dear heart: I shall have you fly from one pleasure to the next, I'll plunge you in a sea of delights, I will fill your cup to overflowing, my angel, I will sate you.

EUGENIE, *throwing herself into Madame de Saint-Ange's arms*—Oh, my dearest one, I adore you; you will never have a more submissive scholar. But it seems to me you gave me to understand in our earlier conversations that it were a difficult thing for a young person to fling herself into libertinage without the husband she is to wed perceiving it later on?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—'Tis true, my heart, but there are secrets which heal all those breaches. I promise to make them known to you, and then, had you fucked like Antoinette, I charge myself to render you as much a virgin as you were the day you were born.

EUGENIE—Oh, my delightful one! Come, continue to instruct me. Be quick then; teach me what should be a woman's conduct in marriage.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—In whatever circumstances, a woman, my dear, whether unwedded, wife, or widow, must never have for objective, occupation, or desire anything save to have herself fucked from morning to night: 'tis for this unique end Nature created her; but if, in order to answer this intention, I require her to trample upon all the prejudices of her childhood, if I prescribe to her the most formal disobedience to her family's orders, the most arrant contempt for all her relatives' advice, you will agree with me, Eugénie, that among all the bonds to be burst, I ought very surely to recommend that the very first be those of wedlock.

Indeed, Eugénie, consider the young girl scarcely out of her father's house or her pension, knowing nothing, without experience: of a sudden she is obliged to pass thence into the arms of a man she has never seen, she is called to the altar and compelled to swear to this man an oath of obedience, of fidelity, the more unjust for her often having nothing in the depths of her heart but the greatest desire to break her word. In all the world, is there a more terrible fate than this, Eugénie? However, whether her husband pleases her or no, whether or not he has tenderness in store for her

or vile treatment, behold! she is married; her honor binds her to her oaths: it is attained if she disregards them; she must be doomed or shackled: either way, she must perish of despair. Ah, no! Eugénie, no! 'tis not for that end we are born; those absurd laws are the handiwork of men, and we must not submit to them. And divorce? Is it capable of satisfying us? Probably not. What greater assurance have we of finding the happiness in a later bondage that eluded us in an earlier?

Therefore, in secrecy let us compensate ourselves for all the restraint imposed by such absurd unions, and let us be certain indeed that this species of disorders, to whatever extreme we carry them, far from outraging Nature, is but a sincere homage we render her; it is to obey her laws to cede to the desires she alone has placed in us; it is only in resisting that we affront her. The adultery men deem a crime, which they have dared punish in us even with death, adultery, Eugénie, is hence nothing but an acquittance sanctioned by a natural law the whims of those tyrants shall never be able to abrogate. But is it not horrible, say our husbands, to lay us open to cherishing as our own children, to embracing as ours the fruit of your licentiousness? The objection is Rousseau's; it is, I admit, the only faintly specious one wherewith adultery may be opposed. Well! Is it not extremely simple to surrender oneself to libertinage without fear of pregnancy? Is it not easier yet to check it if through our oversight or imprudence it should occur? But, as we shall return to the subject, let's now but treat the heart of the matter: we will see that, however plausible it at first appears, the argument is chimerical nevertheless.

First, provided I sleep with my husband, provided his semen flows to the depths of my womb, should I see ten men at the same time I consort with him, nothing will ever be able to prove to him that the child I bear does not belong to him; it is quite as likely the child is his as not, and in a case of uncertainty he cannot justifiably disclaim his part in bringing about something which may perhaps have been all of his doing. Immediately it can be his, it is his; any man who vexes himself with suspicions upon this head seeks vexations, even were his wife a vestal he would plague himself with worries, for it is impossible to be sure of a woman, and she who has behaved well for years may someday interrupt her good behavior.

Hence, if this husband is suspicious, he will be so in any case: never, then, will he be convinced the child he embraces is really his own. Now, if he can be suspicious in any case, there can be no disadvantage in sometimes justifying his suspicions: with what regards his state of happiness or unhappiness, it will all be one; therefore, 'tis just as well things be thus. Well, suppose him in complete error: picture him caressing the fruit of his wife's libertinage: where is the crime in that? Are not our goods held in common? In which case, what ill do I cause by introducing into the ménage a child to whom must be accorded a share of these goods? 'Twill be my share the child will have; he'll steal nothing from my tender mate: I consider as a levy upon my dowry this portion to which the child will be heir; hence, neither it nor I take anything from my husband. Had this child been his, by what title would it have been a claimant to a part of my chattels and monies? Is it not by reason of the fact the child would have been my offspring? Very well, the child is going to inherit this part, rightfully the child's by virtue of the same intimate alliance. It is because this child belongs to me that I owe it a share of my wealth.

With what are you to reproach me? The child is provided for. "But you deceive your husband; thus to be false is atrocious." "No, it's tit for tat," say I, "and there's an end to it: I was the dupe in the first place of the attachments he forced upon me: I take my revenge: what could be more simple?" "But your husband's honor has suffered a real outrage." "What ludicrous notion is this! My libertinage in no wise affects my husband; mine are personal faults. This alleged dishonor signified something a century ago; we're rid of our illusions today, and my husband is no more sullied by my debauches than I might be by his. I might fuck with the whole wide world without wounding him in the slightest. This so-called hurt is therefore a mere fable whose authentic existence is impossible. Of the two things, one: either my husband is a brutal, a jealous man, or he is a delicate one; in the former hypothesis, the best course for me is to avenge myself for his conduct; in the latter, I should be unable to aggrieve him; the fact I am tasting pleasures will make him happy if he is honest; no man of refinement fails to relish the spectacle of the happiness of the person he adores." "But, were you to love him, would you wish him to do the same?" "Ah, woe unto

the wife who decides to be jealous of her husband! Let her be content with what he gives her, if she loves him; but let her make no attempt to constrain him; not only will she have no success, but she will soon make herself detested. So long as I am reasonable, I shall never be afflicted by my husband's debauches; let him be thus with me, and peace will reign in the house."

Let us recapitulate: Whatever be adultery's issue, were it even to introduce into the home children who do not belong to the husband, because they are the wife's they have certain rights to a portion of that wife's dowry; if the husband has intelligence of the thing, he must consider them as he would children his wife might have had by an earlier marriage; if he knows nothing, he'll not be the worse for it, for one cannot be distressed by what one is unaware of; if the adultery is followed by no consequences and if it remain unknown to the husband, no jurist can prove, in this case, the existence of crime: here, adultery appears as an act of perfect indifference to the husband, who knows nothing of it, and perfectly splendid for the wife, whom it delights; if the husband discovers the adultery, 'tis no longer the adultery which is an evil, for it was not such a moment ago, and it could not have altered its nature: if evil there be, it is in the husband's discovery of it: well, that fault belongs only to him: it has nothing to do with his wife.

Those who in former times punished the adulterer were hence mere hangmen, tyrannical and jealous, who, viewing everything subjectively, unjustly imagined that in order to be criminal it was only necessary to offend them, as if a personal injury were always to be considered a crime, and as if one might justly describe as a crime an act which, far from outraging Nature or society, clearly serves the one and the other. There are, however, cases when adultery, easy to prove, becomes more embarrassing for the woman without for that reason being any more criminal; witness, for example, the case wherein the husband is found either impotent or subject to inclinations disfavorable to engendering. As she is susceptible of pleasure, and as her husband never is, her deportment doubtless then becomes more open; but ought she be disquieted on that account? Surely not. The one precaution she must take is to produce no children, or to have an abortion if these precautions should happen to fail her. If it is thanks to her husband's unseemly

penchants that she is compelled to compensate herself for his neglect, she has first of all to satisfy him, without repugnance and according to his tastes, of whatever character they may chance to be; next, let her make it known to him that such complacencies entitle her to a counterpart; let her demand an entire liberty in return for the one she accords; thereupon, the husband refuses or else he consents: if he consents, as has mine, one puts oneself at his disposal and redoubles one's ministrations and condescensions to his caprices; if he refuses, then one perfects one's concealments and one fucks peacefully in their shadow. Is he impotent? Why, then one parts company; but, whatever may be the case, one gives oneself: one fucks, my lamb, the particular situation notwithstanding, because we are born to fuck, because by fucking we obey and fulfill Nature's ordinations, and because all man-made laws which would contravene Nature's are made for naught but our contempt.

A silly gull is the woman whom ties as absurd as those of wedlock inhibit from surrendering to her penchants, who dreads either pregnancy or the injury to her husband, or the yet more vain tarnishing of her reputation! You have just seen, Eugénie, yes, you have just sensed what a dupe she is when basely she immolates both her happiness and all life's joys to the most preposterous prejudices. Oh! let her fuck with impunity! Will a little false glory, a few frivolous religious anticipations balance the weight of her sacrifices? No; no, virtue, vice, all are confounded in the grave. A few years hence, will the public any more exalt the ones than it condemns the others? Why, no, once again, I say no, and the wretch who has lived a stranger to joy, dies, alas, unrewarded.

EUGENIE—How thoroughly you persuade me, my angel, what a straight way you make with my prejudices, what short work you make of all the false principles my mother planted in me! Oh, I would be married tomorrow in order immediately to put your maxims into use. How seductive they are, how true, and how much I love them! Only one thing troubles me, dear one, in what you have just said to me, and as I understand it not at all, I beg you to explain: your husband, you declare, does not, when he takes his pleasure with you, strike an attitude such as would produce children: what then, pray tell, does he do?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—My husband was already advanced in years when I married him. On our wedding night he gave me notice of his fancies, the while assuring me that, for his part, never would he interfere with mine; I swore to obey him and we have always, since then, he and I, lived in the most delicious independence and mutual understanding. My husband's whim is to have himself sucked, and here is the most unusual practice joined as a corollary to that one: while, as I bend over him, my buttocks squarely over his face and cheerily pumping the fuck from his balls, I must shit in his mouth! . . . He swallows it down! . . .

EUGENIE—Now there's a most extraordinary notion!

DOLMANCE—None may be qualified thus, my dear: all are a part of Nature; when she created men, she was pleased to vary their tastes as she made different their countenances, and we ought no more be astonished at the diversity she has put in our features than at that she has placed in our affections. The fancy your friend has just mentioned could not be more à la mode; an infinite number of men, and principally those of a certain age, are prodigiously addicted to it; would you refuse your co-operation, Eugénie, were someone to require it of you?

EUGENIE, *turning red*—In accordance with the maxims wherewith I am being inculcated here, can I refuse anything? I only ask to be forgiven my surprise; this is the first time I have heard of all these lubricities: I must first of all visualize them; but between the solution of the problem and the execution of the act, I believe my tutors can rest assured there will never be but the distance they themselves impose. However all that may be, my dear, you won your liberty by acquiescing to this duty?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—The most entire liberty, Eugénie. On my side, I did everything I wished without his raising any obstacles, but I took no lover: I was too fond of pleasure for that. Unlucky woman, she who is attached; she needs but take a lover to be lost, while ten scenes of libertinage, repeated every day, if she wishes, vanish into the night of silence instantly they are consummated. I was wealthy: I had young men in my pay, they fucked me incognito, I surrounded myself with charming valets, assured of

tasting the sweetest pleasures with me upon condition of discretion, certain they would be thrown out-of-doors if they so much as opened their mouths. You have no idea, dear heart, of the torrent of delights into which, in this manner, I did plunge. Such is the conduct I will always urge upon every woman who would imitate me. During my twelve married years I have been fucked by upward of ten or twelve thousand individuals . . . and in the company I keep I am thought well-behaved! Another would have had lovers; by the time she exchanged the first for the second she would have been doomed.

EUGENIE—This seems the safest way of proceeding; most decidedly, it shall be mine; I must, like yourself, marry a rich man, and above all one with fancies. . . . But, my dear, your husband is strictly bound by his tastes? Does he never ask anything else of you?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Never in a dozen years has he been untrue to himself a single day, save when I am on an outing. A very pretty girl he very much wanted me to take into the house then substitutes for me, and things proceed exceeding well.

EUGENIE—But he doesn't stop there, surely? There are other objects, outside the house, competing to diversify his pleasures?

DOLMANCE—Be certain there are, Eugénie; Madame's husband is one of the greatest libertines of the day; he spends above one hundred thousand crowns a year upon the obscene tastes your friend described to you but a moment ago.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—To tell the truth, I suspect the figure may be higher; but what are his excesses to me, since their multiplicity authorizes and camouflages my own?

EUGENIE—I beseech you, let us follow in detail the manners by which a young person, married or not, may preserve herself from pregnancy, for I confess I am made most timorous by dread of it, whether it be the work of the husband I must take, or the effect of a career of libertinage. You have just indicated one means while speaking of your husband's tastes; but this fashion of taking one's pleasure, which may be highly agreeable to the man, does not seem as pleasurable for the woman, and it is our dalliances, exempt from the risks I fear, that I desire you to discuss.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—A girl risks having a child only in proportion to the frequency with which she permits the man to invade her cunt. Let her scrupulously avoid this manner of tasting delight; in its stead, let her offer indiscriminately her hand, her mouth, her breasts, or her ass. This last thoroughfare will yield her considerable pleasure, far more, indeed, than any other; by means of the others she will give pleasure.

In the first instance, that is to say, the one which brings the hand into play, one proceeds in the fashion you observed a short while ago, Eugénie; one shakes one's friend's member as if one were pumping it; after a little agitation, the sperm is emitted; meanwhile, the man kisses, caresses you, and with this liquid wets that part of your body whereof he is fondest. If one wishes to have it distributed over the breasts, one stretches upon the bed, the virile member is fitted between the two tits, they are compressed, and after a few passes the man discharges so as to flood you sometimes up to the height of your face. This manner is the least voluptuous of all and can only suit those women whose breasts, from repeated usage, have acquired that flexibility, that looseness needed to grip the man's member tightly when clamped between them. Pleasure incepted at the mouth is infinitely more agreeable, quite as much for the man as for the woman. The best way to go about it is for the woman to lie prone, contrariwise to her fucker and upon his body: he pops his prick into your mouth and, his head being lodged between your thighs, he repays in kind what you do for him, by introducing his tongue into your cunt or by playing it over your clitoris; when employing this attitude one must show spirit, catch hold of the buttocks, and the partners should finger and tickle each other's asshole, a measure always necessary to complete voluptuousness. Spirited lovers, those full of imagination, therewith swallow the fuck which squirts into their mouths, and thus delicately they enjoy the exquisite pleasure of mutually causing this precious liquid, mechanically diverted from its customary destination, to pass into their entrails.

DOLMANCE—Eugénie, 'tis a delicious method. I recommend to you its execution. Thus to cheat propagation of its rights and to contradict what fools call the laws of Nature, is truly most charm-

ing. The thighs, the armpits also sometimes provide asylum to the man's member and offer him retreats where his seed may be spilled without risk of pregnancy.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Some women insert sponges into the vagina's interior; these, intercepting the sperm, prevent it from springing into the vessel where generation occurs. Others oblige their fuckers to make use of a little sack of Venetian skin, in the vulgate called a condom, which the semen fills and where it is prevented from flowing farther. But of all the possibilities, that presented by the ass is without any doubt the most delicious. Dolmancé, to you I reserve the dissertations thereupon. Who better than you might be able to describe a taste in whose defense, were it to require any defense, you would lay down your life?

DOLMANCE—I acknowledge my weakness. I admit as well that in all the world there is no mode of pleasure-taking preferable to this; I worship it in either sex; but I'll confess a young lad's ass gives me yet more pleasure than a girl's. *Buggers* is the appellation designating those who are this fancy's adepts; now, Eugénie, when one goes so far as to be a bugger, one must not stop halfway. To fuck women in the rear is but the first part of buggery; 'tis with men Nature wishes men to practice this oddity, and it is especially for men she has given us an inclination. Absurd to say the mania offends Nature; can it be so, when 'tis she who puts it into our head? can she dictate what degrades her? No, Eugénie, not at all; this is as good a place to serve her as any other, and perhaps it is there she is most devoutly worshiped. Propagation owes its existence to her forbearance. How could she have prescribed as law an act which challenges her omnipotence, since propagation is but a consequence of her primary intentions, and since new constructions, wrought by her hand, were our species to be destroyed absolutely, would become again primordial intentions whose accomplishment would be far more flattering to her pride and to her power?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Do you know, Dolmancé, that by means of this system you are going to be led to prove that totally to extinguish the human race would be nothing but to render Nature a service?

DOLMANCE—Who doubts of it, Madame?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—My God! wars, plagues, famines, murders would no longer be but accidents, necessary to Nature's laws, and man, whether instrumental to or the object of these effects, would hence no longer be more a criminal in the one case than he would be a victim in the other?

DOLMANCE—Victim he is, without doubt, when he bends before the blows of ill fortune; but criminal, never. We shall have more to say about all these things; for the moment, in the lovely Eugénie's behalf, let's analyze sodomistic pleasures, which presently are the subject of our discussion. In this mode of pleasure-seeking, the posture most commonly adopted by the woman is for her to lie belly down upon the edge of the bed, the buttocks well spread, the head as low as possible; after having mused for an instant upon the splendid prospect of a ready and beckoning ass, after having patted it, slapped it a bit, handled it, sometimes after having beaten or whipped it, pinched and bitten it, the rake moistens with his mouth the pretty little hole he is about to perforate, and prepares his entry with the tip of his tongue; in similar wise, he wets his engine with saliva, or with pomade, and gently presents it to the aperture he intends to pierce; he guides it with one hand, with the other he lays wide open the cheeks of his delight; immediately he feels his member penetrate, he must thrust energetically, taking all due care not to give ground; then it is, occasionally, the woman suffers, if she is new, or young; but, totally heedless of the pangs which are soon to change into pleasures, the fucker must be lively and drive his engine ahead, inch by inch, gradually, but with determination, till at last he is arrived at his objective, till, that is to say, his device's hairs precisely rub the anal rim of the embugged party. Then may he give free rein to himself; all the thorns are plucked from out his path, there remain roses only there. To complete the metamorphosis into pleasures of what distresses his object still experiences, if it be a boy, let him seize his prick and frig it; let him twiddle her clitoris, if 'tis a girl; the titillations of the pleasure he will cause to be born will in turn work a prodigious contraction in the patient's anus, and will double the delight of the agent who, overwhelmed with comfort, will soon dart, to the very depths of

the ass of his delight, a sperm quite as abundant as thick, thus determined by so many lubricious details. There are some who do not care to have the patient take pleasure in the operation; an attitude we will account for in good time.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Allow me to be the scholar for a moment, and let me ask you, Dolmancé, in what state the patient's ass must be in order to ensure the agent a maximum of pleasure?

DOLMANCÉ—Full, by all means; 'tis essential the object in use have the most imperious desire to shit, so that the end of the fucker's prick, reaching the turd, may drive deep into it, and may more warmly and more softly deposit there the fuck which irritates and sets it afire.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I fear the patient's pleasure is less.

DOLMANCÉ—Error! This method of pleasure-taking is such that there exists no possibility of the fucker's receiving hurt nor of the employed object's failing to be transported into seventh heaven. No other matches this in value, no other can so completely satisfy each of the protagonists, and they who have tasted of it know a great difficulty in abandoning it for another. Such, Eugénie, are the best ways of taking pleasure with a man if the perils of pregnancy are to be avoided; for one enjoys—and be very certain of it—not only offering a man one's ass, but also sucking and fringing him, etc., and I have known libertine ladies who often had a higher esteem for this byplay than for real pleasures. The imagination is the spur of delights; in those of this order, all depends upon it, it is the mainspring of everything; now, is it not by means of the imagination one knows joy? is it not of the imagination that there come the most piquant delights?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Indeed; but let Eugénie beware thereof; the imagination serves us not save when our mind is absolutely free of prejudices: but a single one will suffice to chill it. This capricious portion of our mind is so libertine nothing can restrain it; its greatest triumph, its most eminent delights come of exceeding all limits imposed upon it; of all regularity it is an enemy, it worships disorder, idolizes whatever wears the brand of crime; whence

derived the extraordinary reply of an imaginative woman who was fucking coolly with her husband: "Why this ice?" quoth he. "Ah, truly," answered this singular creature, "'tis all very dull, what you are doing with me."

EUGENIE—I adore the remark. . . . Ah, my dear, how great is my urge to become acquainted with these divine outbursts of a disordered imagination! You'd never believe it, but during our stay together . . . since the instant we met—no, no, my darling, never could you conceive all the voluptuous ideas my brain has caressed. . . . Oh, how well I now understand what is evil . . . how much it is desired of my heart!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—May atrocities, horrors, may the most odious crimes astonish you no more, my Eugénie; what is of the filthiest, the most infamous, the most forbidden, 'tis that which best rouses the intellect . . . 'tis that which always causes us most deliciously to discharge.

EUGENIE—To how many incredible perversities must you not, the one and the other, have surrendered yourselves! And how I should relish hearing the details!

DOLMANCÉ, *kissing and fondling the young lady*—Beauteous Eugénie, a hundred times more would I love to see you experience all I should love to do, rather than to relate to you what I have done.

EUGENIE—I know not whether it would be too good for me to accede to everything.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I would not advise it, Eugénie.

EUGENIE—Very well, I spare Dolmancé his narrations; but you, my dear, pray tell me what they are, the most extraordinary things you have done in your life?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I engaged fifteen men, alone; in twenty-four hours, I was ninety times fucked, as much before as behind.

EUGENIE—Mere debauches, those, tours de force; I dare wager you have done yet more uncommon things.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I passed a term in a brothel.

EUGENIE—And what does that word mean?

DOLMANCE—Such are called the public houses where in consideration of a price agreed upon, each man finds young and pretty girls in good sort to satisfy his passions.

EUGENIE—And you gave yourself there, my dearest?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Yes; there I was, a perfect whore; there during an entire week I satisfied the whims of a goodly number of lechers, and there I beheld the most unusual tastes displayed; moved by a similar libertine principle, like the celebrated empress Theodora, Justinian's wife,¹ I waylaid men in the streets, upon public promenades, and the money I earned from these prostitutions I spent at the lottery.

EUGENIE—My dear, I know that mind of yours: you've gone still further than that.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Were it possible?

EUGENIE—Why, yes! Yes, and this is how I fancy it: have you not told me our most delicious moral sensations come of the imagination?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I did say so.

EUGENIE—Then, by allowing this imagination to stray, by according it the freedom to overstep those ultimate boundaries religion, decency, humaneness, virtue, in a word, all our pretended obligations would like to prescribe to it, is it not possible that the imagination's extravagances would be prodigious?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—No doubt.

EUGENIE—Well, is it not by reason of the immensity of these extravagances that the imagination will be the more inflamed?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Nothing more true.

EUGENIE—If that is so, the more we wish to be agitated, the more we desire to be moved violently, the more we must give rein

¹ See the *Anecdotes of Procopius*.

to our imagination; we must bend it toward the inconceivable; our enjoyment will thereby be increased, made better for the track the intellect follows, and . . .

DOLMANCE, *kissing Eugénie*—Delicious!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—My, but how our little rascal has progressed, and in such a brief space! But, do you know, my charming one, that one can go very far by the route you trace for us.

EUGENIE—I understand it very nicely thus; and since I will subject myself to no inhibitions, you see to what lengths I suppose one may go.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—To crime, vicious creature, to the blackest, most frightful crimes.

EUGENIE, *in a lowered and halting voice*—But you say no crime exists there . . . and after all, it is but to fire the mind: one thinks, but one does not do.

DOLMANCE—However, 'tis very sweet to carry out what one has fancied.

EUGENIE, *flushing*—Well, then, carry it out. . . . Would you not like to persuade me, dear teachers, that you have never done what you have conceived?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—It has sometimes been given to me to do it. . . .

EUGENIE—There we are!

DOLMANCE—Ah! what a mind.

EUGENIE, *continuing*—What I ask you is this: what have you fancied, and then, having fancied, what have you done?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *stammering*—Someday, Eugénie, I shall . . . relate my life to you. Let us continue our instruction . . . for you would bring me to say things . . . things . . .

EUGENIE—Ah, begone! I see you do not love me enough fully to open your soul to me; I shall wait as long as you say; let's get on

with the particulars. Tell me, my dear, who was the happy mortal who intended at your beginnings?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—My brother: from childhood on he adored me; during our earliest years we often amused each other without attaining our goal; I promised to give myself to him immediately I married; I kept my word; happily, my husband damaged nothing; my brother harvested all. We continue with our intrigue, but without hampering ourselves; we do not—he on his part, I on mine—plunge ourselves into anything but the most divine of libertinage's excesses; we even mutually serve one another: I procure women for him, he introduces me to men.

EUGENIE—Delightful arrangement! But, is not incest a crime?

DOLMANCE—Might one so regard Nature's gentlest unions, the ones she most insistently prescribes to us and counsels most warmly? Eugénie, a moment of reason: how, after the vast afflictions our planet sometime knew, how was the human species otherwise able to perpetuate itself, if not through incest? Of which we find, do we not, the example and the proof itself in the books Christianity respects most highly. By what other means could Adam's family² and that of Noah have been preserved? Sift, examine universal custom: everywhere you will detect incest authorized, considered a wise law and proper to cement familial ties. If, in a word, love is born of resemblance, where may it be more perfect than between brother and sister, between father and daughter? An ill-founded policy, one produced by the fear lest certain families become too powerful, bans incest from our midst; but let us not abuse ourselves to the point of mistaking for natural law what is dictated to us only by interest or ambition; let us delve into our hearts: 'tis always there I send our pedantic moralists; let us but question this sacred organ and we will notice that nothing is more exquisite than carnal connection within the family; let us cease to be blind with what concerns a brother's feelings for his sister, a father's for his daughter: in vain does one or the other disguise them behind a mask of legitimate tenderness: the most violent love

² Adam was nothing, nor was Noah, but a restorer of humankind. An appalling catastrophe left Adam alone in the world, just as a similar event did Noah; but Adam's tradition is lost to us, Noah's has been preserved.

is the unique sentiment ablaze in them, the only one Nature has deposited in their hearts. Hence, let us double, triple these delicious incests, fearlessly multiply them, and let us believe that the more straitly the object of our desires does belong to us, the greater charm shall there be in enjoying it.

One of my friends has the habit of living with the girl he had by his own mother; not a week ago he deflowered a thirteen-year-old boy, fruit of his commerce with this girl; in a few years' time, this same lad will wed his mother: such are my friend's wishes; he is readying for them all a destiny analogous to the projects he delights in and his intentions, I know very well, are yet to enjoy what this marriage will bring to bear; he is young and he has cause to hope for the best. Consider, gentle Eugénie, with what a quantity of incests and crimes this honest friend would be soiled were there a jot of truth in the low notion that would have us define these alliances as evil. To be brief, in all these matters I base my attitude upon one principle: had Nature condemned sodomy's pleasures, incestuous correspondences, pollutions, and so forth, would she have allowed us to find so much delight in them? That she may tolerate what outrages her is unthinkable.

EUGENIE—Oh! My divine teachers, I see full well that, according to your doctrine, there are very few crimes in the world, and that we may peacefully follow the bent of all our desires, however singular they may appear to fools who, shocked and alarmed by everything, stupidly confuse social institutions for Nature's divine ordinations. And yet, my friends, do you not at least acknowledge that there exist certain actions absolutely revolting and decidedly criminal, although enjoined by Nature? I am nothing loath to agree with you, that this Nature, as extraordinary in the productions she creates as various in the penchants she gives us, sometimes moves us to cruel deeds; but if, surrendered to depravity, we were to yield to this bizarre Nature's promptings, were we to go so far as to attempt, let me suppose, the lives of our fellows, you will surely grant me, at least I do hope so, that such an act would be a crime?

DOLMANCE—Indeed, Eugénie, little good would it do for us to grant you anything of the sort. Destruction being one of the

chief laws of Nature, nothing that destroys can be criminal; how might an action which so well serves Nature ever be outrageous to her? This destruction of which man is wont to boast is, moreover, nothing but an illusion; murder is no destruction; he who commits it does but alter forms, he gives back to Nature the elements whereof the hand of this skilled artisan instantly re-creates other beings: now, as creations cannot but afford delight to him by whom they are wrought, the murderer thus prepares for Nature a pleasure most agreeable, he furnishes her materials, she employs them without delay, and the act fools have had the madness to blame is nothing but meritorious in the universal agent's eye. 'Tis our pride prompts us to elevate murder into crime. Esteeming ourselves the foremost of the universe's creatures, we have stupidly imagined that every hurt this sublime creature endures must perforce be an enormity; we have believed Nature would perish should our marvelous species chance to be blotted out of existence, while the whole extirpation of the breed would, by returning to Nature the creative faculty she has entrusted to us, reinvigorate her, she would have again that energy we deprive her of by propagating our own selves; but what an inconsequence, Eugénie! indeed! an ambitious sovereign can destroy, at his ease and without the least scruple, the enemies prejudicial to his grandiose designs. . . . Cruel laws, arbitrary, imperious laws can likewise every century assassinate millions of individuals and we, feeble and wretched creatures, we are not allowed to sacrifice a single being to our vengeance or our caprice! Is there anything so barbarous, so outlandish, so grotesque? and, cloaking ourselves in the profoundest mystery, must we not amply compensate ourselves for this ineptitude, and have revenge?³

EUGENIE—Yes, of course . . . Oh, but your ethics seduce me, and how I savor their bouquet! Yet, wait, Dolmancé, tell me now, in good conscience, whether you have not sometimes had satisfaction in crime?

DOLMANCÉ—Do not force me to reveal my faults to you: their number and kind might bring me excessively to blush; Perhaps someday I'll confess them to you.

³ This article will be treated exhaustively further on; for the time being, we limit ourselves to laying some of the bases for the system to be developed later.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—While guiding the law's blade, the criminal has often employed it to satisfy his passions.

DOLMANCÉ—Would that I have no other reproaches to make myself!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *throwing her arms about his neck*—Divine man! . . . I adore you! . . . What spirit, what courage are needed to have tasted every pleasure, as have you! 'Tis to the man of genius only there is reserved the honor of shattering all the links and shackles of ignorance and stupidity. Kiss me—oh, you are charming!

DOLMANCÉ—Be frank, Eugénie, tell me: have you never wished the death of anyone?

EUGENIE—Oh, I have! Yes! there is every day before my eyes an abominable creature I have long wished to see in her grave.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Now, I dare say I have guessed her name.

EUGENIE—Whom do you suspect?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Your mother?

EUGENIE—Oh, let me hide myself upon your breast!

DOLMANCÉ—Voluptuous creature! in my turn I would overwhelm her with the caresses that should be the reward of her heart's energy and her exquisite mind. (*Dolmancé kisses her entire body and bestows light smacks upon her buttocks; he has an erection; his hands, from time to time, stray also over Madame de Saint-Ange's behind which is lubriciously tendered him; restored a little to his senses, Dolmancé proceeds.*) But why should we not put this sublime idea into execution?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Eugénie, I detested my mother quite as much as you hate yours, and I hesitated not.

EUGENIE—The means have been lacking to me.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—The courage, rather.

EUGENIE—Alas! still so young.

DOLMANCÉ—But, Eugénie, now what would you do?

EUGENIE—Everything . . . only show me the way and you'll see!

DOLMANCÉ—It will be shown you, Eugénie, I promise it; but thereunto, I put a condition.

EUGENIE—And what is it? or rather what is the condition I am not ready to accept?

DOLMANCÉ—Come, my rascal, come into my arms: I can hold off no longer; your charming behind must be the price of the gift I promise you, one crime has got to pay for another. Come hither! . . . nay, both, the two of you, run to drown in floods of fuck the heavenly fire that blazes in us!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—If you please, let us put a little order in these revels; measure is required even in the depths of infamy and delirium.

DOLMANCÉ—Nothing easier: the major object, so it appears to me, is that I discharge the while giving this charming girl all possible pleasure: I am going to insert my prick in her ass; meanwhile, as she reclines in your arms you will frig her; do your utmost; by means of the position I place you in, she will be able to retaliate in kind; you will kiss one another. After a few runs into this child's ass, we will vary the picture: I will have you, Madame, by the ass; Eugénie, on top of you, your head between her legs, will present her clitoris to me; I'll suck it: thus I'll cause her to come a second time. Next, I will lodge my prick in her anus; you will avail me of your ass, 'twill take the place of the cunt she had under my nose, and now you will have at it in the style she will have employed, her head now between your legs; I'll suck your asshole as I have just sucked her cunt, you will discharge, so will I, and all the while my hand, embracing the dear sweet pretty little body of this charming novice, will go ahead to tickle her clitoris that she too may swoon from delight.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Capital, my Dolmancé, but will not there be something missing?

DOLMANCÉ—A prick in my ass? Madame, you are right.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Let's do without it this morning: we'll have it in the afternoon: my brother will join us and our pleasures will be at their height. Now let's to work.

DOLMANCÉ—I think I'll have Eugénie frig me for a moment. (*She does so.*) Yes, quite, that's it . . . a bit more quickly, my heart . . . that rosy head must always be kept naked, never let it be covered over; the more 'tis kept taut the more you facilitate the erection . . . never, you must never cap the prick you frig . . . 'Tis very well done . . . thus you yourself put into a proper state the member that is to perforate you. . . . Notice how it responds, gets sturdily up. . . . Give me your tongue, little bitch. . . . Let your ass rest on my right hand, while my left goes on to toy with your clitoris.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Eugénie, would you like to cause him to taste the extremest pleasures?

EUGENIE—By all means . . . I wish to do everything to give him them.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Why, then take his prick in your mouth and suck it a few instants.

EUGENIE, *does it*—Thus?

DOLMANCÉ—Delicious mouth! what warmth! Worth as much to me as the prettiest ass! . . . Voluptuous, tactful, accomplished woman, never deny your lovers this pleasure: 'twill bind them to you forever . . . Ah! by God! ah, by God's own fuck! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—My, what blasphemies, my friend.

DOLMANCÉ—I'll have your ass, Madame, if you please. . . . Yes, give it me, let me kiss it while I'm sucked, and be not astonished at my language: one of my largest pleasures is to swear in God's name when I'm stiff. It seems then that my spirit, at such a moment exalted a thousand times more, abhors, scorns this disgusting fiction; I would like to discover some way better to revile it or to outrage it further; and when my accursed musings lead me to the conviction of the nullity of this repulsive object of my hatred, I am

irritated and would instantly like to be able to re-edify the phantom so that my rage might at least fall upon some target; imitate me, charming women, and you will observe such discourses to increase without fail your sensibility. But, by God's very damnation, I say, I've got absolutely, whatever be my pleasure, I've got to retire from this celestial mouth . . . else I'll leave my fuck in it! . . . All right, Eugénie, move! let's get on with the scene I proposed and, the three of us, let's be plunged into the most voluptuous drunkenness. (*The positions are arranged.*)

EUGENIE—Oh, how I fear, dear one, that your efforts will come to naught! The disproportion is exceedingly strong.

DOLMANCE—Why, I sodomize the very youngest every day; just yesterday a little lad of seven was deflowered by that prick, and in less than three minutes. . . . Courage, Eugénie, courage! . . .

EUGENIE—Oh! You're tearing me!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—A little management there, Dolmancé; remember, I am responsible for the creature.

DOLMANCE—Then frig her, Madame, she'll feel the pain less; but there! 'tis said, 'tis done! I'm in up to the hilt.

EUGENIE—Oh heaven! it is not without trouble . . . see the sweat on my forehead, dear friend. . . . Ah! God, I've never undergone such agonies! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Yet there you are, dear heart, half deflowered, there you are, arrived at a woman's estate; 'tis well worth purchasing the glory at the cost of a little inconvenience; my fingers then do not soothe you at all?

EUGENIE—Could I have borne it without them! . . . Tickle away, rub, my angel. . . . I feel it, imperceptibly the pain metamorphoses into pleasure. . . . Push, Dolmancé! . . . thrust! thrust! oh, I am dying! . . .

DOLMANCE—O by God's holy fuck! thrice bloody fuck of God! Let's change! I'll not be able to hold . . . your behind, kind lady, I beseech you, your ass, quick, place yourself as I told you. (*Shift of attitude, and Dolmancé goes on.*) 'Tis easier so . . . how my

prick penetrates . . . but, Madame, this noble ass is not the less delicious for that. . . .

EUGENIE—Am I as I should be, Dolmancé?

DOLMANCE—Admirably! I've got this little virgin cunt all to myself, delicious. Oh, I'm a guilty one, a villain, indeed I know it; such charms were not made for my eyes; but the desire to provide this child with a firm grounding in voluptuousness overshadows every other consideration. I want to make her fuck to flow, if 'tis possible I want to exhaust her, drink her dry. . . . (*He sucks her.*)

EUGENIE—This pleasure will kill me, I can't resist it! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I'm coming, I say! Oh fuck! . . . fuck! . . . Dolmancé, I'm discharging! . . .

EUGENIE—And I too, my darling! Oh, my God, how he does suck me! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Then swear, little whore, curse! . . . Then cry an oath! . . .

EUGENIE—All right then, damn thee! I discharge! Damn thee! . . . I am so sweetly drunk! . . .

DOLMANCE—To your post! . . . Take up your station! . . . Eugénie! . . . I'll be the dupe of these handlings and shifts. (*Eugénie assumes her place.*) Ah, good! here again am I, at my original place and abode . . . exhibit your asshole, Madame, I'll pump it at my leisure. . . . Oh, but I love to kiss an ass I've just left off fucking. . . . Ah! lick up mine, do you hear, while I drive my sperm deep home into your friend's. . . . Wouldst believe it, Madame? in it goes, and this time effortlessly! Ah, fuck! fuck! you've no idea how it squeezes, how she clamps me! Holy frigging God, what ecstasy! . . . Oh, 'tis there, 'tis done, I resist no longer . . . flow! my fluid flows! . . . and I die! . . .

EUGENIE—He causes me to die also, my friend, I swear it to you. . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—The wench! how promptly she's taken to it!

DOLMANCE—Yes, but I know countless girls of her age nothing on earth could force to take their pleasure otherwise; 'tis only the first encounter that taxes; a woman has no sooner tried that sauce and she'll eat no other cookery. . . . Oh heavens! I'm spent; let me get my breath, a few moments' respite, please.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—There they are, my dear: men. A glance at us, no more, and their desires are satisfied; the subsequent annihilation conducts them to disgust, soon to contempt.

DOLMANCE, *coolly*—Why, what an insult, heavenly creature! (*They embrace.*) The one and the other of you are made for naught but homages, whatever be the state wherein one finds oneself.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Console yourself, Eugénie; while they may have acquired the right to neglect us because they are sated, have we not in the same way that to scorn them, when their conduct bids us to it? If Tiberius sacrificed to Caprea the objects that had just appeased his hungers,⁴ Zingua, Africa's queen, also immolated her lovers.⁵

DOLMANCE—Such excesses, perfectly simple and very intelligible to me, doubtless, all the same ought never be committed amongst ourselves: "Wolves are safe in their own company," as the proverb has it, and trivial though it may be, 'tis true. My friends, dread nothing from me, ever: I'll perhaps have you do much that is evil, but never will I do any to you.

EUGENIE—No, my dear, I dare be held answerable for it: never will Dolmancé abuse the privileges we grant him; I believe he has the roué's probity: it is the best; but let us bring our teacher back to his theorems and, before our senses subside into calm, let us return, I beg of you, to the great design that inflamed us before.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—What, dost think yet on that? I thought 'twas no more than a little intellectual effervescence.

EUGENIE—It is the most certain impulse of my heart, and I'll not be content till the crime is done.

⁴ See Suetonius and Dion Cassius of Nicaea.

⁵ See the *History of Zingua, Queen of Angola*.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Oh splendid! splendid! Let her off, though; consider: she is your mother.

EUGENIE—Noble title!

DOLMANCE—She is right: did this mother think of Eugénie when she brought her into the world? The jade let herself be fucked because she found it agreeable, but she was very far from having this daughter in mind. Let her act as she sees fit with what regards her mother; let's allow her complete freedom and we'll be content to assure her that, whatever be the extreme lengths she goes to, never will she render herself guilty of any evil.

EUGENIE—I abhor her, I detest her, a thousand causes justify my hate; I've got to have her life at no matter what the cost!

DOLMANCE—Very well, since your resolve is unshakable, you'll be satisfied, Eugénie, I give you my oath; but permit me a few words of advice which, before you act, are of the utmost necessity. Never let your secret go out of your mouth, my dear, and always act alone: nothing is more dangerous than an accomplice: let us always beware of even those whom we think most closely attached to us: "One must," wrote Machiavelli, "either have no confederates, or dispatch them as soon as one has made use of them." Nor is that all: guile, Eugénie, guile is indispensable to the projects you are forming. Move closer than ever to your victim before destroying her; have the look of sympathy for her, seem to console her; cajole her, partake of her sufferings, swear you worship her; do yet more: persuade her of it: deceit, in such instances, cannot be carried too far. Nero caressed Agrippina upon the deck of the very bark with which she was to be engulfed: imitate his example, use all the knavery, all the imposture your brain can invent. To lie is always a necessity for women; above all when they choose to deceive, falsehood becomes vital to them.

EUGENIE—Those instructions will be remembered and, no doubt, put into effect; but let us delve deeper into this deceit whose usage you recommend to women; think you then that it is absolutely essential in this world?

DOLMANCE—Without hesitation I say I know of nothing more necessary in life; one certain truth shall prove its indispensability: everyone employs it; I ask, in the light of that, how a sincere individual will not always founder in the midst of a society of false people. Now, if 'tis true, as they declare, that virtues are of some usefulness in civil life, how would you have someone unprovided with either will, or power, or the gift of any virtue, which is the case with many persons, how, I ask you, would you have it that such a personage be not essentially obliged to feign, to dissemble, in order to obtain, in his turn, a little portion of the happiness his competitors seek to wrest away from him? And, in effect, it is very surely virtue, or might it not be the appearance of virtue, which really becomes necessary to social man? Let's not doubt that the appearance alone is quite sufficient to him: he has got that, and he possesses all he needs. Since one does nothing in this world but pinch, rub, and elbow others, is it not enough that they display their skin to us? Let us moreover be well persuaded that of the practice of virtue we can at the very most say that it is hardly useful save to him who has it; others reap so little therefrom that so long as the man who must live amongst other men appears virtuous, it matters not in the slightest whether he is so in fact or not. Deceit, furthermore, is almost always an assured means to success; he who possesses deceit necessarily begins with an advantage over whosoever has commerce or correspondence with him: dazzling him with a false exterior, he gains his confidence; convince others to place trust in you, and you have succeeded. I perceive someone has deceived me, I have only myself to blame; and he who has conned me has done so all the more prettily if because of pride I make no complaint and bear it all nobly; his ascendancy over me will always be pronounced; he will be right, I wrong; he will advance, I'll recede; he is great, I am nothing; he will be enriched, I ruined; in a word, always above me, he'll straightway capture public opinion; once arrived there, useless for me to inculcate him, I'll simply not be heard; and so boldly and unceasingly we'll give ourselves over to the most infamous deceit; let us behold it as the key to every grace, every favor, all reputation, all riches, and by means of the keen pleasure of acting villainously, let us placate the little twinge our conscience feels at having manufactured dupes.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Having there infinitely more on the matter than, so it appears to me, is needed, Eugénie, well convinced, ought also to be reassured, encouraged: she will take action when she pleases. We had now better resume our dissertations upon men's various libertine caprices; the field should be vast; let's survey it; we've just initiated our student into a few of the practice's mysteries, let's not neglect theory.

DOLMANCE—The libertine details of masculine passions, Madame, have little therein to provide suitable stuff for the instruction of a girl who, like Eugénie, is not destined for the whoring profession; she will marry and, such being the hypothesis, one may stake ten to one on it, her husband will have none of those inclinations; however, were he to have them, her wiser conduct is readily to be described: much gentleness, a readiness ever to comply, good humor; on the other hand, much deceit and ample but covert compensation: those few words contain it all. However, were you, Eugénie, to desire some analysis of men's preferences when they resort to libertinage, we might, in order most lucidly to examine the question, generally reduce those tastes to three: *sodomy*, *sacrilegious fancies*, and *penchants to cruelty*. The first of these passions is universal today; to what we have already said upon it, we shall join a few choice reflections. It divides into two classes, active and passive: the man who embuggers, be it a boy, be it a woman, acquits himself of an active sodomization; he is a passive sodomite when he has himself buggered. The question has often been raised, which of the two fashions of sodomistic behavior is the more voluptuous? assuredly, 'tis the passive, since one enjoys at a single stroke the sensations of before and behind; it is so sweet to change sex, so delicious to counterfeit the whore, to give oneself to a man who treats us as if we were a woman, to call that man one's paramour, to avow oneself his mistress! Ah! my friends, what voluptuousness! But, Eugénie, we shall limit ourselves here to a few details of advice relating only to women who, transforming themselves into men, wish, like us, to enjoy this delicious pleasure. I have just familiarized you with those attacks, Eugénie, and I have observed enough to be persuaded you will one of these days make admirable progress in this career; I exhort you to pursue it diligently

as one of the most delightful of the Cytherean isle, and am perfectly sure you will follow my counsel. I'll restrict myself to two or three suggestions essential to every person determined henceforth to know none but these pleasures or ones analogous. First of all, be mindful also of yourself, insist your clitoris be frigged while you are being buggered: no two things harmonize so sweetly as do these two pleasures; avoid a douche, let there be no rubbing upon the sheets, no wiping with towels, when you have just been fucked in this style; 'tis a good idea to have the breech open always; whereof result desires, and titillations which soon obviate any concern for tidiness; there is no imagining to what point the sensations are prolonged. Prior to sodomite amusements remember to avoid acids: they aggravate haemorrhoids and render introductions painful: do not permit several men to discharge one after the other into your ass: this mixture of sperms, however it may excite the imagination, is never beneficial and often dangerous to the health; always rid yourself of each emission before allowing the next to be deposited.

EUGENIE—But if they were to be made in my cunt, should that purging not be a crime?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Imagine nothing of the sort, sweet little fool; there is not the least wrong in diverting a man's semen into a detour by one means or by another, because propagation is in no wise the objective of Nature; she merely tolerates it; from her viewpoint, the less we propagate, the better; and when we avoid it altogether, that's best of all. Eugénie, be the implacable enemy of this wearisome child-getting, and even in marriage incessantly deflect that perfidious liquor whose vegetation serves only to spoil our figures, which deadens our voluptuous sensations, withers us, ages and makes us fade and disturbs our health; get your husband to accustom himself to these losses; entice him into this or that passage, let him busy himself there and thus keep him from making his offerings at the temple; tell him you detest children, point out the advantages of having none. Keep a close watch over yourself in this article, my dear, for, I declare to you, I hold generation in such horror I should cease to be your friend the instant you were to become pregnant. If, however, the misfortune does occur, without

yourself having been at fault, notify me within the first seven or eight weeks, and I'll have it very neatly remedied. Dread not infanticide; the crime is imaginary: we are always mistress of what we carry in our womb, and we do no more harm in destroying this kind of matter than in evacuating another, by medicines, when we feel the need.

EUGENIE—But if the child is near the hour of its birth?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Were it in the world, we should still have the right to destroy it. In all the world there is no prerogative more secure than that of mothers over their children. No race has failed to recognize this truth: 'tis founded in reason, consecrated in principle.

DOLMANCE—The right is natural . . . it is incontestable. The deific system's extravagance was the source of every one of those gross errors. The imbeciles who believed in God, persuaded that our existence is had of none but him and that immediately an embryo begins to mature, a little soul, emanation of God, comes straightway to animate it; these fools, I say, assuredly had to regard as a capital crime this small creature's undoing, because, according to them, it no longer belonged to men. 'Twas God's work; 'twas God's own: dispatch it without crime? No. Since, however, the torch of philosophy has dissipated all those impostures, since, the celestial chimera has been tumbled in the dust, since, better instructed of physics' laws and secrets, we have evolved the principle of generation, and now that this material mechanism offers nothing more astonishing to the eye than the development of a germ of wheat, we have been called back to Nature and away from human error. As we have broadened the horizon of our rights, we have recognized that we are perfectly free to take back what we only gave up reluctantly, or by accident, and that it is impossible to demand of any individual whomsoever that he become a father or a mother against his will; that this creature whether more or less on earth is not of very much consequence, and that we become, in a word, as certainly the masters of this morsel of flesh, however it be animated, as we are of the nails we pare from our fingers, or the excrements we eliminate through our bowels, because the one and the other are our own, and

because we are absolute proprietors of what emanates from us. Having had elaborated for you, Eugénie, the very mediocre importance the act of murder has here on earth, you have been obliged to see of what slight consequence, similarly, must be everything that has to do with childbearing even if the act is perpetrated against a person who has arrived at the age of reason; unnecessary to embroider upon it: your high intelligence adds its own arguments to support my proofs. Peruse the history of the manner of all the world's peoples and you will unfailingly see that the practice is global; you will finally be convinced that it would be sheer imbecility to accord a very indifferent action the title of evil.

EUGENIE, *first to Dolmancé*—I cannot tell you to what point you persuade me. (*Now addressing herself to Madame de Saint-Ange*.) But tell me, my most dear, have you ever had occasion to employ the remedy you propose to me in order internally to destroy the fetus?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Twice, and both times with total success; but I must admit I have had recourse to it only at pregnancy's outset; however, I am acquainted with two ladies who have used the same remedy at mid-term, and they assure me it all came out as happily with them. Should you be in need, count upon me, my dear, but I urge you never to allow yourself to fall into a state of having need. An ounce of prevention . . . But back we go, and on with the lubricious details we have promised this young lady. Pursue, Dolmancé; we've reached the sacrilegious fancies.

DOLMANCÉ—I suppose Eugénie is sufficiently disabused on the score of religious errors to be intimately persuaded that sporting with the objects of fools' piety can have no sort of consequence. Sacrilegious fancies have so little substance to them that indeed they cannot heat any but those very youthful minds gladdened by any rupture of restraint; 'tis here a kind of petty vindictiveness which fires the imagination and which, very probably, can provoke a moment or two of enjoyment; but these delights, it would seem to me, must become insipid and cold when one is of an age to understand and to be convinced of the nullity of the objects of which the idols we jeer at are but meager likenesses. The profanation of

relics, the images of saints, the host, the crucifix, all that, in the philosopher's view can amount to no more than the degradation of a pagan statue. Once your scorn has condemned those execrable baubles, you must leave them to contempt, and forget them; 'tis not wise to preserve anything for all that but blasphemy, not that blasphemy has much meaning, for as of the moment God does not exist, what's the use of insulting his name? but it is essential to pronounce hard and foul words during pleasure's intoxication, and the language of blasphemy very well serves the imagination. Be utterly unsparing; be lavish in your expressions; they must scandalize to the last degree; for 'tis sweet to scandalize: causing scandal flatters one's pride, and though this be a minor triumph, 'tis not to be disdained; I say it openly, Mesdames, such is one of my secret delights: few are the moral pleasures which more actively affect my imagination. Try it, Eugénie, and you shall see what results from it. Above all, labor to articulate a prodigious impiety when you find yourself with persons of your own age who yet vegetate in superstition's twilight; parade your debauchery, announce your libertinage; affect a whorish air, let them spy your breast when you go with them into secluded places, garb yourself indecently; flauntingly expose the most intimate parts of your body; require of your friends that they do the same; seduce them, lecture them, cause them to see what is ridiculous in their prejudices; put them eye to eye with what is called *evil*; in their company swear like a trooper; if they are younger than you, take them by force, ply them with examples or with counsels, entertain them with all you can think of that is, in a word, most apt to pervert them, thuswise corrupt them; similarly, be extremely free with men; display irreligion and impudence to them; far from taking umbrage at the liberties they will take, mysteriously grant them everything which can amuse them without compromising yourself; let yourself be handled by them, frig them, get yourself frigged; yes, go even so far as to lend them your ass; but, since the fictitious honor of women is bound up with their anterior integrity, be in a less willing humor to have it demolished; once married, secure a lackey, not a lover, or pay a few reliable young men: from there on, all is to be masked, and is; no more peril to your reputation and without anyone ever

having been able to suspect you, you have learned the art of doing whatever you please. Let us move on.

Cruel pleasures comprise the third sort we promised to analyze. This variety is today exceedingly common amongst men, and here is the argument they employ to justify them: we wish to be roused, stirred, they say, 'tis the aim of every man who pursues pleasure, and we would be moved by the most active means. Taking our departure from this point, it is not a question of knowing whether our proceedings please or displease the object that serves us, it is purely a question of exposing our nervous system to the most violent possible shock; now, there is no doubt that we are much more keenly affected by pain than by pleasure: the reverberations that result in us when the sensation of pain is produced in others will essentially be of a more vigorous character, more incisive, will more energetically resound in us, will put the animal spirits more violently into circulation and these, directing themselves toward the nether regions by the retrograde motion essential to them, instantly will ignite the organs of voluptuousness and dispose them to pleasure. Pleasure's effects, in women, are always uncertain; often disappointing; it is, furthermore, very difficult for an old or an ugly man to produce them. When it does happen that they are produced, they are feeble, and the nervous concussions fainter; hence, pain must be preferred, for pain's telling effects cannot deceive, and its vibrations are more powerful. But, one may object to men infatuated by this mania, this pain is afflictive to one's fellow; is it charitable to do others ill for the sake of delighting oneself? In answer thereto, the rascals reply that, accustomed in the pleasure-taking act to thinking exclusively of themselves and accounting others as nothing, they are persuaded that it is entirely reasonable, in accordance with natural impulsions, to prefer what they feel to what they do not feel. What, they dare ask, what do these pains occasioned in others do to us? Hurt us? No; on the contrary, we have just demonstrated that from their production there results a sensation delightful to us. For what reason then ought we to go softly with an individual who feels one thing while we feel another? Why should we spare him a torment that will cost us never a tear, when it is certain that from this

suffering a very great pleasure for us will be born? Have we ever felt a single natural impulse advising us to prefer others to ourselves, and is each of us not alone, and for himself in this world? 'Tis a very false tone you use when you speak to us of this Nature which you interpret as telling us not to do to others what we would not have done to us; such stuff never came but from the lips of men, and weak men. Never does a strong man take it into his head to speak that language. They were the first Christians who, daily persecuted on account of their ridiculous doctrine, used to cry at whosoever chose to hear: "Don't burn us, don't flay us! *Nature says one must not do unto others that which unto oneself one would not have done!*" Fools! How could Nature, who always urges us to delight in ourselves, who never implants in us other instincts, other notions, other inspirations, how could Nature, the next moment, assure us that we must not, however, decide to love ourselves if that might cause others pain? Ah! believe me, Eugénie, believe me, Nature, mother to us all, never speaks to us save of ourselves; nothing has more of the egoistic than her message, and what we recognize most clearly therein is the immutable and sacred counsel: prefer thyself, love thyself, no matter at whose expense. But the others, they say to you, may avenge themselves. . . . Let them! the mightier will vanquish; he will be right. Very well, there it is, the primitive state of perpetual strife and destruction for which Nature's hand created us, and within which alone it is of advantage to her that we remain.

Thus, my dear Eugénie, is the manner of these persons' arguing, and from my experience and studies I may add thereunto that cruelty, very far from being a vice, is the first sentiment Nature injects in us all. The infant breaks his toy, bites his nurse's breast, strangles his canary long before he is able to reason; cruelty is stamped in animals, in whom, as I think I have said, Nature's laws are more emphatically to be read than in ourselves; cruelty exists amongst savages, so much nearer to Nature than civilized men are; absurd then to maintain cruelty is a consequence of depravity. I repeat, the doctrine is false. Cruelty is natural. All of us are born furnished with a dose of cruelty education later modifies; but education does not belong to Nature, and is as deforming to Na-

ture's sacred effects as arboriculture is to trees. In your orchards compare the tree abandoned to Nature's ministry with the other your art cares for, and you will see which is the more beautiful, you will discover from which you will pluck the superior fruit. Cruelty is simply the energy in a man civilization has not yet altogether corrupted: therefore it is a virtue, not a vice. Repeal your laws, do away with your constraints, your chastisements, your habits, and cruelty will have dangerous effects no more, since it will never manifest itself save when it meets with resistance, and then the collision will always be between competing cruelties; it is in the civilized state cruelty is dangerous, because the assaulted person nearly always lacks the force or the means to repel injury; but in the state of uncivilization, if cruelty's target is strong, he will repulse cruelty; and if the person attacked is weak, why, the case here is merely that of assault upon one of those persons whom Nature's law prescribes to yield to the strong—'tis all one, and why seek trouble where there is none?

We may dispense with an explanation of cruelty in man's lubricious pleasure; you already have a faint idea, Eugénie, of the several excesses they tend to lead to, and your ardent imagination must easily enable you to understand that for a firm and stoical spirit, they should be restricted by no limits. Nero, Tiberius, Helio-gabulus slaughtered their children to cause an erection; Maréchal de Retz, Charolais, Condé also committed murders of debauch; the first declared upon being questioned that he knew no delight more powerful than the one derived from the torture inflicted by his chaplain and himself upon infants of either sex. Seven or eight hundred sacrificed children were found in one of his Breton châteaux. All quite conceivable, I've just proven it to you. Our constitution, our scheme, our organs, the flow of liquids, the animal spirits' energy, such are the physical causes which in the same hour make for the Tituses and the Neros, the Messalinas or the Chantals; we can no longer take pride in the virtue that repents of vice, no more condemn Nature for having caused us to be born good than for having created us criminal: she acts in keeping with her designs, her views, her needs: let us submit to them. And so I will only examine, in what follows, female cruelty, which is always

more active than male, by reason of the excessive sensibility of women's organs.

In general, we distinguish two sorts of cruelty: that resulting from stupidity, which, never reasoned, never analyzed, assimilates the unthinking individual into a ferocious beast: this cruelty affords no pleasure, for he inclined to it is incapable of discrimination; such a being's brutalities are rarely dangerous: it is always easy to find protection against them; the other species of cruelty, fruit of extreme organic sensibility, is known only to them who are extremely delicate in their person, and the extremes to which it drives them are those determined by intelligence and niceness of feeling; this delicacy, so finely wrought, so sensitive to impressions, responds above all, best, and immediately to cruelty; it awakens in cruelty, cruelty liberates it. How few are able to grasp these distinctions! . . . and how few there are who sense them! They exist nonetheless. Now, it is this second kind of cruelty you will most often find in women. Study them well: you will see whether it is not their excessive sensitivity that leads them to cruelty; you will see whether it is not their extremely active imagination, the acuity of their intelligence that renders them criminal, ferocious; oh, they are charming creatures, every one of them; and not one of the lot cannot turn a wise man into a giddy fool if she tries; unhappily, the rigidity, or rather the absurdity, of our customs acts as no encouragement to their cruelty; they are obliged to conceal themselves, to feign, to cover over their propensities with ostensible good and benevolent works which they detest to the depths of their soul; only behind the darkest curtain, by taking the greatest precautions, aided by a few dependable friends, are they able to surrender to their inclinations; and as there are many of this sort, so there are many who are miserable. Would you meet them? Announce a cruel spectacle, a burning, a battle, a combat of gladiators, you will see droves of them come running; but these occasions are not numerous enough to feed their fury: they contain themselves, and they suffer.

Let's cast a rapid glance at women of this variety. Zingua, Queen of Angola, cruelest of women, killed her lovers as soon as they had had their way with her; often she had warriors contend while she looked on and was the victor's prize; to flatter her ferocious spirit, she had every pregnant woman under the age of

thirty ground in a mortar.⁶ Zoé, a Chinese emperor's wife, knew no pleasure equal to what she felt upon witnessing the execution of criminals; wanting these, she had slaves put to death, and the while would fuck with her husband, and proportioned her discharges to the anguishes she made these wretches endure. 'Twas she who, searching to improve the tortures she imposed upon her victims, invented the famous hollow column of brass one heats after having sealed the patient within. Theodora, Justinian's wife, amused herself seeing eunuchs made; and Messalina frigged herself while men were masturbated to death before her. The women of Florida cause their husband's member to swell and they deposit little insects upon the glans, which produces very horrible agonies; they league together to perform the operation, several of them attacking one man in order to be more sure of the thing. When the Spaniards came, they themselves held their husbands while those European barbarians assassinated them. Mesdames Voisin and la Bravilliers poisoned for the simple pleasure of committing crime. In a word, history furnishes a thousand thousand details of women's cruelty, and it is because of the natural penchant they have, because of their instincts for cruelty, that I should like to have them become accustomed to active flagellation, a means by which cruel men appease their ferocity. Some few among them have the habit already, I know, but it is not yet in use amongst women, at least to the point I should desire. By means of this outlet given women's barbarity, society would have much to gain; for, unable to be evil in one way, they are in some other, and, thus broadcasting their poison everywhere about, they cause their husbands and their families to despair. The refusal to perform a good action, when the occasion presents itself, and that to relieve misfortune, surely gives considerable impetus, if you wish, to that ferocity into which certain women naturally are led, but all this is pale, weak stuff, and often falls far short of the need they have to do yet worse. There would be without doubt other devices whereby woman, at once sensitive and ferocious, might calm her intemperate emotions, but, Eugénie, they are dangerous means, and I should never dare recommend them to you. . . . But, my stars! What is the matter with you, dear angel? Madame, look at the state your pupil is in!

⁶ See the *History of Zingua, Queen of Angola*, written by a missionary.

EUGENIE, *frigging herself*—Oh Christ! you drive me wild! See what your frigging speeches do! . . .

DOLMANCE—To the rescue, Madame, help me if you will! Are we going to allow this lovely child to discharge without our aid? . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Oh, what an injustice 'twould be! (*Taking Eugénie in her arms.*) Adorable creature, never have I beheld a sensibility like yours, never so delightful a mind! . . .

DOLMANCE—Take care of the fore-end, Madame, I am going to glide over this pretty little asshole with my tongue, and give her a few light slaps on these cheeks; she must be made to discharge at least seven or eight times in this manner.

EUGENIE, *wild-eyed, beside herself*—Ah, by fuck! it won't be difficult!

DOLMANCE—In your present posture, ladies, you might be able to suck my prick, one after the other; thus excited, I could with much more energy advance to our charming pupil's pleasures.

EUGENIE—My dear, I dispute with you the honor of sucking this noble prick. (*She seizes it.*)

DOLMANCE—Oh, what delights! what voluptuous warmth! Eugénie, will you behave well at this critical instant?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—She'll swallow, oh, I promise you, she'll swallow it down; yet . . . on the other hand, if she were through childishness . . . for I do not know what reason . . . were she to neglect the duties lubricity imposes upon her . . .

DOLMANCE, *greatly aroused*—I'd not forgive her, Madame, there would be no pardon for her! . . . An exemplary punishment . . . I swear to you she'd be whipped . . . whipped till her blood flowed. . . . Ah, damn the both of you, I discharge . . . my fuck's coming! . . . Swallow . . . swallow, Eugénie, let there not be one drop lost! and you, Madame, look to my ass; it's ready for you. . . . Do you see how it yawns? do you not see how it calls your fingers? By God's fuck! my ecstasy is complete . . . drive them in further, to the wrist! Ah, back on our feet, I can no more . . . this delicious girl has sucked me like an angel. . . .

EUGENIE—My dear, my adorable instructor, not a drop was lost. Kiss me, my love, your fuck is now in the depths of my bowels.

DOLMANCE—She is delicious . . . and how the wench discharged! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—She is inundated—but what's that I hear? Someone knocks? who can have come to trouble us? My brother . . . imprudent creature!

EUGENIE—But, my dear, this is treason!

DOLMANCE—Unparalleled, is it not? Fear not, Eugénie, we labor for naught but to procure you pleasures.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—And we'll very soon convince her of it! Come in, dear brother, and have a laugh at this little girl's shyness; she's hiding herself so as not to be seen by you.

DIALOGUE THE FOURTH

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, EUGENIE,
DOLMANCE, LE CHEVALIER DE MIRVEL

LE CHEVALIER—Lovely Eugénie, I beg you to be easy; my discretion is entire; there is my sister and there my friend, both of whom can be held answerable for me.

DOLMANCE—I see but one way to terminate this ridiculous ceremony: look here, Chevalier, we are educating this pretty girl, we are teaching her all a little girl of her age should know and, the better to instruct her, we join some practice to theory. She must have a tableau dressed for her: it must feature a prick discharging, that's where presently we are; would you like to serve as model?

LE CHEVALIER—Surely, the proposal is too flattering to refuse, and Mademoiselle has the charms that will very quickly guarantee the desired lesson's effects.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Then let's go on; to work!

EUGENIE—Oh, indeed, 'tis too much; you abuse my inexperience to such a degree . . . but for whom is Monsieur going to take me?

LE CHEVALIER—For a charming girl, Eugénie . . . for the most adorable creature I have ever laid eyes on. (*He kisses her;*

his hands rove over her charms.) Oh God! what fresh, what sweet attractions! . . . enchanting! . . .

DOLMANCE—Less prattle, Chevalier, let's act instead; I'll direct the scene, 'tis my right; the object here is to exhibit to Eugénie the mechanics of an ejaculation; but, since it should be difficult for her to observe such a phenomenon in cold blood, the four of us are going to group ourselves close together. You, Madame, will frig your friend, I'll be responsible for the Chevalier. When 'tis a question of a man's pollution, he would infinitely prefer to entrust the business to another man, not to a woman. As a man knows what suits himself, so he knows how to manage for another. . . . Well, off we go. Positions! (*They arrange themselves.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Are we not too close?

DOLMANCE, *who has already got his hands upon the Chevalier*—Impossible to be too close, Madame; we must have your friend's face and breast inundated by the proofs of your brother's virility; let him aim at her nose, as the saying goes. Master of the pump, I'll direct the stream in such wise she'll be covered quite absolutely. Meanwhile, frig her in every lubricious part of her body; Eugénie, give all of your imagination up to dwelling upon libertinage's ultimate extravagances; think that you are about to see its most splendid mysteries operated before your very eyes; cast away every restraint, spurn every one: never was modesty a virtue. Had Nature desired some part of our body to be hidden, she would have seen to the matter herself; but she created us naked; hence, she wishes that we go naked, and all contrary practice thoroughly outrages her laws. Children, who do not yet have any notion of pleasure and consequently of the necessity to render it more keen by modesty, exhibit all of themselves. One also sometimes meets with a yet stranger curiosity: there are countries where, although modesty of manners is not to be encountered, modesty of dress is in usage. In Tahiti, girls are clothed, and when one demands it, they strip. . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—What I love about Dolmancé is that he wastes not a moment; all the while he discourses, observe how he acts, look how approvingly he inspects my brother's superb ass, how voluptuously he frigs the young man's handsome prick.

. . . Come, Eugénie, let's not tarry. There's the pump's nozzle in the air; it won't be long before we're flooded.

EUGENIE—Oh, dearest friend, what a monstrous member! . . . I can scarcely get my hand around it! . . . Dear God, are they all as big as this?

DOLMANCE—Eugénie, you know that mine is much inferior in size; such engines are redoubtable for a youngster; you are fully aware one such as this could not without danger perforate you.

EUGENIE, *already being frigged by Madame de Saint-Ange*—I'd brave anything to enjoy it!

DOLMANCE—And you would be right: a girl ought never be terrified by such a thing; Nature lends a helping hand, and the torrents of pleasure wherewith she overwhelms you soon compensate the slight inconveniences that precede them. I have seen girls younger than you sustain still more massy pricks: with courage and patience life's greatest obstacles are surmounted. 'Tis madness to think one must have a child deflowered by only very small pricks. I hold the contrary view, that a virgin should be delivered unto none but the vastest engines to be had, in order that, the hymeneal ligaments sooner burst, pleasure's sensations can more promptly occur in her. To be sure, once launched on this diet, she will have much to do to quit it for another less piquant, more meager; but if she is wealthy, lovely, and youthful, she'll find as many of this size as she can wish. Let her keep her wits about her: should something mediocre be offered her, and should she nevertheless have the desire to make use of it, let her put it in her ass.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Indeed, and to be still happier, let her employ the greater and the lesser at once; let the voluptuous jars wherewith she will agitate him who encunts her serve to precipitate the ecstasy of the other who buggers, and, drowned in the fuck of the two, let her loose her own as she dies of pleasure.

DOLMANCE—(*It should be pointed out that the pollutions continue throughout all of the dialogue.*) It seems to me two or three more pricks should figure in the picture you describe, Madame;

this woman of yours ought to have, don't you think, a prick in her mouth and another in each hand?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—She might have some clapped under her armpits and a few in her hair, if it were possible she ought to have thirty ranged round her; under such circumstances, one must have, touch, devour nothing but pricks, be inundated by them all, at the same instant one discharges oneself. Ah, Dolmancé! libertine that you are, I defy you to equal me in these delicious combats of luxury. . . . On this head, I've done all that it is possible to do.

EUGENIE, *continuously frigged by her friend, as is the Chevalier by Dolmancé*—Oh, my sweet! . . . I grow dizzy! . . . Why, I too could procure myself such pleasures! . . . I could give myself . . . to a perfect army of men! . . . Ah, what delight! . . . How you frig me, dearest one . . . you are the very goddess of pleasure . . . and how this wondrous prick does swell . . . how its majestic head enlarges and grows red! . . .

DOLMANCE—He's not far from the denouement.

LE CHEVALIER—Eugénie . . . sister . . . approach. . . . Oh, what divine breasts! . . . what soft, plump thighs! Discharge! discharge both, my fuck will join yours! . . . It flows! leaps! Christ! (*During the crisis, Dolmancé has carefully directed his friend's outpourings of sperm upon the two women and principally upon Eugénie, who finds herself drenched.*)

EUGENIE—Magnificent spectacle! how noble, how majestic it is . . . I'm completely covered! . . . it sprang into my very eyes! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Wait, dear heart, let me gather up these priceless pearls; I'll rub some upon your clitoris more speedily to provoke your own discharge.

EUGENIE—Ah! yes, my darling, yes! delicious idea . . . go ahead, and I'll come in your arms.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Divine child, kiss me a thousand times over . . . let me suck your tongue . . . let me breathe your voluptuous respiration all fired by pleasure's heat! Ah, fuck! I discharge myself. . . . Brother, finish me, I beg you to finish me! . . .

DOLMANCE—Yes, Chevalier . . . frig your sister.

LE CHEVALIER—I'd prefer to fuck her . . . I'm still in a state to.

DOLMANCE—Very well, press it in and give me your ass; I'll fuck you throughout this voluptuous incest. Eugénie, armed with this India rubber dildo, will bugger me. Destined someday to have enacted all the roles of lechery, she has got to strive, in the lessons we're giving here, to fulfill them all equally well.

EUGENIE, *rigging up the dildo*—Oh, willingly! You will never find me wanting when it is a question of libertinage; it is now my single god, the unique rule of my conduct, the single basis of all my actions. (*She buggers Dolmancé.*) In like wise, my dear master? Is it well done? . . .

DOLMANCE—Splendidly! . . . Truly, the little rascal buggers me mannishly! Fine! it seems to me we are all four perfectly attached one to the other; we have but to commence.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Oh, I'm dying, Chevalier! . . . I am incapable of becoming accustomed to the throbbing of your lovely prick! . . .

DOLMANCE—Ah, but this damned, this charming ass affords me pleasure! Oh fuck! fuck! all of us, let's discharge together! Christ, but I perish! I expire! Ah, in my life never have I come more voluptuously! Hast lost thy sperm, Chevalier?

LE CHEVALIER—Look you at this cunt: smeared, muddied up, is it not?

DOLMANCE—Oh, my friend, wouldst I had as much in my ass!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Rest, stop, I am dead.

DOLMANCE, *kissing Eugénie*—This matchless girl has fucked me like a god.

EUGENIE—In truth, I found it rather pleasurable.

DOLMANCE—All excesses procure it, provided one is libertine; and a woman is best advised to multiply those excesses even to beyond the possible.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I have deposited five hundred *louis* with a notary, and the purse will belong to any individual, whomsoever he be, who can teach me a passion I am ignorant of now, and who can plunge me into an ecstasy I have not yet enjoyed.

DOLMANCE—(At this point the interlocutors, set to rights, have ceased to occupy themselves with all but conversation.) The idea is strange, Madame, and I'd accept to try, but I am in doubt whether this uncommon desire after which you chase, resembles the delicate pleasures you have just tasted.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—What indeed!

DOLMANCE—'Tis that, in honor, I know nothing so boring as enjoyment of the cunt and when once, Madame, one has, like yourself, tasted what the ass has to offer, I cannot conceive how one may forsake that pleasure for others.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—They are old habits. When one thinks as I do, one wishes everywhere to be fucked and whatever the part an engine perforates, one is made happy upon feeling it there. However, I am wholly of your opinion and herewith attest to all voluptuous women that the pleasure they will experience of ass-fucking will always by much surpass the one they experience in having a man by the cunt. On this count let them refer to that woman who in all Europe has accomplished most in the one manner and in the other: I certify there is not the least comparison to be made, and that very reluctantly will they return to the fore after having put their behinds to the proof.

LE CHEVALIER—My thoughts are not entirely identical. I am prepared for anything that is expected of me, but, by taste, in women I really love only the altar Nature indicates for the rendering of an homage.

DOLMANCE—Why, to be sure, and it's the ass! My dear Chevalier, never did Nature, if you scrupulously examine her ordinations, never did Nature indicate another altar for our offerings than the asshole, but this latter she expressly commands. Ah, by God! were not her intention that we fuck assholes, would she have so exactly proportioned this orifice to fit our member? is not this

aperture circular, like this instrument? Why, then! What person, no matter how great an enemy of common sense, can imagine that an oval hole could have been created for our cylindrical pricks! Ponder this deformity and you will at once apprehend Nature's intentions; we very plainly see that too frequent sacrifices made in this part, by increasing a propagation of which only her forbearance makes us capable, would displease her infallibly. But let us go on with our education. Eugénie has just, entirely at her leisure, contemplated the sublime mystery of a discharge; presently, I would like to have her learn how to direct its flow.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Considering your exhaustion, 'tis to expose her to a great deal of trouble.

DOLMANCE—To be sure; and that is why I should desire that we have, from your house or your fields, some robust young lad who could serve as a mannequin, and upon whom we could give our lessons.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I've precisely what you need.

DOLMANCE—It might not be, by chance, a young gardener, with a delicious aspect, of about eighteen years or twenty, whom I saw just a short while ago, working in your kitchen garden?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Augustin? Exactly, yes, Augustin, whose member measures fourteen inches in length and has a circumference of eight and an half!

DOLMANCE—Great heaven! what a monster! . . . and that discharges? . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Like a waterfall! . . . I'll go fetch him.

DIALOGUE THE FIFTH

DOLMANCE, LE CHEVALIER, AUGUSTIN,
EUGENIE, MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *presenting Augustin*—Behold the man I mentioned. Let's on with it, friends, let's to our frolics; what would life be without its little amusements? Come hither, simpleton! Oh, the ninny! . . . Would you believe it, I have been six months struggling to turn this great pig into something fit for civilized society, and I've got nowhere with him.

AUGUSTIN—Aye, M'am, you speak sometimes like that, that I'm beginning not to get on so bad right now, and when there's a piece of ground lying fallow you always give it to me to till, I'm the one that gets it.

DOLMANCE, *laughing*—Oh, precious! . . . charming! . . . The dear boy, he's as frank as he is fresh. . . . (*Exhibiting Eugénie.*) Augustin, look sharp, my lad, there's a bed of flowers lying fallow; would you like to try your spade on it?

AUGUSTIN—Oh Jemmy, Sir! Such neat little oddments ain't made for such as me.

DOLMANCE—To it, Mademoiselle.

EUGENIE, *blushing*—Heavens! I am so ashamed!

DOLMANCE—Rid yourself of that weak-hearted sentiment; all actions, and above all those of libertinage, being inspired in us by Nature, there is not one, of whatever kind, that warrants shame. Be smart there, Eugénie, act the whore with this young man; consider that every provocation sensed by a boy and originating from a girl is a natural offertory, and that your sex never serves Nature better than when it prostitutes itself to ours; that 'tis, in a word, to be fucked that you were born, and that she who refuses her obedience to this intention Nature has for her does not deserve to see the light longer. You yourself, lower the young man's trousers to below his handsome thighs, roll his shirt up under his vest, so that his fore-end . . . and his after, which, by the by, is damn fine, are at your disposal. . . . Now, let one of your hands catch up that lank length of flesh, pendant now, but which, I wager, will soon amaze you in its new form, and with your other hand explore his buttocks, and, thus, tickle his rectal gap. . . . Yes, in this manner . . . (*To show Eugénie how 'tis to be done, he socratizes Augustin himself.*) Uncap this rubicund head; never, while you pollute it, never allow it to be covered over; keep it naked . . . stretch the skin, yea, stretch it taut. . . . Now there; dost see what effect my lesson has had already? . . . And you, my boy, I beseech you, don't stand there holding your hands behind your back; isn't there something you might put them to? Let them stray about upon this superb breast, over these wondrous buttocks. . . .

AUGUSTIN—Sir, couldn't I give this miss a smack or two, it would make me right happy.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Well, kiss her, imbecile, kiss her as much as you like; do you not kiss me when I'm in bed with you?

AUGUSTIN—Oh, jeez! Pretty little mouth, all fresh and nice-tasting! . . . Seems like I've got my nose in the roses in our garden. (*Showing his rising prick.*) Look, Sir, that's what it does, d'ye see it?

EUGENIE—Good heaven! How it enlarges!

DOLMANCE—Attempt now to put rather more regularity in your motions, let them be more energetic. . . . Here, yield me your place for an instant, and watch closely what I do. (*He frigs Augus-*

tin.) Do you observe? These movements are more purposeful and at the same time softer. There, begin again and above all keep the head bare . . . Good! there it is in its full vigor; now let's ascertain whether it's bigger than the Chevalier's.

EUGENIE—Be certain of it: you see very well I cannot get my hand around it.

DOLMANCE, *measuring*—Yes, right you are: fourteen long, eight and a half around. I've never seen a larger. 'Tis what is called a superb prick. And you, Madame, you say you employ it?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Regularly, every night I spend here in the country.

DOLMANCE—But not, I hope, in the ass?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Rather more often there than in the cunt.

DOLMANCE—Ah! my God! what libertinage! Upon my honor, I don't know whether I could manage it.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Don't pinch, Dolmancé, and he'll penetrate your ass as neatly as he does mine.

DOLMANCE—We shall see; I flatter myself in the belief our Augustin will do me the honor of casting a little fuck into my behind: I'll repay him in the same coin; but let's continue, we have lessons to give. . . . Look sharp, Eugénie, mind, the serpent is about to disgorge its venom: prepare yourself; fix your gaze upon the head of this sublime weapon; and when as the sign of its approaching spasm you see it inflate, take on a deeper, more purple hue, let your activities then become frenzied; let your fingers now tickling his anus dig as deep as possible, before the event occurs; give yourself entirely to the libertine who is amusing himself with you; seek out his mouth in order to suck it; let your charms fly, so to speak, to do your hands' bidding. . . . He discharges, Eugénie, 'tis the moment of your triumph.

AUGUSTIN—Aië! aië! Miss, it's killing me! I can't do no more! More, go on and do me more, harder, Miss, please, Miss! Ah, God a'mighty! I can't see straight! . . .

DOLMANCE—Redouble your efforts, Eugénie! Triple them! Caution to the winds, he's drunk and in his throes! . . . God, what abundance of sperm! . . . with what power it springs forth! . . . Behold the traces of the initial jet: it shot ten feet, nay, more! By God's fuck! the room's awash; Never have I seen a comparable discharge, and you tell me, Madame, this article fucked you last night?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Nine or ten times, I believe; we gave up counting long ago.

LE CHEVALIER—Lovely Eugénie, you're covered with it.

EUGENIE—Wouldst I were drowned in it. (*To Dolmancé:*) Tell me, my dear master, are you content?

DOLMANCE—Mightily, for a beginning; but there remain several episodes you have neglected.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Wait; they can mean nothing to her lest they are the fruit of experience; for my part, I confess I am exceedingly pleased with my Eugénie; the happiest dispositions are apparent in her, and I believe that we ought now to have her enjoy another spectacle. Let's have her witness the effects of a prick in the ass. Dolmancé, I am going to offer you mine; I shall be in my brother's arms; he will encunt me, I'll be buggered by you, and Eugénie will prepare your prick, will insert it in my ass, will supervise all the movements, will study them, all this in order to familiarize herself with this operation to which, afterward, she will submit; it will then be a question of this Hercules' fair prick.

DOLMANCE—I am passing eager to see this pretty little behind rent by brave Augustin's violent blows; but I agree to what you propose, Madame, provided we add one detail: Augustin, whom I'll have stiff again with two strokes of my wrist, will bugger me while I sodomize you.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I heartily approve the arrangement; I too gain thereby; and my scholar will benefit from two excellent lessons instead of one.

DOLMANCE, *seizing Augustin*—Come, my stalwart swain, I'll restore thee to life. . . . Eh, look how the brute responds! Kiss me,

dear friend. . . . You are still all wetted over with fuck, and 'tis fuck I ask of thee. Ah, by God, I simply must pump his ass while frigging him! . . .

LE CHEVALIER—Approach, sister; to comply with Dolmancé's strictures and with yours, I am going to stretch out on this bed; you will lie in my arms, and expose your gorgeous buttocks to him, and very wide indeed you shall spread them. . . . Yes, just so: we're ready to begin.

DOLMANCE—No, not quite; wait for me; I must first of all enter your sister's ass, since Augustin whispers me to do it; next, I'll marry you: remember, let's not fall short of any of our principles and remember also that a student is observing us, and we owe her precise demonstrations. Eugénie, come frig me while I determine this low fellow's enormous engine; lend a hand with my own erection, pollute my prick, very lightly, roll it upon your buttocks. . . . (*She does so.*)

EUGENIE—Is this as it ought to be?

DOLMANCE—There is always too much of the timorous in your movements; far more tightly squeeze the prick you frig, Eugénie; if masturbation is agreeable at all it is because the member is more severely compressed than in fucking, it is therefore necessary that the co-operating hand become, for the engine over which it works, an infinitely straiter passage than exists anywhere else in the body. . . . Better! Yes, that's better! Spread your behind yet a little more so that with each stroke the end of my prick can glide ahead to touch your asshole. . . . yes, very good, very good indeed! While waiting, Chevalier, frig your sister; we will be at your disposal in a minute. . . . Ah, excellent! there's my man stiffening! Now ready yourself, Madame; open that sublime ass to my impure ardor; Eugénie, guide the dart, it must be your hand that conducts it to the vent, your hand must make it penetrate; immediately it is in, get a grip on good Augustin here, and fill my entrails up with him; those are an apprentice's chores and thence there is much instruction to be had; that, my dear, is why I put you to this trouble.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Are my buttocks where you wish them, Dolmancé? Ah, my angel, if you but knew how much I desire you, how long I have been waiting to be buggered by a sodomite!

DOLMANCE—Thy will shall be done, Madame; but suffer me to halt an instant at my idol's feet; I would praise it before entering into the depths of the sanctuary. . . . What a divine ass is this! . . . let me kiss it! let me lick it, lick it a thousand times over and a thousand more! . . . Here, that's the prick you yearn for! . . . Dost feel it, bitch? Tell me, say, dost feel it penetrate? . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Oh, drive it to darkness in my bowels! . . . Oh sweet lechery, what is your empire!

DOLMANCE—'Tis an ass such as never in my days have I fucked; worthy of Ganymede himself! To it, Eugénie, be immediately attendant upon my buggering by Augustin.

EUGENIE—I bring him to you; there. (*To Augustin:*) Wake, sweet angel, do you spy the hole you've to pierce?

AUGUSTIN—Aye, I see it. Mother of God! there's a big one I say! I'll go in easier than into you, Miss. Kiss me a little so it will enter nice.

EUGENIE, *embracing him*—Oh, as much as you like, you are so fresh! . . . But push, do you hear! The head's out of sight—'twas quick, and I dare say the rest will follow close behind. . . .

DOLMANCE—Thrust, thrust, my good fellow . . . tear me, if so it must be. . . . Dost see my ass? Is it not ready? Doth it not beckon? Well, drive . . . ah, by Christ! what a bludgeon! never have I received one of such amplitude . . . Eugénie, how many inches remain outside?

EUGENIE—Scarcely two.

DOLMANCE—Then I have eleven in my ass! . . . What ecstasy! He cleaves me in twain, I can no more! Chevalier! Are you ready?

LE CHEVALIER—Feel, and give me your opinion.

DOLMANCE—Come hither, my children, let me wed thee . . . let me do all I may to expedite this heavenly incest. (*He introduces the Chevalier's prick into his sister's cunt.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Why, my dears, there I am fucked from either side! By Jesus! What a divine pleasure! No, there's none like it in all the world. Ah, fuck! how I pity the woman who has not tasted it! Rattle me, Dolmancé, smite away . . . let the violence of your movements impale me upon my brother's blade and you, Eugénie, do you contemplate me; come, regard me in vice; come, learn, from my example, to savor it, to be transported, to taste it with delectation. . . . Behold, my love, behold all that I simultaneously do: scandal, seduction, bad example, incest, adultery, sodomy! Oh, Satan! one and unique god of my soul, inspire thou in me something yet more, present further perversions to my smoking heart, and then shalt thou see how I shall plunge myself into them all!

DOLMANCE—Ah voluptuous creature, how you do stir up my fuck, how your sentiments and the uncommon temperature of your ass do excite it to discharge! 'Twill all have me coming in an instant. . . . Eugénie, fire my fucker's courage, belabor his flanks, pry apart his buttocks; you are now somewhat skilled in the art of reviving the desires in him who vacillates . . . your approach alone gives energy to the prick that fucks me. . . . I feel it, the strokes are more powerful . . . oh, thou bitch, I must yield to you what I should never have wanted but to owe to my own ass-end . . . wait for me! wait, dost hear? Oh, my friends, let us not discharge but in unison: 'tis life's single pleasure! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Fuck! fuck! come when you wish . . . for I can withstand it no longer! Oh double name of God be-fucked! Sacred bugger-God! I come! . . . Inundate me, my friends, soak, drench, drown your whore! spray floods of your scum-fuck to the very seat of this blazing soul! it exists for naught but to be slaked, quenched by your tides! Aiè! aiè! aiè! . . . fuck! . . . fuck! . . . what incredible excess of voluptuousness! . . . I am slain! . . . Eugénie, let me kiss thee, let me eat thee! let me consume, batten upon thy fuck as I loose my own! . . . (*Augustin, Dolmancé and the Chevalier act in chorus; the fear of appearing monotonous prevents us from recording expressions which, upon such occasions, are all very apt to resemble one another.*)

DOLMANCE—And there is one of the fairest fucks I have ever had. (*Showing Augustin to the others.*) This bugger glutted me with sperm! but, Madame, I consider I passed as much on to you.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Ah, speak not to me of it; I am sunk in it.

EUGENIE—I cannot say as much, not I! no! (*Casting herself playfully into her friend's arms.*) You say you have committed abundant sins, my dearest, but as for me, blessed God! not a one. Oh, if I have got to eat my soup cold this way, I'll have indigestion.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *bursting into laughter*—How droll the creature is!

DOLMANCE—But how charming! Come here, little one, I'd whip thee a bit. (*He strikes her ass.*) Kiss me, your turn is soon to come.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—From now on we must occupy ourselves exclusively with her; consider her, brother, she's the prey; examine that charming maidenhead; 'twill soon belong to thee.

EUGENIE—Oh, no! not by the fore-end! 'twould hurt me overmuch; from behind as much as you please, as Dolmancé dealt with me a short while ago.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Naive and delicious girl! She demands of you precisely what one has so much difficulty obtaining from others.

EUGENIE—Oh, 'tis not without a little remorse; for you have not entirely reassured me upon the criminal enormity I have always heard ascribed to this, especially when it is done between man and man, as has just occurred with Dolmancé and Augustin; tell me, Monsieur, tell me how your philosophy explains this species of misdemeanor. 'Tis frightful, is it not?

DOLMANCE—Start from one fundamental point, Eugénie: in libertinage, nothing is frightful, because everything libertinage suggests is also a natural inspiration; the most extraordinary, the most bizarre acts, those which most arrantly seem to conflict with every law, every human institution (as for Heaven, I have nothing

to say), well, Eugénie, even those are not frightful, and there is not one amongst them all that cannot be demonstrated within the boundaries of Nature; it is certain that the one you allude to, lovely Eugénie, is the very same relative to which one finds such a strange fable in the tasteless fictions of the Holy Writ, that tedious compilation of an untutored Jew during a Babylonian captivity; but the anecdote is false, wants all likelihood, all verisimilitude, when it is affirmed that in retribution for these depravities, those cities, those towns rather, perished by fire; having their site upon the craters of ancient volcanoes, Sodom, Gomorrah too, perished like the Italian cities Vesuvius' lavas submerged; and that's all there is to the miracle, yet, all the same, 'twas from this most simple event they departed in order barbarously to invent the torture of fire to be used against those unfortunate humans who, in one area of Europe, delivered themselves over to this natural fancy.

EUGENIE—Oh, 'tis natural?

DOLMANCE—Yes, natural, so I affirm it to be; Nature has not got two voices, you know, one of them condemning all day what the other commands, and it is very certain that it is nowhere but from her organ that those men who are infatuated with this mania receive the impressions that drive them to it. They who wish to denigrate the taste or proscribe its practice declare it is harmful to population; how dull-witted they are, these imbeciles who think of nothing but the multiplication of their kind, and who detect nothing but the crime in anything that conduces to a different end. Is it really so firmly established that Nature has so great a need for this overcrowding as they would like to have us believe? is it very certain that one is guilty of an outrage whenever one abstains from this stupid propagation? To convince ourselves, let us for an instant scrutinize both her operations and her laws. Were it that Nature did naught but create, and never destroy, I might be able to believe, with those tedious sophists, that the sublimest of all actions would be incessantly to labor at production, and following that, I should grant, with them, that the refusal to reproduce would be, would perforce have to be, a crime; however, does not the most fleeting glance at natural operations reveal that destructions are just as necessary to her plan as are creations? that the one and the

other of these functions are interconnected and enmeshed so intimately that for either to operate without the other would be impossible? that nothing would be born, nothing would be regenerated without destructions? Destruction, hence, like creation, is one of Nature's mandates.

This principle acknowledged, how may I offend Nature by refusing to create? the which, supposing there to be some evil in it, would appear infinitely less evil, no question about it, than the act of destruction, which latter is numbered among her laws, as I have but a moment ago proven. If on the one hand I admit the penchant Nature has given me to fabricate these losses and ruins, I must examine, on the other hand, to see whether they are not necessary to her and whether I do not conform with her will when I destroy; thus considered, where then, I ask you, is the crime? But, the fools and the populators continue to object—and they are naught but one—this procreative sperm cannot have been placed in your loins for any purpose other than reproduction: to misuse it is an offense. I have just proven the contrary, since this misuse would not even be equivalent to destruction, and since destruction, far more serious than misuse, would not itself be criminal. Secondly, it is false that Nature intends this spermatic liquid to be employed only and entirely for reproduction; were this true, she would not permit its spillage under any circumstance save those appropriate to that end. But experience shows that the contrary may happen, since we lose it both when and where we wish. Secondly, she would forbid the occurrence of those losses save in coitus, losses which, however, do take place, both when we dream and when we summon remembrances; were Nature miserly about this so precious sap, 'twould never but be into the vessel of reproduction she would tolerate its flow; assuredly, she would not wish this voluptuousness, wherewith at such moments she crowns us, to be felt by us when we divert our tribute; for it would not be reasonable to suppose she could consent to give us pleasures at the very moment we heaped insults upon her. Let us go further; were women not born save to produce—which most surely would be the case were this production so dear to Nature—, would it happen that, throughout the whole length of a woman's life, there are no more than seven years, all the arithmetic performed, during which she is in a state capable of

conceiving and giving birth? What! Nature avidly seeks propagation, does she; and everything which does not tend to this end offends her, does it! and out of a hundred years of life the sex destined to produce cannot do so during more than seven years! Nature wishes for propagation only, and the semen she accords man to serve in these reproductions is lost, wasted, misused wherever and as often as it pleases man! He takes the same pleasures in this loss as in useful employment of his seed, and never the least inconvenience! . . .

Let us cease, good friends, let us cease to believe in such absurdities: they cause good sense to shudder. Ah! far from outraging Nature, on the contrary—and let us be well persuaded of it—the sodomite and Lesbian serve her by stubbornly abstaining from a conjunction whose resultant progeniture can be nothing but irksome to her. Let us make no mistake about it, this propagation was never one of her laws, nothing she ever demanded of us, but at the very most something she tolerated; I have told you so. Why! what difference would it make to her were the race of men entirely to be extinguished upon earth, annihilated! she laughs at our pride when we persuade ourselves all would be over and done with were this misfortune to occur! Why, she would simply fail to notice it. Do you fancy races have not already become extinct? Buffon counts several of them perished, and Nature, struck dumb by a so precious loss, doesn't so much as murmur! The entire species might be wiped out and the air would not be the less pure for it, nor the Star less brilliant, nor the universe's march less exact. What idiocy it is to think that our kind is so useful to the world that he who might not labor to propagate it or he who might disturb this propagation would necessarily become a criminal! Let's bring this blindness to a stop and may the example of more reasonable peoples serve to persuade us of our errors. There is not one corner of the earth where the alleged crime of sodomy has not had shrines and votaries. The Greeks, who made of it, so to speak, a virtue, raised a statue unto Venus Callipygea; Rome sent to Athens for law, and returned with this divine taste.

And under the emperors, behold the progress it made! Sheltered by the Roman eagle, it spread from one end of the earth to the other; with the Empire's collapse, it took refuge near the diadem, it

followed the arts in Italy, it is handed down to those of us who govern ourselves aright. We discover a hemisphere, we find sodomy in it. Cook casts anchor in a new world: sodomy reigns there. Had our balloons reached the moon, it would have been discovered there as well. Delicious preference, child of Nature and of pleasure, thou must be everywhere men are to be found, and wherever thou shalt be known, there shall they erect altars to thee! O my friends, can there be an extravagance to equal that of imagining that a man must be a monster deserving to lose his life because he has preferred enjoyment of the asshole to that of the cunt, because a young man with whom he finds two pleasures, those of being at once lover and mistress, has appeared to him preferable to a young girl, who promises him but half as much! He shall be a villain, a monster, for having wished to play the role of a sex not his own! Indeed! Why then has Nature created him susceptible of this pleasure?

Let us inspect his conformation; you will observe radical differences between it and that of other men who have not been blessed with this predilection for the behind; his buttocks will be fairer, plumper; never a hair will shade the altar of pleasure, whose interior, lined with a more delicate, more sensual, more sensitive membrane, will be found positively of the same variety as the interior of a woman's vagina; this man's character, once again unlike that of others, will be softer, more pliant, subtler; in him you will find almost all the vices and all the virtues native to women; you will recognize even their weaknesses there; all will have feminine manias and sometimes feminine habits and traits. Would it then be possible that Nature, having thus assimilated them into women, could be irritated by what they have of women's tastes? Is it not evident that this is a category of men different from the other, a class Nature has created in order to diminish or minimize propagation, whose overgreat extent would infallibly be prejudicial to her? . . . Ah, dear Eugénie, did you but know how delicate is one's enjoyment when a heavy prick fills the behind, when, driven to the balls, it flutters there, palpitating; and then, withdrawn to the foreskin, it hesitates, and returns, plunges in again, up to the hair! No, no, in the wide world there is no pleasure to rival this one: 'tis the delight of philosophers, that of heroes, it would be that of

the gods were not the parts used in his heavenly conjugation the only gods we on earth should reverence!⁷

EUGENIE, *very much moved*—Oh, my friends, let me be buggered! . . . Here, my buttocks stand ready. . . . I present them to you! . . . Fuck me, for I discharge! . . . (*Upon pronouncing these words, she falls into the arms of Madame de Saint-Ange, who clasps her, embraces her, and offers the young lady's elevated flanks to Dolmancé.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Divine teacher, will you resist the proposal? Will you not be tempted by this sublime ass? See how it doth yawn, how it winks at thee!

DOLMANCE—I ask your forgiveness, beautiful Eugénie: it shall not be I, if indeed you wish it, who shall undertake to extinguish the fires I have lit. Dear child, in my eyes you possess the large fault of being a woman. I was so considerate as to forget much in order to harvest your virginity; deign to think well of me for going no further: the Chevalier is going to take the task in hand. His sister, equipped with this artificial prick, will bestow the most redoubtable buffets upon her brother's ass, all the while presenting her noble behind to Augustin, who shall bugger her and whom I'll fuck meantime; for, I make no attempt to conceal it, this fine lad's ass has been signaling to me for an hour, and I wish absolutely to repay him for what he has done to me.

EUGENIE—I accept the revision; but, in truth, Dolmancé, the frankness of your avowal little offsets its impoliteness.

DOLMANCE—A thousand pardons, Mademoiselle; but we other buggers are very nice on the question of candor and the exactitude of our principles.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—However, a reputation for candor is not the one we commonly grant those whom, like yourself, are accustomed only to taking people from behind.

⁷ A later part of this work promising us a much more extensive dissertation upon this subject, we have, here, limited ourselves to an analysis but roughly sketched and but boldly outlined.

DOLMANCE—We do have something of the treacherous, yes; a touch of the false, you may believe it. But after all, Madame, I have demonstrated to you that this character is indispensable to man in society. Condemned to live amidst people who have the greatest interest in hiding themselves from our gaze, in disguising the vices they have in order to exhibit nothing but virtues they never respect, there should be the greatest danger in the thing were we to show them frankness only; for then, 'tis evident, we would give them all the advantages over us they on their part refuse us, and the dupery would be manifest. The needs for dissimulation and hypocrisy are bequeathed us by society; let us yield to the fact. Allow me for an instant to offer my own example to you, Madame: there is surely no being more corrupt anywhere in the world; well, my contemporaries are deceived in me; ask them what they think of Dolmancé, and they all will tell you I am an honest man, whereas there is not a single crime whereof I have not gleaned the most exquisite delights.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Oh, you do not convince me that you have committed atrocities.

DOLMANCE—Atrocities . . . indeed, Madame, I have wrought horrors.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Fie, you are like the man who said to his confessor: "Needless to go into details, Sir; murder and theft excepted, you can be sure I've done everything."

DOLMANCE—Yes, Madame, I should say the same thing, omitting those exceptions.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—What! libertine, you have permitted yourself . . .

DOLMANCE—Everything, Madame, everything; with a temperament and principles like mine, does one deny oneself anything?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Oh, let's fuck! fuck! . . . I can bear such language no longer; we'll return to it. But save your confessions for later, Dolmancé; to hear them best your auditors should be *clear-headed*. And when you have an erection, all the sincerity

deserts what you say, you fall to uttering horrors and from you we get, in the guise of truths, the libertine glitterings of an inflamed imagination. (*They take their places.*)

DOLMANCE—One moment, Chevalier, one moment; I am the one who shall introduce it; but, by way of preliminary, and I ask the lovely Eugénie's pardon for it, she must allow me to flog her in order she be put in the proper humor. (*He beats her.*)

EUGENIE—I assure you, this ceremony has no purpose. . . . Admit, Dolmancé, that it satisfies your lewdness; but in doing it don't take on airs, I beg of you, and suppose you are doing anything in my behalf.

DOLMANCE, *whipping merrily away*—Ah, you'll have news for me in a moment! . . . You have yet no acquaintance with this preliminary's influences. . . . Come, come, little bitch, you'll be lashed!

EUGENIE—My God, how he does wax hot! And my buttocks too, they are all afire! . . . But, indeed, you're hurting me!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I'll avenge you, dear heart; I'll retaliate in kind. (*She takes up a whip and flogs Dolmancé.*)

DOLMANCE—With all my heart; I ask but one favor of Eugénie: that she consent to be flogged as vigorously as I myself desire to be; you notice how well within natural law I am; but wait, let's arrange it: let Eugénie mount your flanks, Madame, she will clutch your neck, like those children whose mothers carry them on their backs; that way, I'll have two asses under my hand; I'll drub them together; the Chevalier and Augustin, both will work upon me, striking my buttocks. . . . Yes, 'tis thus . . . Well, there we are! . . . what ecstasy!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Do not spare this little rascal, I beseech you, and as I ask no quarter, I want you to grant it to no one.

EUGENIE—Aië! aië! aië! I believe my blood is flowing!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—'Twill embellish our buttocks by lending color to them. . . . Courage, my angel, courage; bear in mind that it is always by way of pain one arrives at pleasure.

EUGENIE—I can no more!

DOLMANCE, *halts a minute to contemplate his work; then, starting in again*—Another fifty, Eugénie; yes, precisely, fifty more on either cheek will do it. O bitches! how great shall now be your pleasure in fucking! (*The posture is dissolved.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *examining Eugénie's buttocks*—Oh, the poor little thing, her behind is all bloodied over! Beast, how much pleasure you take thus in kissing cruelty's vestiges!

DOLMANCE, *polluting himself*—Yes, I mask nothing, and my pleasures would be more ardent were the wounds more cruel.

EUGENIE—But you are a monster!

DOLMANCE—Indeed I am.

LE CHEVALIER—There's good faith in him at least.

DOLMANCE—Off with you, Chevalier. Sodomize her.

LE CHEVALIER—Hold her body and in three shakes 'twill be done.

EUGENIE—Oh heavens! Yours is thicker than Dolmancé's . . . Chevalier, you are tearing me apart! . . . go softly, I beg of you! . . .

LE CHEVALIER—Impossible, my angel, I must reach my objective. . . . Consider: I'm performing before my master's eyes; both his prestige and mine are at stake.

DOLMANCE—'Tis there! I prodigiously love to see a prick's pubic hair rub the border of an anus. . . . Come now, Madame, embugger your brother. Here we have Augustin's prick, in an admirable way to be introduced into you, and I promise you I'll spare your fucker nothing. . . . Excellent! it seems to me we've got our rosary well strung together; not another thought now but of discharging.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Cast an eye on this little tramp! How she quivers and wriggles!

EUGENIE—Is it my fault? I am dying from pleasure! That whipping . . . this immense prick . . . the amiable Chevalier who frigs me the while! My darling, my darling, I can no more!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Jesus! nor can I! I discharge! . . .

DOLMANCE—A little unity, my friends; grant me another two more minutes to overtake you and we shall all of us come together.

LE CHEVALIER—There's no time left; my fuck runs into lovely Eugénie's ass . . . I am dying! Ah sacred name of the fucking Almighty! what pleasure! . . .

DOLMANCE—I follow you, friends . . . I follow hard after you . . . I too am blinded by fuck. . . .

AUGUSTIN—Me too! . . . and me! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—What a scene! . . . This bugger has filled up my ass! . . .

LE CHEVALIER—To the bidet, ladies, to the bidet!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—No, indeed, no, I like that, I do; I like the feeling of fuck in my ass, and keep it in me as long as I can.

EUGENIE—No more, enough. . . . My friends, tell me now if a woman must always accept the proposal, when 'tis made to her, thus to be fucked?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Always, dear heart, unfailingly. More, as this mode of fucking is delightful, she ought to require it of those of whom she makes use; but if she is dependent upon the person with whom she amuses herself, if she hopes to obtain favors from him, gifts or thanks, let her restrain her eagerness and not surrender her ass for nothing; cede it after being urged, besought, wheedled; there is not a man of all those who possess the taste who would not ruin himself for a woman clever enough to refuse him nothing save with the design of inflaming him further; she will extract from him all she wants if she well has the art of yielding only when pressed.

DOLMANCE—Well, little angel, are you converted? have you given over believing sodomy a crime?

EUGENIE—And were it one, what care I? Have you not demonstrated the nonexistence of crime? There are now very few actions which appear criminal in my view.

DOLMANCE—There is crime in nothing, dear girl, regardless of what it be: the most monstrous of deeds has, does it not, an auspicious aspect?

EUGENIE—Who's to gainsay it?

DOLMANCE—Well, as of this moment, it loses every aspect of crime; for, in order that what serves one by harming another be a crime, one should first have to demonstrate that the injured person is more important, more precious to Nature than the person who performs the injury and serves her; now, all individuals being of uniform importance in her eyes, 'tis impossible that she have a predilection for some one among them; hence, the deed that serves one person by causing suffering to another is of perfect indifference to Nature.

EUGENIE—But if the action were harmful to a very great quantity of individuals . . . and if it rewarded us with only a very small quantity of pleasure, would it not then be a frightful thing to execute it?

DOLMANCE—No more so, because there is no possible comparison between what others experience and what we sense; the heaviest dose of agony in others ought, assuredly, to be as naught to us, and the faintest quickening of pleasure, registered in us, does touch us; therefore, we should, at whatever the price, prefer this most minor excitation which enchants us, to the immense sum of others' miseries, which cannot affect us; but, on the contrary, should it happen that the singularity of our organs, some bizarre feature in our construction, renders agreeable to us the sufferings of our fellows, as sometimes occurs, who can doubt, then, that we should incontestably prefer anguish in others, which entertains us, to that anguish's absence, which would represent, for us, a kind of privation? The source of all our moral errors lies in the ridiculous acknowledgment of that tie of brotherhood the Christians invented in the age of their ill-fortune and sore distress. Constrained to beg pity from others, 'twas not unclever to claim that all men are brothers; how is one to refuse aid if this hypothesis be accepted? But its rational acceptance is impossible; are we not all born solitary, isolated? I say more: are we not come into the world all enemies, the one of the

other, all in a state of perpetual and reciprocal warfare? Now, I ask whether such would be the situation if they did truly exist, this supposed tie of brotherhood and the virtues it enjoins? Are they really natural? Were they inspired in man by Nature's voice, men would be aware of them at birth. From that time onward, pity, good works, generosity, would be native virtues against which 'twould be impossible to defend oneself, and would render the primitive state of savage man totally contrary to what we observe it to be.

EUGENIE—Yet if, as you say, Nature caused man to be born alone, all independent of other men, you will at least grant me that his needs, bringing him together with other men, must necessarily have established some ties between them; whence blood relationships, ties of love too, of friendship, of gratitude: you will, I hope, respect those at least.

DOLMANCE—No more than the others, I am afraid; but let us analyze them, I should like to: a swift glance, Eugénie, at each one in particular. Would you say, for example, that the need to marry or to prolong my race or to arrange my fortune or insure my future must establish indissoluble or sacred ties with the object I ally myself to? Would it not, I ask you, be an absurdity to argue thus? So long as the act of coition lasts, I may, to be sure, continue in need of that object, in order to participate in the act; but once it is over and I am satisfied, what, I wonder, will attach the results of this commerce to me? These latter relationships were the results of the terror of parents who dreaded lest they be abandoned in old age, and the politic attentions they show us when we are in our infancy have no object but to make them deserving of the same consideration when they are become old. Let us no longer be the dupes of this rubbish: we owe nothing to our parents . . . not the least thing, Eugénie, and since it is far less for our sake than for their own they have labored, we may rightfully test them, even rid ourselves of them if their behavior annoys us; we ought to love them only if they comport themselves well with us, and then our tenderness toward them ought not to be one degree greater than what we might feel for other friends, because the rights of birth establish nothing, are basis to nothing, and, once they have been wisely scrutinized

and with deliberation, we will surely find nothing there but reasons to hate those who, exclusively thoughtful of their own pleasure, have often given us nothing but an unhappy and unhealthy existence.

You mention, Eugénie, ties of love; may you never know them! Ah! for the happiness I wish you, may such a sentiment never approach your breast! What is love? One can only consider it, so it seems to me, as the effect upon us of a beautiful object's qualities; these effects distract us; they inflame us; were we to possess this object, all would be well with us; if 'tis impossible to have it, we are in despair. But what is the foundation of this sentiment? desire. What are this sentiment's consequences? madness. Let us confine ourselves to the cause and guarantee ourselves against the effects. The cause is to possess the object: spend it! let's strive to succeed, but using our head, not losing our wits; let's enjoy it when we've got it; let's console ourselves if we fail: a thousand other identical and often much superior objects exist to soothe our regrets and our pride: all men, all women resemble each other: no love resists the effects of sane reflection. O 'tis a very great cheat and a dupery, this intoxication which puts us in such a state that we see no more, exist no more save through this object insanely adored! Is this really to live? Is it not rather voluntarily to deprive oneself of all life's sweetness? Is it not to wish to linger in a burning fever which devours, consumes us, without affording us other than metaphysical joys, which bear such a likeness to the effects of madness? Were we always to love this adorable object, were it certain we should never have to quit it, 'twould still be an extravagance without doubt, but at least an excusable one. Does this happen, however? Has one many examples of these deathless liaisons, unions which are never dissolved or repudiated? A few months of doting and dalliance soon restores the object to its proper size and shape, and we blush to think of the incense we have squanderingly burned upon that altar, and often we come to wonder that it ever could have seduced us at all.

O voluptuous young women, deliver your bodies unto us as often and as much as you wish! Fuck, divert yourselves, that's the essential thing; but be quick to fly from love. There is none but physical good in it, said Buffon, and as a good philosopher he exercised his reason on an understanding of Nature. I repeat it,

amuse yourselves; but love not at all; nor be any more concerned to make yourselves loved: to exhaust oneself in lamentation, waste in sighs, abase oneself in leering and oglings, pen billets-doux, 'tis not that which you must do; it is to fuck, to multiply and often change your fuckers, it is above all to oppose yourselves resolutely to enslavement by any one single person, because the outcome of constant love, binding you to him, would be to prevent you from giving yourself to someone else, a cruel selfishness which would soon become fatal to your pleasures. Women are not made for one single man; 'tis for men at large Nature created them. Listening only to this sacred voice, let them surrender themselves, indifferently, to all who want them: always whores, never mistresses, eschewing love, worshiping pleasure; it will be roses only they will discover in life's career; it will no longer be but flowers they proffer us! Ask, Eugénie, ask the charming woman who has so kindly consented to undertake your education, ask her what is to be done with a man after one has enjoyed him. (*In a lower voice, so as not to be heard by Augustin.*) Ask her if she would lift a finger to save this Augustin who, today, is the cause of her delights. Should it fall out that someone wished to steal him from her, she would take another, would think no more on this one and, soon weary of the new, would herself sacrifice him within two months' time, were new pleasures to be born of this maneuver.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Let my dear Eugénie be very sure that Dolmancé is describing the impulses of my heart, mine and that of every other woman, as if she were to unfold it to him herself.

DOLMANCE—The final part of my analysis treats the bonds of friendship and those of gratitude. We shall respect the former, very well, provided they remain useful to us; let us keep our friends as long as they serve us; forget them immediately we have nothing further from them; 'tis never but selfishly one should love people; to love them for themselves is nothing but dupery; Nature never inspires other movements in mankind's soul, other sentiments than those which ought to prove useful in some sort, good for something; nothing is more an egoist than Nature; then let us be egoists too, if we wish to live in harmony with her dictates. As for

gratitude, Eugénie, 'tis doubtless the most feeble of all the bonds. Is it then for ourselves men are obliging to us? Not a bit of it, my dear; 'tis through ostentation, for the sake of pride. Is it not humiliating thus to become the toy of others' pride? Is it not yet more so to fall into indebtedness to them? Nothing is more burdensome than a kindness one has received. No middle way, no compromise: you have got to repay it or ready yourself for abuse. Upon proud spirits a good deed sits very heavily: it weighs upon them with such violence that the one feeling they exhale is hatred for their benefactors. What then, in your opinion, are now the ties which supply the isolation wherein Nature creates us? What are they, those which should establish relationships between men? By what title should we love them, those others, cherish them, prefer them to ourselves? By what right should we relieve them, who says that we must relieve them in misfortune? Where now in our souls is that cradle of the pretty and useless virtues of generosity, humanity, charity, all those enumerated in the absurd codes of a few idiotic religious doctrines, doctrines which, preached by impostors or by indigents, were invented to secure them their sustenance and toleration? Why, Eugénie, why do you yet acknowledge something sacred in men? Do you conceive some reasons for not always preferring yourself to them?

EUGENIE—What you say so thrills my heart that my mind can take no exception to it.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—These precepts are grounded in Nature, Eugénie; the proof is that you approve them; freshly hatched from her womb, how could what you sense be the fruit of corruption?

EUGENIE—But if all the errors you speak of are in Nature, why do our laws oppose them?

DOLMANCE—Those laws, being forged for universal application, are in perpetual conflict with personal interest, just as personal interest is always in contradiction with the general interest. Good for society, our laws are very bad for the individuals whereof it is composed; for, if they one time protect the individual, they hinder, trouble, fetter him for three quarters of his life; and so

the wise man, the man full of contempt for them, will be wary of them, as he is of reptiles and vipers which, although they wound or kill, are nevertheless sometimes useful to medicine; he will safeguard himself against the laws as he would against noxious beasts; he will shelter himself behind precautions, behind mysteries, the which, for prudence, is easily done. Should the fancy to execute a few crimes inflame your spirit, Eugénie, be very certain you may commit them peacefully in the company of your friend and me.

EUGENIE—Ah, the fancy is already in my heart!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—What caprice agitates you, Eugénie? you may report it to us in confidence.

EUGENIE, *wild-eyed*—I want a victim.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—And of what sex would you desire her to be?

EUGENIE—Of mine!

DOLMANCE—Well, Madame, are you content with your student? does she make sufficiently rapid progress?

EUGENIE, *as above*—A victim, my dearest, a victim! . . . Oh, God, that would cause my life's happiness! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—And what would you do with her?

EUGENIE—Everything! . . . everything! . . . all that could render her the most wretched of creatures. Oh, my dearest, my dearest, have pity on me! I can stand it no longer!

DOLMANCE—By God, what an imagination! . . . Come, Eugénie, you are delicious . . . come, let me bestow a thousand kisses upon you! (*He takes her in his arms.*) Look, Madame, do you see it? Do you see this libertine discharge *mentally*, without anyone having touched her? I must absolutely embugger her once again.

EUGENIE—And afterward will I have what I request?

DOLMANCE—Yes, mad creature! . . . yes, we assure you, you shall! . . .

EUGENIE—Oh, my friend, there is my ass! . . . do with it what you will! . . .

DOLMANCE—One moment, while I arrange this pleasure bout in a sufficiently lustful manner. (*As Dolmancé gives his orders, each person executes them, taking his post.*) Augustin, lie down on the bed; Eugénie, do you recline in his arms; while I sodomize her, I'll frig her clitoris with the head of Augustin's superb prick, and Augustin who must be sparing of his fuck will take good care not to discharge; the gentle Chevalier—who, without saying a word, softly frigs himself while listening to us—will have the kindness to arrange himself upon Eugénie's shoulders so as to expose his fine buttocks to my kisses: I'll frig him amain; so shall I have my engine in an ass and a prick in each hand, to pollute; and you, Madame, after having been your master, I want you to become mine: buckle on the most gigantic of your dildos. (*Madame de Saint-Ange opens a chest filled with a store of them, and our hero selects the most massive.*) Splendid! This, according to the label, is fourteen by ten; fit it about your loins, Madame, and spare me not.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Indeed, Dolmancé, you had best reconsider. I will cripple you with this device.

DOLMANCE—Fear not; push, my angel, penetrate: I'll not enter your dear Engénie's ass until your enormous member is well advanced into mine . . . and it is! it is! oh, little Jesus! . . . You propel me heavenward! . . . No pity, my lovely one . . . I tell you I am going to fuck your ass without preparations . . . oh, sweet God! magnificent ass! . . .

EUGENIE—Oh, my friend, you are tearing me. . . . at least prepare the way.

DOLMANCE—I'll do nothing of the sort, by God: half the pleasure's lost by these stupid attentions. Put yourself in mind of our principles, Eugénie: I labor in my behalf only: now victim for a moment, my lovely angel, soon you'll persecute in your turn. . . . Ah, holy God, it enters! . . .

EUGENIE—You are putting me to death!

DOLMANCE—Ah God! I touch bottom! . . .

EUGENIE—Ah, do what you will, 'tis arrived . . . I feel nothing but pleasure! . . .

DOLMANCE—How I love to frig this huge prick on a virgin's clitoris! . . . You, Chevalier, show me a good ass. . . Do I frig you well, libertine? . . . And you, Madame, do fuck me, fuck your slut . . . yes, I am she and wish to be . . . Eugénie, discharge, my angel, yes, discharge! . . . Despite himself, Augustin fills me with his fuck. . . I receive the Chevalier's, mine goes to join him. . . I resist no more. . . Eugénie, wiggle your buttocks and grip my prick: I am going to jet a blazing fuck-stream deep into your entrails. . . Ah! fucking bugger of a God! I die! (*He withdraws, the circle breaks.*) Behold, Madame, here's your little libertine full of fuck again; the entrance to her cunt is soaked with it; frig her, vigorously smite her clitoris all wet with sperm: 'tis one of the most delicious things that may be done.

EUGENIE, *palpitating*—Oh, my blessed one, what pleasure you give me! Ah, dear love, I burn with lubricity! (*The posture is assumed.*)

DOLMANCE—Chevalier, as 'tis you who'll deflower this lovely child, add your ministrations to those of your sister, that she may swoon in your arms, and strike the sodomite's attitude: I am going to embugger you while Augustin does the same to me. (*The disposition is effected.*)

LE CHEVALIER—Is my position satisfactory?

DOLMANCE—Your*ass ever so gently raised, up with it, a fraction of an inch, my love; there, just so . . . without lubrication, Chevalier?

LE CHEVALIER—Why, bless my soul! as you damned well please; can I feel anything but pleasure in this delicious girl's womb! (*He kisses her, frigs her, burying a finger in her cunt while Madame de Saint-Ange strums Eugénie's clitoris.*)

DOLMANCE—As for myself, my dear, I, be assured of it, I take far more pleasure with you than with Eugénie; there is an

immense difference between a boy's and girl's ass. . . So bugger me, Augustin! what a bloody effort is required to get you to move!

AUGUSTIN—B'damn, Sir, it's because it's just been running and dripping a moment ago into this pretty little turtledove here and now you're wanting it to get right up for your bum there which really ain't so pretty,

DOLMANCE—Idiot! But why complain? 'Tis Mother Nature. Well, go on, trusty Augustin, go on with your indiscriminate penetrating, and when one day you have a little more experience, you will tell me whether one ass isn't worth thirty cunts. . . Eugénie, deal fairly with the Chevalier; you are thoughtless of everyone but yourself; well, libertine, you are right; but in your own pleasure's interest, frig him, since he is to gather your first fruits.

EUGENIE—But I am frigging him, I do kiss him, I am going out of my head. . . Aië! aië! aië! my friends, I can stand no more . . . pity my condition . . . I am dying . . . I discharge! Oh, God! I am in ecstasy! . . .

DOLMANCE—Now, as for myself, I have elected prudence and restraint: I wish merely to have this fine ass put me in form; the fuck that's being fired in me I am saving for Madame de Saint-Ange: 'tis wonderfully amusing to commence in one ass the operation one wishes to conclude in another. I say there, Chevalier, you seem nicely got up . . . shall we to the deflowering? . . .

EUGENIE—Oh, heavens! no, not by him, I'd perish from it; yours is smaller, Dolmancé: may it be you to whom I owe thanks for the operation, I beg of you!

DOLMANCE—'Tis out of the question, my angel; I've never fucked a cunt in my life and one cannot begin at my age. Your hymen belongs to the Chevalier: of us all here, he alone is worthy of its capture: do you not rob him of his just prize.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Refuse a maidenhead . . . as fresh, as pretty as this—for I defy anyone to say my Eugénie is not the loveliest girl in France—oh, Monsieur! Monsieur, indeed, that's what I call holding too closely to one's principles!

DOLMANCE—You say I am too scrupulous, Madame? 'Tis unkind. For there are multitudes of my colleagues, stricter in their worship than I, who most assuredly would not bugger you. . . . I, I've done it, and would do it again: it is not, thus, as you suspect, a question of carrying my worship to the point of fanaticism.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Well then Chevalier, the task is yours, proceed; but have a little care what you do; consider the narrowness of the channel you are going to navigate: what of the proportion between the contents and the container?

EUGENIE—Oh, 'twill kill me, I'm sure of it, 'tis inevitable. . . . But my furious desire to be fucked makes me chance it fearlessly. . . . Go on, penetrate, my dear, I abandon myself to you.

LE CHEVALIER, *taking a firm grip upon his rampant prick*—Fuck, yes! let it go in. . . . Sister, Dolmancé, each of you take one of her legs. . . . Ah, by God, what an enterprise! . . . Yes, yes, she must be split like a melon, halved, God and God again, yes, it's got to enter!

EUGENIE—Gently, gently, the pain is great. . . . (*She screams; tears roll down her cheeks.*) Help me! my good friend. . . . (*She struggles.*) No, I don't want him to do it! . . . I'll cry for help if you persist! . . .

LE CHEVALIER—Cry away as much as you please, little chit, I tell you it must go in even were it to shiver you into small pieces.

EUGENIE—What barbarity!

DOLMANCE—Fuck! is one expected to be a gentleman when one is stiff?

LE CHEVALIER—Ha! look! it's sunk . . . it's in! by God! . . . Fuck! there's the maidenhead blasted to the devil! . . . Look how it bleeds!

EUGENIE—Go on, tiger! . . . tear me to ribbons if you wish . . . I don't care a damn! . . . kiss me, butcher, I adore you! . . . Oh, 'tis nothing when it's inside: all the pains are forgot. . . . Woe unto girls who shy away from such an attack! . . . What tremendous

pleasures they deny themselves at the cost of a little trouble! . . . Thrust! thrust! push! Chevalier, I am coming! . . . spray your fuck over the wounds and lacerations . . . drive it to the bottom of my womb . . . ah! suffering gives way to pleasure . . . I am ready to swoon! . . . (*The Chevalier discharges; while he fucked, Dolmancé toyed with his ass and balls, and Madame de Saint-Ange tickled Eugénie's clitoris. They dissolve their position.*)

DOLMANCE—'Twould be my opinion that, while the avenue is open, the little bitch might instantly be fucked by Augustin!

EUGENIE—By Augustin! . . . a prick of those dimensions! . . . ah, immediately! . . . While I am still bleeding! . . . Do you then wish to kill me?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Dear heart . . . kiss me, I sympathize with you . . . but sentence has been pronounced; there is no appeal, my dearest: you have got to submit to it.

AUGUSTIN—Ah, zounds! here I am, all ready: soon's it means sticking this bonny girl and I'd come, by God, all the way from Rome, on foot.

LE CHEVALIER, *grasping Augustin's mammoth device*—Look at it, Eugénie, look how it is erect . . . how worthy it is to replace me. . . .

EUGENIE—Oh merciful heaven, what a piece! . . . Oh, 'tis clear, you design my death! . . .

AUGUSTIN, *seizing Eugénie*—Oh no, Mam'selle, that's never killed anybody.

DOLMANCE—One instant, my fine boy, one instant: she must present her ass to me while you fuck her . . . yes, that's it, come hither, Madame; I promised to sodomize you, I'll keep my word; but situate yourself in such a way that as I fuck you, I can be within reach of Eugénie's fucker. And let the Chevalier flog me in the meantime. (*All is arranged.*)

EUGENIE—Oh fuck! he cracks me! . . . Go gently, great lout! . . . Ah, the bugger! he digs in! . . . there 'tis, the fucking-john! . . .

he's at the very bottom! . . . I'm dying! . . . Oh, Dolmancé, how you strike! . . . 'tis to ignite me before and behind; you're setting my buttocks afire!

DOLMANCÉ, *swinging his whip with all his strength*—You'll be afire . . . you'll burn, little bitch! . . . and you'll only discharge the more deliciously. How you frig her, Saint-Ange . . . let your deft fingers soothe the hurt that Augustin and I cause her! . . . But your anus contracts . . . I see it, Madame, I see it! we're going to come together. . . . Oh, 'tis I know not how divine thus to be, 'twixt brother and sister!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *to Dolmancé*—Fuck, my star, fuck! . . . Never do I believe I have had so much pleasure!

LE CHEVALIER—Dolmancé, let's change hands; be nimble: pass from my sister's ass to Eugénie's, so as to acquaint her with the intermediary's pleasures, and I will embugger my sister who meanwhile will shower upon your ass the very whip strokes wherewith you've just brought Eugénie's behind to blood.

DOLMANCÉ, *executing the proposal*—Agreed . . . there, my friend, hast ever seen a shift more cunningly effected?

EUGENIE—What! both of them on top of me, good heavens! . . . what will come next? I've really had enough of this oaf! . . . Ah, how much fuck this double pleasure is going to cost me! . . . it flows already. Without that sensual ejaculation, I believe I would be already dead. . . . Why, my dearest, you imitate me. . . . Oh, hear the bitch swear! . . . * Discharge, Dolmancé, . . . discharge, my love . . . this fat peasant inundates me: he shoots to the depths of my entrails. . . . Oh, my good fuckers, what is this? Two at a time? Good Christ! . . . receive my fuck, dear companions, it conjoins itself with your own. . . . I am annihilated. . . . (*The attitudes are dissolved.*) Well, my dear, what think you of your scholar? . . . Am I enough of a whore now? . . . But what a state you do put me in . . . what an agitation! . . . Oh, yes, I swear, in my drunkenness, I swear I would have gone if necessary and got myself fucked in the middle of the street! . . .

DOLMANCÉ—How beautiful she is thus.

EUGENIE—You! I detest you: you refused me.

DOLMANCÉ—Could I contradict my dogmas?

EUGENIE—Very well, I forgive you, and I must respect the principles which lead us to wild conduct; how could I not acknowledge and adopt them, I who wish not to live save in crime? Let's sit down and chat a little; I'm exhausted. Continue my instruction, Dolmancé, and say something that will console me for the excesses to which I have given myself over; stifle my remorse; encourage me.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—'Tis fair enough: as we say, a little theory must succeed practice: it is the means to make a perfect disciple.

DOLMANCÉ—Well then! Upon what subject, Eugénie, would you like to have a discussion?

EUGENIE—I should like to know whether manners are truly necessary in a governed society, whether their influence has any weight with the national genius.

DOLMANCÉ—Why, by God, I have something here with me. As I left home this morning I bought, outside the Palace of Equality, a little pamphlet, which if one can believe the title, ought surely to answer your question. . . . It's come straight from the press.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Let me see it. (*She reads:*) "Yet Another Effort, Frenchmen, If You Would Become Republicans." Upon my word, 'tis an unusual title: 'tis promising; Chevalier, you possess a fine organ, read it to us.

DOLMANCÉ—Unless I am mistaken, this should perfectly reply to Eugénie's queries.

EUGENIE—Assuredly!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Out with you, Augustin: this is not for you; but don't go too far; we'll ring when we want you back.

LE CHEVALIER—Well, I'll begin.

YET ANOTHER EFFORT,
FRENCHMEN,
IF YOU WOULD BECOME REPUBLICANS

RELIGION

I am about to put forward some major ideas; they will be heard and pondered. If not all of them please, surely a few will; in some sort, then, I shall have contributed to the progress of our age, and shall be content. We near our goal, but haltingly: I confess that I am disturbed by the presentiment that we are on the eve of failing once again to arrive there. Is it thought that goal will be attained when at last we have been given laws? Abandon the notion; for what should we, who have no religion, do with laws? We must have a creed, a creed befitting the republican character, something far removed from ever being able to resume the worship of Rome. In this age, when we are convinced that morals must be the basis of religion, and not religion of morals, we need a body of beliefs in keeping with our customs and habits, something that would be their necessary consequence, and that could, by lifting up the spirit, maintain it perpetually at the high level of this precious liberty, which today the spirit has made its unique idol.

Well, I ask, is it thinkable that the doctrine of one of Titus' slaves, of a clumsy histrionic from Judaea, be fitting to a free and warlike nation that has just regenerated itself? No, my fellow countrymen, no; you think nothing of the sort. If, to his misfortune, the Frenchman were to entomb himself in the grave of Christianity, then on one side the priests' pride, their tyranny, their despotism, vices forever cropping up in that impure horde, on the other side the baseness, the narrowness, the platitudes of dogma and mystery of this infamous and fabulous religion, would, by blunting the fine edge of the republican spirit, rapidly put about the Frenchman's neck the yoke which his vitality but yesterday shattered.

Let us not lose sight of the fact this puerile religion was among our tyrants' best weapons: one of its key dogmas was to render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's. However, we have dethroned

Caesar, we are no longer disposed to render him anything. Frenchmen, it would be in vain were you to suppose that your oath-taking clergy today is in any essential manner different from yesterday's non-juring clergy: there are inherent vices beyond all possibility of correction. Before ten years are out—utilizing the Christian religion, its superstitions, its prejudices—your priests, their pledges notwithstanding and though despoiled of their riches, are sure to reassert their empire over the souls they shall have undermined and captured; they shall restore the monarchy, because the power of kings has always reinforced that of the church; and your republican edifice, its foundations eaten away, shall collapse.

O you who have axes ready to hand, deal the final blow to the tree of superstition; be not content to prune its branches: uproot entirely a plant whose effects are so contagious. Well understand that your system of liberty and equality too rudely affronts the ministers of Christ's altars for there ever to be one of them who will either adopt it in good faith or give over seeking to topple it, if he is able to recover any dominion over consciences. What priest, comparing the condition to which he has been reduced with the one he formerly enjoyed, will not do his utmost to win back both the confidence and the authority he has lost? And how many feeble and pusillanimous creatures will not speedily become again the thralls of this cunning shavepate! Why is it imagined that the nuisances which existed before cannot be revived to plague us anew? In the Christian church's infancy, were priests less ambitious than they are today? You observe how far they advanced; to what do you suppose they owed their success if not to the means religion furnished them? Well, if you do not absolutely prohibit this religion, those who preach it, having yet the same means, will soon achieve the same ends.

Then annihilate forever what may one day destroy your work. Consider that the fruit of your labors being reserved for your grandchildren only, duty and probity command that you bequeath them none of those seeds of disaster which could mean for your descendants a renewal of the chaos whence we have with so much trouble just emerged. At the present moment our prejudices are weakening; the people have already abjured the Catholic absurdities; they have already suppressed the temples, sent the relics flying,

and agreed that marriage is a mere civil undertaking; the smashed confessionals serve as public meeting places; the former faithful, deserting the apostolic banquet, leave the gods of flour dough to the mice. Frenchmen, an end to your waverings: all of Europe, one hand halfway raised to the blindfold over her eyes, expects that effort by which you must snatch it from her head. Make haste: *holy Rome* strains every nerve to repress your vigor; hurry, lest you give Rome time to secure her grip upon the few proselytes remaining to her. Unsparingly and recklessly smite off her proud and trembling head; and before two months the tree of liberty, overshadowing the wreckage of Peter's Chair, will soar victoriously above all the contemptible Christian vestiges and idols raised with such effrontery over the ashes of Cato and Brutus.

Frenchmen, I repeat it to you: Europe awaits her deliverance from *scepter* and *censer* alike. Know well that you cannot possibly liberate her from royal tyranny without at the same time breaking for her the fetters of religious superstition: the shackles of the one are too intimately linked to those of the other; let one of the two survive, and you cannot avoid falling subject to the other you have left intact. It is no longer before the knees of either an imaginary being or a vile impostor a republican must prostrate himself; his only gods must now be *courage* and *liberty*. Rome disappeared immediately Christianity was preached there, and France is doomed if she continues to revere it.

Let the absurd dogmas, the appalling mysteries, the impossible morality of this disgusting religion be examined with attention, and it will be seen whether it befits a republic. Do you honestly believe I would allow myself to be dominated by the opinion of a man I had just seen kneeling before the idiot priest of Jesus? No; certainly not! That eternally base fellow will eternally adhere, by dint of the baseness of his attitudes, to the atrocities of the *ancien régime*; as of the moment he were able to submit to the stupidities of a religion as abject as the one we are mad enough to acknowledge, he is no longer competent to dictate laws or transmit learning to me; I no longer see him as other than a slave to prejudice and superstition.

To convince ourselves, we have but to cast our eyes upon the handful of individuals who remain attached to our fathers' insensate

worship: we will see whether they are not all irreconcilable enemies of the present system, we will see whether it is not amongst their numbers that all of that justly contemned caste of *royalists* and *aristocrats* is included. Let the slave of a crowned brigand grovel, if he pleases, at the feet of a plaster image; such an object is ready-made for his soul of mud. He who can serve kings must adore gods; but we, Frenchmen, but we, my fellow countrymen, we, rather than once more crawl beneath such contemptible traces, we would die a thousand times over rather than abase ourselves anew! Since we believe a cult necessary, let us imitate the Romans: actions, passions, heroes—those were the objects of their respect. Idols of this sort elevated the soul, electrified it, and more: they communicated to the spirit the virtues of the respected being. Minerva's devotee coveted wisdom. Courage found its abode in his heart who worshiped Mars. Not a single one of that great people's gods was deprived of energy; all of them infused into the spirit of him who venerated them the fire with which they were themselves ablaze; and each Roman hoped someday to be himself worshiped, each aspired to become as great at least as the deity he took for a model. But what, on the contrary, do we find in Christianity's futile gods? What, I want to know, what does this idiot's religion offer you?⁸ Does the grubby Nazarene fraud inspire any great thoughts in you? His foul, nay repellent mother, the shameless Mary—does she excite any virtues? And do you discover in the saints who garnish the Christian Elysium, any example of greatness, of either heroism or virtue? So alien to lofty conceptions is this miserable belief, that no artist can employ its attributes in the monuments he raises; even in Rome itself, most of the embellishments of the papal palaces have their origins in paganism, and as long as this world shall continue, paganism alone will arouse the verve of great men.

Shall we find more motifs of grandeur in pure theism? Will acceptance of a chimera infuse into men's minds the high degree

⁸ A careful inspection of this religion will reveal to anyone that the impieties with which it is filled come in part from the Jews' ferocity and innocence, and in part from the indifference and confusion of the Gentiles; instead of appropriating what was good in what the ancient peoples had to offer, the Christians seem only to have formed their doctrine from a mixture of the vices they found everywhere.

of energy essential to republican virtues, and move men to cherish and practice them? Let us imagine nothing of the kind; we have bid farewell to that phantom and, at the present time, atheism is the one doctrine of all those prone to reason. As we gradually proceeded to our enlightenment, we came more and more to feel that, motion being inherent in matter, the prime mover existed only as an illusion, and that all that exists essentially having to be in motion, the motor was useless; we sensed that this chimerical divinity, prudently invented by the earliest legislators, was, in their hands, simply one more means to enthrall us, and that, reserving unto themselves the right to make the phantom speak, they knew very well how to get him to say nothing but what would shore up the preposterous laws whereby they declared they served us. Lycurgus, Numa, Moses, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, all these great rogues, all these great thought-tyrants, knew how to associate the divinities they fabricated with their own boundless ambition; and, certain of captivating the people with the sanction of those gods, they were always studious, as everyone knows, either to consult them exclusively about, or to make them exclusively respond to, what they thought likely to serve their own interests.

Therefore, today let us equally despise both that empty god impostors have celebrated, and all the farce of religious subtleties surrounding a ridiculous belief: it is no longer with this bauble that free men are to be amused. Let the total extermination of cults and denominations therefore enter into the principles we broadcast throughout all Europe. Let us not be content with breaking scepters; we will pulverize the idols forever: there is never more than a single step from superstition to royalism.⁹ Does anyone doubt it? Then let him understand once and for all, that in every age one of the primary concerns of kings has been to maintain the dominant religion as one of the political bases that best sustains the throne. But, since it is shattered, that throne, and since it is,

⁹ Inspect the history of every race: never will you find one of them changing the government it has for a monarchical system, save by reason of the brutalization or the superstition that grips them; you will see kings always upholding religion, and religion sanctifying kings. One knows the story of the steward and the cook: *Hand me the pepper; I'll pass you the butter.* Wretched mortals! are you then destined forever to resemble these two rascals' master?

happily, shattered for all time, let us have not the slightest qualm about also demolishing the thing that supplied its plinth.

Yes, citizens, religion is incompatible with the libertarian system; you have sensed as much. Never will a free man stoop to Christianity's gods; never will its dogmas, its rites, its mysteries, or its morals suit a republican. One more effort; since you labor to destroy all the old foundations, do not permit one of them to survive, for let but one endure, 'tis enough, the rest will be restored. And how much more certain of their revival must we not be if the one you tolerate is positively the source and cradle of all the others! Let us give over thinking religion can be useful to man; once good laws are decreed unto us, we will be able to dispense with religion. But, they assure us, the people stand in need of one; it amuses them, they are soothed by it. Fine! Then, if that be the case, give us a religion proper to free men; give us the gods of paganism. We shall willingly worship Jupiter, Hercules, Pallas; but we have no use for a dimensionless god who nevertheless fills everything with his immensity, an omnipotent god who never achieves what he wills, a supremely good being who creates malcontents only, a friend of order in whose government everything is in turmoil. No, we want no more of a god who is at loggerheads with Nature, who is the father of confusion, who moves man at the moment man abandons himself to horrors; such a god makes us quiver with indignation, and we consign him forever to the oblivion whence the infamous Robespierre wished to call him forth.¹⁰

Frenchmen, in the stead of that unworthy phantom, we will substitute the imposing simulacra that rendered Rome mistress of the earth; let us treat every Christian image as we have the tokens of monarchy. There where once tyrants sat we have mounted emblems of liberty; in like manner we will place effigies of great men on the pedestals once occupied by statues of the knaves Christianity adored.¹¹ Let us cease to entertain doubts as to the effect of atheism

¹⁰ All religions are agreed in exalting the divinity's wisdom and power; but as soon as they expose his conduct, we find nothing but imprudence, weakness, and folly. God, they say, created the world for himself, and up until the present time his efforts to make it honor him have proven unsuccessful; God created us to worship him, and our days are spent mocking him! Unfortunate fellow, that God!

¹¹ We are only speaking here of those great men whose reputation has been for a long while secure.

in the country: have not the peasants felt the necessity of the annihilation of the Catholic cult, so contradictory to the true principles of freedom? Have they not watched undaunted, and without sorrow or pain, their altars and presbyteries battered to bits? Ah! rest assured, they will renounce their ridiculous god in the same way. The statues of Mars, of Minerva, and of Liberty will be set up in the most conspicuous places in the villages; holidays will be celebrated there every year; the prize will be decreed to the worthiest citizen. At the entrance to a secluded wood, Venus, Hymen, and Love, erected beneath a rustic temple, will receive lovers' homages; there, by the hand of the Graces, Beauty will crown Constancy. More than mere loving will be required in order to pose one's candidacy for the tiara; it will be necessary to have merited love. Heroism, capabilities, humaneness, largeness of spirit, a proven civism—those are the credentials the lover shall be obliged to present at his mistress' feet, and they will be of far greater value than the titles of birth and wealth a fool's pride used to require. Some virtues at least will be born of this worship, whereas nothing but crimes come of that other we had the weakness to profess. This worship will ally itself to the liberty we serve; it will animate, nourish, inflame liberty, whereas theism is in its essence and in its nature the most deadly enemy of the liberty we adore.

Was a drop of blood spilled when the pagan idols were destroyed under the Eastern Empire? The revolution, prepared by the stupidity of a people become slaves again, was accomplished without the slightest hindrance or outcry. Why do we dread the work of philosophy as more painful than that of despotism? It is only the priests who still hold the people, whom you hesitate to enlighten, captive at the feet of their imaginary god: take the priests from the people, and the veil will fall away naturally. Be persuaded that these people, a good deal wiser than you suppose them, once rid of tyranny's irons, will soon also be rid of superstition's. You are afraid of the people unrestrained—how ridiculous! Ah, believe me, citizens, the man not to be checked by the material sword of justice will hardly be halted by the moral fear of hell's torments, at which he has laughed since childhood; in a word, many crimes have been committed as a consequence of your theism, but never has it prevented a single one.

If it is true that passions blind, that their effect is to cloud our eyes to dangers that surround us, how may we suppose that those dangers which are remote, such as the punishments announced by your god, can successfully dispel the cloud not even the blade of the law itself, constantly suspended above the passions, is able to penetrate? If then it is patently clear that this supplementary check imposed by the idea of a god becomes useless, if it is demonstrated that by its other effects it is dangerous, then I wish to know, to what use can it be put, and from what motives should we lend our support in order to prolong its existence?

Is someone about to tell me that we are not yet mature enough to consolidate our revolution in so brilliant a manner? Ah, my fellow citizens, the road we took in '89 has been much more difficult than the one still ahead of us, and we have little yet to do to conquer the opinion we have been harrying since the time of the overwhelming of the Bastille. Let us firmly believe that a people wise enough and brave enough to drag an impudent monarch from the heights of grandeur to the foot of the scaffold, a people that, in these last few years, has been able to vanquish so many prejudices and sweep away so many ridiculous impediments, will be sufficiently wise and brave to terminate the affair and in the interests of the republic's well-being, abolish a mere phantom after having successfully beheaded a real king.

Frenchmen, only strike the initial blows; your State education will then see to the rest. Get promptly to the task of training the youth, it must be amongst your most important concerns; above all, build their education upon a sound ethical basis, the ethical basis that was so neglected in your religious education. Rather than fatigue your children's young organs with deific stupidities, replace them with excellent social principles; instead of teaching them futile prayers which, by the time they are sixteen, they will glory in having forgotten, let them be instructed in their duties toward society; train them to cherish the virtues you scarcely ever mentioned in former times and which, without your religious fables, are sufficient for their individual happiness; make them sense that this happiness consists in rendering others as fortunate as we desire to be ourselves. If you repose these truths upon Christian chimeras, as you so foolishly used to do, scarcely will your pupils have detected the

absurd futility of its foundations than they will overthrow the entire edifice, and they will become bandits for the simple reason they believe the religion they have toppled forbids them to be bandits. On the other hand, if you make them sense the necessity of virtue, uniquely because their happiness depends upon it, egoism will turn them into honest people, and this law which dictates their behavior to men will always be the surest, the soundest of all. Let there then be the most scrupulous care taken to avoid mixing religious fantasies into this State education. Never lose sight of the fact it is free men we wish to form, not the wretched worshippers of a god. Let a simple philosopher introduce these new pupils to the inscrutable but wonderful sublimities of Nature; let him prove to them that awareness of a god, often highly dangerous to men, never contributed to their happiness, and that they will not be happier for acknowledging as a cause of what they do not understand, something they well understand even less; that it is far less essential to inquire into the workings of Nature than to enjoy her and obey her laws; that these laws are as wise as they are simple; that they are written in the hearts of all men; and that it is but necessary to interrogate that heart to discern its impulse. If they wish absolutely that you speak to them of a creator, answer that things always having been what now they are, never having had a beginning and never going to have an end, it thus becomes as useless as impossible for man to be able to trace things back to an imaginary origin which would explain nothing and do not a jot of good. Tell them that men are incapable of obtaining true notions of a being who does not make his influence felt on one of our senses.

All our ideas are representations of objects that strike us: what is to represent to us the idea of a god, who is plainly an idea without object? Is not such an idea, you will add when talking to them, quite as impossible as effects without causes? Is an idea without prototype anything other than an hallucination? Some scholars, you will continue, assure us that the idea of a god is innate, and that mortals already have this idea when in their mothers' bellies. But, you will remark, that is false; every principle is a judgment, every judgment the outcome of experience, and experience is only acquired by the exercise of the senses; whence it follows that religious principles bear upon nothing whatever and are not in the

slightest innate. How, you will go on, how have they been able to convince rational beings that the thing most difficult to understand is the most vital to them? It is that mankind has been terrorized; it is that when one is afraid one ceases to reason; it is, above all, that we have been advised to mistrust reason and defy it; and that, when the brain is disturbed, one believes anything and examines nothing. Ignorance and fear, you will repeat to them, ignorance and fear—those are the twin bases of every religion.

Man's uncertainty with respect to his god is, precisely, the cause for his attachment to his religion. Man's fear in dark places is as much physical as moral; fear becomes habitual in him, and is changed into need: he would believe he were lacking something even were he to have nothing more to hope for or dread. Next, return to the utilitarian value of morals: apropos of this vast subject, give them many more examples than lessons, many more demonstrations than books, and you will make good citizens of them: you will turn them into fine warriors, fine fathers, fine husbands: you will fashion men that much more devoted to their country's liberty, whose minds will be forever immune to servility, forever hostile to servitude, whose genius will never be troubled by any religious terror. And then true patriotism will shine in every spirit, and will reign there in all its force and purity, because it will become the sovereign sentiment there, and no alien notion will dilute or cool its energy; then your second generation will be sure, reliable, and your own work, consolidated by it, will go on to become the law of the universe. But if, through fear or faintheartedness, these counsels are ignored, if the foundations of the edifice we thought we destroyed are left intact, what then will happen? They will rebuild upon these foundations, and will set thereupon the same colossi, with this difference, and it will be a cruel one: the new structures will be cemented with such strength that neither your generation nor ensuing ones will avail against them.

Let there be no doubt of it: religions are the cradles of despotism: the foremost amongst all the despots was a priest: the first king and the first emperor of Rome, Numa and Augustus, associated themselves, the one and the other, with the sacerdotal; Constantine and Clovis were rather abbots than sovereigns; Helio-gabalus was priest of the sun. At all times, in every century, every

age, there has been such a connection between despotism and religion that it is infinitely apparent and demonstrated a thousand times over, that in destroying one, the other must be undermined, for the simple reason that the first will always put the law into the service of the second. I do not, however, propose either massacres or expulsions. Such dreadful things have no place in the enlightened mind. No, do not assassinate at all, do not expel at all; these are royal atrocities, or the brigands' who imitate kings; it is not at all by acting as they that you will force men to look with horror upon them who practiced those crimes. Let us reserve the employment of force for the idols; ridicule alone will suffice for those who serve them: Julian's sarcasm wrought greater damage to Christianity than all Nero's tortures. Yes, we shall destroy for all time any notion of a god, and make soldiers of his priests; a few of them are already; let them keep to this trade, soldiering, so worthy of a republican; but let them give us no more of their chimerical being nor of his nonsense-filled religion, the single object of our scorn.

Let us condemn the first of those blessed charlatans who comes to us to say a few more words either of god or of religion, let us condemn him to be jeered at, ridiculed, covered with filth in all the public squares and marketplaces in France's largest cities: imprisonment for life will be the reward of whosoever falls a second time into the same error. Let the most insulting blasphemy, the most atheistic works next be fully and openly authorized, in order to complete the extirpation from the human heart and memory of those appalling pastimes of our childhood; let there be put in circulation the writings most capable of finally illuminating the Europeans upon a matter so important, and let a considerable prize, to be bestowed by the Nation, be awarded to him who, having said and demonstrated everything upon this score, will leave to his countrymen no more than a scythe to mow the land clean of all those phantoms, and a steady heart to hate them. In six months, the whole will be done; your infamous god will be as naught, and all that without ceasing to be just, jealous of the esteem of others without ceasing to be honest men; for it will have been sensed that the real friend of his country must in no way be led about by chimeras, as is the slave of kings; that it is not, in a word, either the frivolous hope of a better world nor fear of the greatest ills

Nature sends us that must lead a republican, whose only guide is virtue and whose one restraint is conscience.

MANNERS

After having made it clear that theism is in no wise suitable to a republican government, it seems to me necessary to prove that French manners are equally unsuitable to it. This article is the more crucial, for the laws to be promulgated will issue from manners, and will mirror them.

Frenchmen, you are too intelligent to fail to sense that new government will require new manners. That the citizens of a free State conduct themselves like a despotic king's slaves is unthinkable: the differences of their interests, of their duties, of their relations amongst one another essentially determine an entirely different manner of behaving in the world; a crowd of minor faults and of little social indelicacies, thought of as very fundamental indeed under the rule of kings whose expectations rose in keeping with the need they felt to impose curbs in order to appear respectable and unapproachable to their subjects, are due to become as nothing with us; other crimes with which we are acquainted under the names of regicide and sacrilege, in a system where kings and religion will be unknown, in the same way must be annihilated in a republican State. In according freedom of conscience and of the press, consider, citizens—for it is practically the same thing—whether freedom of action must not be granted too: excepting direct clashes with the underlying principles of government, there remain to you it is impossible to say how many fewer crimes to punish, because in fact there are very few criminal actions in a society whose foundations are liberty and equality. Matters well weighed and things closely inspected, only that is really criminal which rejects the law; for Nature, equally dictating vices and virtues to us, in reason of our constitution, yet more philosophically, in reason of the need Nature has of the one and the other, what she inspires in us would become a very reliable gauge by which to adjust exactly what is good and bad. But, the better to develop my thoughts upon so important

a question, we will classify the different acts in man's life that until the present it has pleased us to call criminal, and we will next square them to the true obligations of a republican.

In every age, the duties of man have been considered under the following three categories:

1. Those his conscience and his credulity impose upon him, with what regards a supreme being;
2. Those he is obliged to fulfill toward his brethren;
3. Finally, those that relate only to himself.

The certainty in which we must be that no god meddles in our affairs and that, as necessary creatures of Nature, like plants and animals, we are here because it would be impossible for us not to be—, this unshakable certainty, it is clear enough, at one stroke erases the first group of duties, those, I wish to say, toward the divinity to which we erroneously believe ourselves beholden; and with them vanish all religious crimes, all those comprehended under the indefinite names of *impiety*, *sacrilege*, *blasphemy*, *atheism*, etc., all those, in brief, which Athens so unjustly punished in Alcibiades, and France in the unfortunate Labarre. If there is anything extravagant in this world it is to see men, in whom only shallowness of mind and poverty of ideas give rise to a notion of god and to what this god expects of them, nevertheless wish to determine what pleases and what angers their imagination's ridiculous phantom. It would hence not be merely to tolerate indifferently each of the cults that I should like to see us limit ourselves; I should like there to be perfect freedom to deride them all; I should like men, gathered in no matter what temple to invoke the eternal who wears their image, to be seen as so many comics in a theater, at whose antics everyone may go to laugh. Regarded in any other light, religions become serious, and then important once again; they will soon stir up and patronize opinions, and no sooner will people fall to disputing over religions than some will be beaten into favoring religions.¹² Equality

¹² Each nation declares its religion the best of all and relies, to persuade one of it, upon an endless number of proofs not only in disagreement with one another, but nearly all contradictory. In our profound ignorance, what is the one which may please god, supposing now that there is a god? We should, if we are wise, either protect them all and equally, or proscribe them all in the same way; well, to proscribe them is certainly the surer, since we have the moral assurance that all are mummeries, no one of which can be more pleasing than another to a god who does not exist.

once wrecked by the preference or protection tendered one of them, the government will soon disappear, and out of the reconstituted *theocracy* the *aristocracy* will be reborn in a trice. I cannot repeat it to you too often: no more gods, Frenchmen, no more gods, lest under their fatal influence you wish to be plunged back into all the horrors of despotism; but it is only by jeering that you will destroy them; all the dangers they bring in their wake will instantly be revived en masse if you pamper or ascribe any consequence to them. Carried away by anger, you overthrow their idols? Not for a minute; have a bit of sport with them, and they will crumble to bits; once withered, the opinion will collapse of its own accord.

I trust I have said enough to make plain that no laws ought to be decreed against religious crimes, for that which offends an illusion offends nothing, and it would be the height of inconsistency to punish those who outrage or who despise a creed or a cult whose priority to all others is established by no evidence whatsoever. No, that would necessarily be to exhibit a partiality and, consequently, to influence the scales of equality, that foremost law of your new government.

We move on to the second class of man's duties, those which bind him to his fellows; this is of all the classes the most extensive.

Excessively vague upon man's relations with his brothers, Christian morals propose bases so filled with sophistries that we are completely unable to accept them, since, if one is pleased to erect principles, one ought scrupulously to guard against founding them upon sophistries. This absurd morality tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Assuredly, nothing would be more sublime were it ever possible for what is false to be beautiful. The point is not at all to love one's brethren as oneself, since that is in defiance of all the laws of Nature, and since hers is the sole voice which must direct all the actions in our life; it is only a question of loving others as brothers, as friends given us by Nature, and with whom we should be able to live much better in a republican State, wherein the disappearance of distances must necessarily tighten the bonds.

May humanity, fraternity, benevolence prescribe our reciprocal obligations, and let us individually fulfill them with the simple degree of energy Nature has given us to this end; let us do so with-

out blaming, and above all without punishing, those who, of chillier temper or more acrimonious humor, do not notice in these yet very touching social ties all the sweetness and gentleness others discover therein; for, it will be agreed, to seek to impose universal laws would be a palpable absurdity: such a proceeding would be as ridiculous as that of the general who would have all his soldiers dressed in a uniform of the same size; it is a terrible injustice to require that men of unlike character all be ruled by the same law: what is good for one is not at all good for another.

That we cannot devise as many laws as there are men must be admitted; but the laws can be lenient, and so few in number, that all men, of whatever character, can easily observe them. Furthermore, I would demand that this small number of laws be of such a sort as to be adaptable to all the various characters; they who formulate the code should follow the principle of applying more or less, according to the person in question. It has been pointed out that there are certain virtues whose practice is impossible for certain men, just as there are certain remedies which do not agree with certain constitutions. Now, would it not be to carry your injustice beyond all limits were you to send the law to strike the man incapable of bowing to the law? Would your iniquity be any less here than in a case where you sought to force the blind to distinguish amongst colors?

From these first principles there follows, one feels, the necessity to make flexible, mild laws and especially to get rid forever of the atrocity of capital punishment, because the law which attempts a man's life is impractical, unjust, inadmissible. Not, and it will be clarified in the sequel, that we lack an infinite number of cases where, without offense to Nature (and this I shall demonstrate), men have freely taken one another's lives, simply exercising a prerogative received from their common mother; but it is impossible for the law to obtain the same privileges, since the law, cold and impersonal, is a total stranger to the passions which are able to justify in man the cruel act of murder. Man receives his impressions from Nature, who is able to forgive him this act; the law, on the contrary, always opposed as it is to Nature and receiving nothing from her, cannot be authorized to permit itself the same extravagances: not having the same motives, the law cannot have the same rights. Those are wise

and delicate distinctions which escape many people, because very few of them reflect; but they will be grasped and retained by the instructed to whom I recommend them, and will, I hope, exert some influence upon the new code being readied for us.

The second reason why the death penalty must be done away with is that it has never repressed crime; for crime is every day committed at the foot of the scaffold. This punishment is to be got rid of, in a word, because it would be difficult to conceive of a poorer calculation than this, by which a man is put to death for having killed another: under the present arrangement the obvious result is not one man the less but, of a sudden, two; such arithmetic is in use only amongst headsmen and fools. However all that may be, the injuries we can work against our brothers may be reduced to four types: *calumny*; *theft*; the crimes which, caused by *impurity*, may in a disagreeable sense affect others; and *murder*.

All these were acts considered of the highest importance under the monarchy; but are they quite so serious in a republican State? That is what we are going to analyze with the aid of philosophy's torch, for by its light alone may such an inquiry be undertaken. Let no one tax me with being a dangerous innovator; let no one say that by my writings I seek to blunt the remorse in evildoers' hearts, that my humane ethics are wicked because they augment those same evildoers' penchant for crime. I wish formally to certify here and now, that I have none of these perverse intentions; I set forth the ideas which, since the age when I first began to reason, have identified themselves in me, and to whose expression and realization the infamous despotism of tyrants has been opposed for uncounted centuries. So much the worse for those susceptible to corruption by any idea; so much the worse for them who fasten upon naught but the harmful in philosophic opinions, who are likely to be corrupted by everything. Who knows? They may have been poisoned by reading Seneca and Charron. It is not to them I speak; I address myself only to people capable of hearing me out, and they will read me without any danger.

It is with utmost candor I confess that I have never considered calumny an evil, and especially in a government like our own, under which all of us, bound closer together, nearer one to the other, obviously have a greater interest in becoming acquainted with one an-

other. Either one or the other: calumny attaches to a truly evil man, or it falls upon a virtuous creature. It will be agreed that, in the first case, it makes little difference if one imputes a little more evil to a man known for having done a great deal of it; perhaps indeed the evil which does not exist will bring to light evil which does, and there you have him, the malefactor, more fully exposed than ever before.

We will suppose now that an unwholesome influence reigns over Hanover, but that in repairing to that city where the air is insalubrious, I risk little worse than a bout of fever; may I reproach the man who, to prevent me from going to Hanover, tells me that one perishes upon arriving there? No, surely not; for, by using a great evil to frighten me, he spared me a lesser one.

If, on the contrary, a virtuous man is calumniated, let him not be alarmed; he need but exhibit himself, and all the calumniator's venom will soon be turned back upon the latter. For such a person, calumny is merely a test of purity whence his virtue emerges more resplendent than ever. As a matter of fact, his individual ordeal may profit the cause of virtue in the republic, and add to its sum; for this virtuous and sensitive man, stung by the injustice done him, will apply himself to the cultivation of still greater virtue; he will want to overcome this calumny from which he thought himself sheltered, and his splendid actions will acquire a correspondingly greater degree of energy. Thus, in the first instance, the calumniator produces quite favorable results by inflating the vices of the dangerous object of his attacks; in the second, the results achieved are excellent, for virtue is obliged to offer itself to us entire.

Well now, I am at a loss to know for what reason the calumniator deserves your fear, especially under a regime where it is essential to identify the wicked, and to augment the energy of the good. Let us hence very carefully avoid any declarations prejudicial to calumny; we will consider it both a lantern and a stimulant, and in either case something highly useful. The legislator, all of whose ideas must be as large as the work he undertakes is great, must never be concerned with the effect of that crime which strikes only the individual. It is the general, overall effect he must study; and when in this manner he observes the effects calumny produces, I defy him to find anything punishable in it. I defy him to find any shadow

or hint of justice in the law that would punish it; our legislator becomes the man of greatest justice and integrity if, on the contrary, he encourages and rewards it.

Theft is the second of the moral offenses whose examination we proposed.

If we glance at the history of ancient times, we will see theft permitted, nay, recompensed in all the Greek republics; Sparta and Lacedaemon openly favored it; several other peoples regarded it as a virtue in a warrior; it is certain that stealing nourishes courage, strength, skill, tact, in a word, all the virtues useful to a republican system and consequently to our own. Lay partiality aside, and answer me: is theft, whose effect is to distribute wealth more evenly, to be branded as a wrong in our day, under our government which aims at equality? Plainly, the answer is no: it furthers equality and, what is more, renders more difficult the conservation of property. There was once a people who punished not the thief but him who allowed himself to be robbed, in order to teach him to care for his property. This brings us to reflections of a broader scope.

God forbid that I should here wish to assail the pledge to respect property the Nation has just given; but will I be permitted some remarks upon the injustice of this pledge? What is the spirit of the vow taken by all a nation's individuals? Is it not to maintain a perfect equality amongst citizens, to subject them all equally to the law protecting the possessions of all? Well, I ask you now whether that law is truly just which orders the man who has nothing to respect another who has everything? What are the elements of the social contract? Does it not consist in one's yielding a little of his freedom and of his wealth in order to assure and sustain the preservation of each?

Upon those foundations all the laws repose; they justify the punishments inflicted upon him who abuses his liberty; in the same way, they authorize the imposition of conditions; these latter prevent a citizen from protesting when these things are demanded of him, because he knows that by means of what he gives, the rest of what he has is safeguarded for him; but, once again, by what right will he who has nothing be enchained by an agreement which protects only him who has everything? If, by your pledge, you perform an act of equity in protecting the property of the rich, do you

not commit one of unfairness in requiring this pledge of the owner who owns nothing? What advantage does the latter derive from your pledge? and how can you expect him to swear to something exclusively beneficial to someone who, through his wealth, differs so greatly from him? Certainly, nothing is more unjust: an oath must have an equal effect upon all the individuals who pronounce it; that it bind him who has no interest in its maintenance is impossible, because it would no longer be a pact amongst free men; it would be the weapon of the strong against the weak, against whom the latter would have to be in incessant revolt. Well, such, exactly, is the situation created by the pledge to respect property the Nation has just required all the citizens to subscribe to under oath; by it only the rich enchain the poor, the rich alone benefit from a bargain into which the poor man enters so thoughtlessly, failing to see that through this oath wrung from his good faith, he engages himself to do a thing that cannot be done with respect to himself.

Thus convinced, as you must be, of this barbarous inequality, do not proceed to worsen your injustice by punishing the man who has nothing for having dared to filch something from the man who has everything; your inequitable pledge gives him a greater right to it than ever. In driving him to perjury by forcing him to make a promise which, for him, is absurd, you justify all the crimes to which this perjury will impel him; it is not for you to punish something for which you have been the cause. I have no need to say more to make you sense the terrible cruelty of chastising thieves. Imitate the wise law of the people I spoke of just a moment ago; punish the man neglectful enough to let himself be robbed; but proclaim no kind of penalty against robbery. Consider whether your pledge does not authorize the act, and whether he who commits it does any more than put himself in harmony with the most sacred of Nature's movements, that of preserving one's own existence at no matter whose expense.

The transgressions we are considering in this second class of man's duties toward his fellows include actions for whose undertaking libertinage may be the cause; among those which are pointed to as particularly incompatible with approved behavior are *prostitution, incest, rape, and sodomy*. We surely must not for one moment doubt that all those known as moral crimes, that is to say, all

acts of the sort to which those we have just cited belong, are of total inconsequence under a government whose sole duty consists in preserving, by whatever may be the means, the form essential to its continuance: there you have a republican government's unique morality. Well, the republic being permanently menaced from the outside by the despots surrounding it, the means to its preservation cannot be imagined as *moral means*, for the republic will preserve itself only by war, and nothing is less moral than war. I ask how one will be able to demonstrate that in a state rendered *immoral* by its obligations, it is essential that the individual be *moral*? I will go further: it is a very good thing he is not. The Greek lawgivers perfectly appreciated the capital necessity of corrupting the member-citizens in order that, their *moral dissolution* coming into conflict with the establishment and its values, there would result the *insurrection* that is always indispensable to a political system of perfect happiness which, like republican government, must necessarily excite the hatred and envy of all its foreign neighbors. Insurrection, thought these sage legislators, is not at all a *moral* condition; however, it has got to be a republic's permanent condition. Hence it would be no less absurd than dangerous to require that those who are to insure the perpetual *immoral* subversion of the established order themselves be *moral* beings: for the state of a moral man is one of tranquillity and peace, the state of an *immoral* man is one of perpetual unrest that pushes him to, and identifies him with, the necessary insurrection in which the republican must always keep the government of which he is a member.

We may now enter into detail and begin by analyzing modesty, that fainthearted negative impulse of contradiction to impure affections. Were it among Nature's intentions that man be modest, assuredly she would not have caused him to be born naked; unnumbered peoples, less degraded by civilization than we, go about naked and feel no shame on that account; there can be no doubt that the custom of dressing has had its single origin in harshness of climate and the coquetry of women who would rather provoke desire and secure to themselves its effects than have it caused and satisfied independently of themselves. They further reckoned that Nature having created them not without blemishes, they would be far better assured of all the means needed to please by concealing

these flaws behind adornments; thus modesty, far from being a virtue, was merely one of corruption's earliest consequences, one of the first devices of female guile.

Lycurgus and Solon, fully convinced that immodesty's results are to keep the citizen in the *immoral* state indispensable to the mechanics of republican government, obliged girls to exhibit themselves naked at the theater.¹³ Rome imitated the example: at the games of Flora they danced naked; the greater part of pagan mysteries were celebrated thus; among some peoples, nudity even passed for a virtue. In any event, immodesty is born of lewd inclinations; what comes of these inclinations comprises the alleged criminality we are discussing, of which prostitution is the foremost effect.

Now that we have got back upon our feet and broken with the host of prejudices that held us captive; now that, brought closer to Nature by the quantity of prejudices we have recently obliterated, we listen only to Nature's voice, we are fully convinced that if anything were criminal, it would be to resist the penchants she inspires in us, rather than to come to grips with them. We are persuaded that lust, being a product of those penchants, is not to be stifled or legislated against, but that it is, rather, a matter of arranging for the means whereby passion may be satisfied in peace. We must hence undertake to introduce order into this sphere of affairs, and to establish all the security necessary so that, when need sends the citizen near the objects of lust, he can give himself over to doing with them all that his passions demand, without ever being hampered by anything, for there is no moment in the life of man when liberty in its whole amplitude is so important to him. Various stations, cheerful, sanitary, spacious, properly furnished and in every respect safe, will be erected in divers points in each city; in them, all sexes, all ages, all creatures possible will be offered to the caprices of the libertines who shall come to divert themselves, and the most

¹³ It has been said the intention of these legislators was, by dulling the passion men experienced for a naked girl, to render more active the one men sometimes experience for their own sex. These sages caused to be shown that for which they wanted there to be disgust, and to be hidden what they thought inclined to inspire sweeter desires; in either case, did they not strive after the objective we have just mentioned? One sees that they sensed the need of immorality in republican manners.

absolute subordination will be the rule of the individuals participating; the slightest refusal or recalcitrance will be instantly and arbitrarily punished by the injured party. I must explain this last more fully, and weigh it against republican manners; I promised I would employ the same logic from beginning to end, and I shall keep my word.

Although, as I told you just a moment ago, no passion has a greater need of the widest horizon of liberty than has this, none, doubtless, is as despotic; here it is that man likes to command, to be obeyed, to surround himself with slaves compelled to satisfy him; well, whenever you withhold from man the secret means whereby he exhales the dose of despotism Nature instilled in the depths of his heart, he will seek other outlets for it, it will be vented upon nearby objects; it will trouble the government. If you would avoid that danger, permit a free flight and rein to those tyrannical desires which, despite himself, torment man ceaselessly: content with having been able to exercise his small dominion in the middle of the harem of sultanas and youths whose submission your good offices and his money procure for him, he will go away appeased and with nothing but fond feelings for a government which so obligingly affords him every means of satisfying his concupiscence; proceed, on the other hand, after a different fashion, between the citizen and those objects of public lust raise the ridiculous obstacles in olden times invented by ministerial tyranny and by the lubricity of our Sardanapaluses¹⁴—do that, and the citizen, soon embittered against your regime, soon jealous of the despotism he sees you exercise all by yourself, will shake off the yoke you lay upon him, and, weary of your manner of ruling, will, as he has just done, substitute another for it.

But observe how the Greek legislators, thoroughly imbued with these ideas, treated debauchery at Lacedaemon, at Athens: rather than prohibiting, they sotted the citizen on it; no species of lechery was forbidden him; and Socrates, whom the oracle described

¹⁴ It is well known that the infamous and criminal Sartine devised, in the interests of the king's lewdness, the plan of having Dubarry read to Louis XV, thrice each week, the private details, enriched by Sartine, of all that transpired in the evil corners of Paris. This department of the French Nero's libertinage cost the the State three millions.

as the wisest philosopher of the land, passing indifferently from Aspasia's arms into those of Alcibiades, was not on that account less the glory of Greece. I am going to advance somewhat further, and however contrary are my ideas to our present customs, as my object is to prove that we must make all haste to alter those customs if we wish to preserve the government we have adopted, I am going to try to convince you that the prostitution of women who bear the name of honest is no more dangerous than the prostitution of men, and that not only must we associate women with the lecheries practiced in the houses I have set up, but we must even build some for them, where their whims and the requirements of their temper, ardent like ours but in a quite different way, may too find satisfaction with every sex.

First of all, what right have you to assert that women ought to be exempted from the blind submission to men's caprices Nature dictates? and, secondly, by what other right do you defend their subjugation to a continence impossible to their physical structure and of perfect uselessness to their honor?

I will treat each of these questions separately.

It is certain, in a state of Nature, that women are born *vul-guivaguons*, that is to say, are born enjoying the advantages of other female animals and belonging, like them and without exception, to all males; such were, without any doubt, both the primary laws of Nature and the only institutions of those earliest societies into which men gathered. *Self-interest*, *egoism*, and *love* degraded these primitive attitudes, at once so simple and so natural; one thought oneself enriched by taking a woman to wife, and with her the goods of her family: there we find satisfied the first two feelings I have just indicated; still more often, this woman was taken by force, and thereby one became attached to her—there we find the other of the motives in action, and in every case, injustice.

Never may an act of possession be exercised upon a free being; the exclusive possession of a woman is no less unjust than the possession of slaves; all men are born free, all have equal rights: never should we lose sight of those principles; according to which never may there be granted to one sex the legitimate right to lay monopolizing hands upon the other, and never may one of these sexes, or classes, arbitrarily possess the other. Similarly, a woman existing in

the purity of Nature's laws cannot allege, as justification for refusing herself to someone who desires her, the love she bears another, because such a response is based upon exclusion, and no man may be excluded from the having of a woman as of the moment it is clear she definitely belongs to all men. The act of possession can only be exercised upon a chattel or an animal, never upon an individual who resembles us, and all the ties which can bind a woman to a man are quite as unjust as illusory.

If then it becomes incontestable that we have received from Nature the right indiscriminately to express our wishes to all women, it likewise becomes incontestable that we have the right to compel their submission, not exclusively, for I should then be contradicting myself, but temporarily.¹⁵ It cannot be denied that we have the right to decree laws that compel woman to yield to the flames of him who would have her; violence itself being one of that right's effects, we can employ it lawfully. Indeed I have Nature not proven that we have that right, by bestowing upon us the strength needed to bend women to our will?

It is in vain women seek to bring to their defense either modesty or their attachment to other men; these illusory grounds are worthless; earlier, we saw how contemptible and factitious is the sentiment of modesty. Love, which may be termed the *soul's madness*, is no more a title by which their constancy may be justified: love, satisfying two persons only, the beloved and the loving, cannot serve the happiness of others, and it is for the sake of the happiness of everyone, and not for an egotistical and privileged happiness, that women have been given to us. All men therefore have an equal right of enjoyment of all women; therefore, there is no man who, in keeping with natural law, may lay claim to a unique and personal right over a woman. The law which will oblige them

¹⁵ Let it not be said that I contradict myself here, and that after having established, at some point further above, that we have no right to bind a woman to ourselves, I destroy those principles when I declare now we have the right to constrain her; I repeat, it is a question of enjoyment only, not of property: I have no right of possession upon that fountain I find by the road, but I have certain rights to its use; I have the right to avail myself of the limpid water it offers my thirst; similarly, I have no real right of possession over such-and-such a woman, but I have incontestable rights to the enjoyment of her; I have the right to force from her this enjoyment, if she refuses me it for whatever the cause may be.

to prostitute themselves, as often and in any manner we wish, in the houses of debauchery we referred to a moment ago, and which will coerce them if they balk, punish them if they shirk or dawdle, is thus one of the most equitable of laws, against which there can be no sane or rightful complaint.

A man who would like to enjoy whatever woman or girl will henceforth be able, if the laws you promulgate are just, to have her summoned at once to duty at one of the houses; and there, under the supervision of the matrons of that temple of Venus, she will be surrendered to him, to satisfy, humbly and with submission, all the fancies in which he will be pleased to indulge with her, however strange or irregular they may be, since there is no extravagance which is not in Nature, none which she does not acknowledge as her own. There remains but to fix the woman's age; now, I maintain it cannot be fixed without restricting the freedom of a man who desires a girl of any given age.

He who has the right to eat the fruit of a tree may assuredly pluck it ripe or green, according to the inspiration of his taste. But, it will be objected, there is an age when the man's proceedings would be decidedly harmful to the girl's well-being. This consideration is utterly without value; once you concede me the proprietary right of enjoyment, that right is independent of the effects enjoyment produces; from this moment on, it becomes one, whether this enjoyment be beneficial or damaging to the object which must submit itself to me. Have I not already proven that it is legitimate to force the woman's will in this connection? and that immediately she excites the desire to enjoy she has got to expose herself to this enjoyment, putting all egotistical sentiments quite aside? The issue of her well-being, I repeat, is irrelevant. As soon as concern for this consideration threatens to detract from or enfeeble the enjoyment of him who desires her, and who has the right to appropriate her, this consideration for age ceases to exist; for what the object may experience, condemned by Nature and by the law to slake momentarily the other's thirst, is nothing to the point; in this study, we are only interested in what agrees with him who desires. But we will redress the balance.

Yes, we will redress it; doubtless we ought to. These women we have just so cruelly enslaved—there is no denying we must

recompense them, and I come now to the second question I proposed to answer.

If we admit, as we have just done, that all women ought to be subjugated to our desires, we may certainly allow them ample satisfaction of theirs. Our laws must be favorable to their fiery temperament. It is absurd to locate both their honor and their virtue in the antinatural strength they employ to resist the penchants with which they have been far more profusely endowed than we; this injustice of manners is rendered more flagrant still since we contrive at once to weaken them by seduction, and then to punish them for yielding to all the efforts we have made to provoke their fall. All the absurdity of our manners, it seems to me, is graven in this shocking paradox, and this brief outline alone ought to awaken us to the urgency of exchanging them for manners more pure.

I say then that women, having been endowed with considerably more violent penchants for carnal pleasure than we, will be able to give themselves over to it wholeheartedly, absolutely free of all encumbering hymeneal ties, of all false notions of modesty, absolutely restored to a state of Nature; I want laws permitting them to give themselves to as many men as they see fit; I would have them accorded the enjoyment of all sexes and, as in the case of men, the enjoyment of all parts of the body; and under the special clause prescribing their surrender to all who desire them, there must be subjoined another guaranteeing them a similar freedom to enjoy all they deem worthy to satisfy them.

What, I demand to know, what dangers are there in this license? Children who will lack fathers? Hal what can that matter in a republic where every individual must have no other dam than the nation, where everyone born is the motherland's child. And how much more they will cherish her, they who, never having known any but her, will comprehend from birth that it is from her alone all must be expected. Do not suppose you are fashioning good republicans so long as children, who ought to belong solely to the republic, remain immured in their families. By extending to the family, to a restricted number of persons, the portion of affection they ought to distribute amongst their brothers, they inevitably adopt those persons' sometimes very harmful prejudices; such children's opinions, their thoughts are particularized, malformed, and

the virtues of a Man of the State become completely inaccessible to them. Finally abandoning their heart altogether to those by whom they have been given breath, they have no devotion left for what will cause them to mature, to understand, and to shine, as if these latter blessings were not more important than the former! If there is the greatest disadvantage in thus letting children imbibe interests from their family often in sharp disagreement with those of their country, there is then the most excellent argument for separating them from their family; and are they not naturally weaned away by the means I suggest, since in absolutely destroying all marital bonds, there are no longer born, as fruits of the woman's pleasure, anything but children to whom knowledge of their father is absolutely forbidden, and with that the possibility of belonging to only one family, instead of being, as they must be, purely *les enfants de la patrie*.

There will then be houses intended for women's libertinage and, like the men's, under the government's protection; in these establishments there will be furnished all the individuals of either sex women could desire, and the more constantly they frequent these places the higher they will be esteemed. There is nothing so barbarous or so ludicrous as to have identified their honor and their virtue with the resistance women show the desires Nature implants in them, and which continually inflame those who are hypocrite enough to pass censure on them. From the most tender age,¹⁶ a girl released from her paternal fetters, no longer having anything to preserve for marriage (completely abolished by the wise laws I advocate), and superior to the prejudices which in former times imprisoned her sex, will therefore, in the houses created for the purpose, be able to indulge in everything to which her constitution prompts her; she will be received respectfully, copiously satisfied, and, returned once again into society, she will be able to tell of the pleasures she tasted quite as publicly as today she speaks of a ball or promenade. O charming sex, you will be free: as do men, you

¹⁶ The Babylonians scarcely awaited their seventh year to carry their first fruits to the temple of Venus. The first impulse to concupiscence a young girl feels is the moment when Nature bids her prostitute herself, and without any other kind of consideration she must yield instantly Nature speaks; if she resists, she outrages Nature's law.

will enjoy all the pleasures of which Nature makes a duty, from not one will you be withheld. Must the diviner half of humankind be laden with irons by the other? Ah, break those irons; Nature wills it. For a bridle have nothing but your inclinations, for laws only your desires, for morality Nature's alone; languish no longer under brutal prejudices which wither your charms and hold captive the divine impulses of your hearts;¹⁷ like us, you are free, the field of action whereon one contends for Venus' favors is as open to you as it is to us; have no fear of absurd reproaches; pedantry and superstition are things of the past; no longer will you be seen to blush at your charming delinquencies; crowned with myrtle and roses, the esteem we conceive for you will be henceforth in direct proportion to the scale you give your extravagances.

What has just been said ought doubtless to dispense us from examining adultery; nevertheless, let's cast a glance upon it, however nonexistent it be in the eyes of the laws I am establishing. To what point was it not ridiculous in our former institutions to consider adultery criminal! Were there anything absurd in the world, very surely it is the timelessness ascribed to conjugal relations; it appears to me it is but necessary to scrutinize, or sense the weight of, those bonds in order to cease to view as wicked the act which lightens them; Nature, as we remarked recently, having supplied women with a temper more ardent, with a sensibility more profound, than she awarded persons of the other sex, it is unquestionably for women that the marital contract proves more onerous.

Tender women, you ablaze with love's fire, compensate yourselves now, and do so boldly and unafraid; persuade yourselves that there can exist no evil in obedience to Nature's promptings, that it is not for one man she created you, but to please them all, without discrimination. Let no anxiety inhibit you. Imitate the Greek republicans; never did the philosophers whence they had their laws contrive to make adultery a crime for them, and nearly all authorized disorderliness among women. Thomas More proves in his *Utopia*

¹⁷ Women are unaware to what point their lasciviousness embellishes them. Let one compare two women of roughly comparable age and beauty, one of whom lives in celibacy, and the other in libertinage: it will be seen by how much the latter exceeds in éclat and freshness; all violence done Nature is far more wearing than the abuse of pleasures; everyone knows beds improve a woman's looks.

that it becomes women to surrender themselves to debauchery, and that great man's ideas were not always pure dreams.¹⁸

Amongst the Tartars, the more profligate a woman, the more she was honored; about her neck she publicly wore a certain jewelry attesting to her impudicity, and those who were not at all decorated were not at all admired. In Peru, families cede their wives and daughters to the visiting traveler; they are rented at so much the day, like horses, or carriages! Volumes, finally, would not suffice to demonstrate that lewd behavior has never been held criminal amongst the illuminated peoples of the earth. Every philosopher knows full well it is solely to the Christian impostors we are indebted for having puffed it up into crime. The priests had excellent cause to forbid us lechery: this injunction, by reserving to them acquaintance with and absolution for these private sins, gave them an incredible ascendancy over women, and opened up to them a career of lubricity whose scope knew no limits. We know only too well how they took advantage of it and how they would again abuse their powers, were they not hopelessly discredited.

Is incest more dangerous? Hardly. It loosens family ties and the citizen has that much more love to lavish on his country; the primary laws of Nature dictate it to us, our feelings vouch for the fact; and nothing is so enjoyable as an object we have coveted over the years. The most primitive institutions smiled upon incest; it is found in society's origins: it was consecrated in every religion, every law encouraged it. If we traverse the world we will find incest everywhere established. The blacks of the Ivory Coast and Gabon prostitute their wives to their own children; in Judah, the eldest son must marry his father's wife; the people of Chile lie indifferently with their sisters, their daughters, and marry mother and daughter at the same time. I would venture, in a word, that incest ought to be every government's law—every government whose basis is fraternity. How is it that reasonable men were able to carry absurdity to the point of believing that the enjoyment of one's mother, sister, or daughter could ever be criminal? Is it not, I ask, an abominable view wherein it is made to appear a crime for a man to place higher

¹⁸ The same thinker wished affianced couples to see each other naked before marriage. How many alliances would fail, were this law enforced! It might be declared that the contrary is indeed what is termed purchase of merchandise sight unseen.

value upon the enjoyment of an object to which natural feeling draws him close? One might just as well say that we are forbidden to love too much the individuals Nature enjoins us to love best, and that the more she gives us a hunger for some object, the more she orders us away from it. These are absurd paradoxes; only people bestialized by superstition can believe or uphold them. The community of women I am establishing necessarily leading to incest, there remains little more to say about a supposed misdemeanor whose inexistence is too plainly evident to warrant further pursuit of the matter, and we shall turn our attention to rape, which at first glance seems to be, of all libertinage's excesses, the one which is most dearly established as being wrong, by reason of the outrage it appears to cause. It is certain, however, that rape, an act so very rare and so very difficult to prove, wrongs one's neighbor less than theft, since the latter is destructive to property, the former merely damaging to it. Beyond that, what objections have you to the ravisher? What will you say, when he replies to you that, as a matter of fact, the injury he has committed is trifling indeed, since he has done no more than place a little sooner the object he has abused in the very state in which she would soon have been put by marriage and love.

But sodomy, that alleged crime which will draw the fire of heaven upon cities addicted to it, is sodomy not a monstrous deviation whose punishment could not be severe enough? Ah, sorrowful it is to have to reproach our ancestors for the judiciary murders in which, upon this head, they dared indulge themselves. We wonder that savagery could ever reach the point where you condemn to death an unhappy person all of whose crime amounts to not sharing your tastes. One shudders to think that scarce forty years ago the legislators' absurd thinking had not evolved beyond this point. Console yourselves, citizens; such absurdities are to cease: the intelligence of your lawmakers will answer for it. Thoroughly enlightened upon this weakness occurring in a few men, people deeply sense today that such error cannot be criminal, and that Nature, who places such slight importance upon the essence that flows in our loins, can scarcely be vexed by our choice when we are pleased to vent it into this or that avenue.

What single crime can exist here? For no one will wish to

maintain that all the parts of the body do not resemble each other, that there are some which are pure, and others defiled; but, as it is unthinkable such nonsense be advanced seriously, the only possible crime would consist in the waste of semen. Well, is it likely that this semen is so precious to Nature that its loss is necessarily criminal? Were that so, would she every day institute those losses? and is it not to authorize them to permit them in dreams, to permit them in the act of taking one's pleasure with a pregnant woman? Is it possible to imagine Nature having allowed us the possibility of committing a crime that would outrage her? Is it possible that she consent to the destruction by man of her own pleasures, and to his thereby becoming stronger than she? It is unheard of—into what an abyss of folly one is hurled when, in reasoning, one abandons the aid of reason's torch! Let us abide in our unshakable assurance that it is as easy to enjoy a woman in one manner as in another, that it makes absolutely no difference whether one enjoys a girl or a boy, and as soon as it is clearly understood that no inclinations or tastes can exist in us save the ones we have from Nature, that she is too wise and too consistent to have given us any which could ever offend her.

The penchant for sodomy is the result of physical formation, to which we contribute nothing and which we cannot alter. At the most tender age, some children reveal that penchant, and it is never corrected in them. Sometimes it is the fruit of satiety; but even in this case, is it less Nature's doing? Regardless of how it is viewed, it is her work, and, in every instance, what she inspires must be respected by men. If, were one to take an exact inventory, it should come out that this taste is infinitely more affecting than the other, that the pleasures resulting from it are far more lively, and that for this reason its exponents are a thousand times more numerous than its enemies, would it not then be possible to conclude that, far from affronting Nature, this vice serves her intentions, and that she is less delighted by our procreation than we so foolishly believe? Why, as we travel about the world, how many peoples do we not see holding women in contempt! Many are the men who strictly avoid employing them for anything but the having of the child necessary to replace them. The communal aspect of life in republics always renders this vice more frequent in that form of society; but it is not

dangerous. Would the Greek legislators have introduced it into their republics had they thought it so? Quite the contrary; they deemed it necessary to a warlike race. Plutarch speaks with enthusiasm of the battalion of lovers: for many a year they alone defended Greece's freedom. The vice reigned amongst comrades-in-arms, and cemented their unity. The greatest of men lean toward sodomy. At the time it was discovered, the whole of America was found inhabited by people of this taste. In Louisiana, amongst the Illinois, Indians in feminine garb prostituted themselves as courtesans. The blacks of Benguela publicly keep men; nearly all the seraglios of Algiers are today exclusively filled with young boys. Not content to tolerate love for young boys, the Thebans made it mandatory; the philosopher of Chaeronea prescribed sodomy as the surest way to a youth's affection.

We know to what extent it prevailed in Rome, where they had public places in which young boys, costumed as girls, and girls as boys, prostituted themselves. In their letters, Martial, Catullus, Tibullus, Horace, and Virgil wrote to men as though to their mistresses; and we read in Plutarch¹⁹ that women must in no way figure in men's love. The Amasians of Crete used to abduct boys, and their initiation was distinguished by the most singular ceremonies. When they were taken with love for one, they notified the parents upon what day the ravisher wished to carry him off; the youth put up some resistance if his lover failed to please him; in the contrary case, they went off together, and the seducer restored him to his family as soon as he had made use of him; for in this passion as in that for women, one always has too much when one has had enough. Strabo informs us that on this very island, seraglios were peopled with boys only; they were prostituted openly.

Is one more authority required to prove how useful this vice is in a republic? Let us lend an ear to Jerome the Peripatetic: "The love of youths," says he, "spread throughout all of Greece, for it instilled in us strength and courage, and thus stood us in good stead when we drove the tyrants out; conspiracies were formed amongst lovers, and they were readier to endure torture than denounce their accomplices; such patriots sacrificed everything to the

¹⁹ *The Moralities*: "On Love."

State's prosperity; it was beheld as a certain thing, that these attachments steadied the republic, women were declaimed against, and to entertain connections with such creatures was a frailty reserved to despots." Pederasty has always been the vice of warrior races. From Caesar we learn that the Gauls were to an extraordinary degree given to it. The wars fought to sustain the republic brought about the separation of the two sexes, and hence the propagation of the vice, and when its consequences, so useful to the State, were recognized, religion speedily blessed it. That the Romans sanctified the amours of Jupiter and Ganymede is well known. Sextus Empiricus assures us that this caprice was compulsory amongst the Persians. At last, the women, jealous and contemned, offered to render their husbands the same service they received from young boys; some few men made the experiment, and returned to their former habits, finding the illusion impossible. The Turks, greatly inclined toward this depravity Mohammed consecrated in the Koran, were nevertheless convinced that a very young virgin could well enough be substituted for a youth, and rarely did they grow to womanhood without having passed through the experience. Sextus Quintus and Sanchez allowed this debauch; the latter even undertook to show it was of use to procreation, and that a child created after this preliminary exercise was infinitely better constituted thanks to it. Finally, women found restitution by turning to each other. This latter fantasy doubtless has no more disadvantages than the other, since nothing comes of the refusal to reproduce, and since the means of those who have a bent for reproduction are powerful enough for reproduction's adversaries never to be able to harm population. Amongst the Greeks, this female perversion was also supported by policy: the result of it was that, finding each other sufficient, women sought less communication with men and their detrimental influence in the republic's affairs was thus held to a minimum. Lucian informs us of what progress this license promoted, and it is not without interest we see it exemplified in Sappho.

In fine, these are perfectly inoffensive manias; were women to carry them even further, were they to go to the point of caressing monsters and animals, as the example of every race teaches us, no ill could possibly result therefrom, because corruption of manners,

often of prime utility to a government, cannot in any sense harm it, and we must demand enough wisdom and enough prudence of our legislators to be entirely sure that no law will emanate from them that would repress perversions which, being determined by constitution and being inseparable from physical structure, cannot render the person in whom they are present any more guilty than the person Nature created deformed.

In the second category of man's crimes against his brethren, there is left to us only murder to examine, and then we will move on to man's duties toward himself. Of all the offenses man may commit against his fellows, murder is without question the cruelest, since it deprives man of the single asset he has received from Nature, and its loss is irreparable. Nevertheless, at this stage several questions arise, leaving aside the wrong murder does him who becomes its victim.

1. As regards the laws of Nature only, is this act really criminal?
2. Is it criminal with what regards the laws of politics?
3. Is it harmful to society?
4. What must be a republican government's attitude toward it?
5. Finally, must murder be repressed by murder?

Each of these questions will be treated separately; the subject is important enough to warrant thorough consideration; our ideas touching murder may surprise for their boldness. But what does that matter? Have we not acquired the right to say anything? The time has come for the ventilation of great verities; men today will not be content with less. The time has come for error to disappear; that blindfold must fall beside the heads of kings. From Nature's point of view, is murder a crime? That is the first question posed.

It is probable that we are going to humiliate man's pride by lowering him again to the rank of all of Nature's other creatures, but the philosopher does not flatter small human vanities; ever in burning pursuit of truth, he discerns it behind stupid notions of pride, lays it bare, elaborates upon it, and intrepidly shows it to the astonished world.

What is man? and what difference is there between him and other plants, between him and all the other animals of the world?

None, obviously. Fortuitously placed, like them, upon this globe, he is born like them; like them, he reproduces, rises, and falls; like them he arrives at old age and sinks like them into nothingness at the close of the life span Nature assigns each species of animal, in accordance with its organic construction. Since the parallels are so exact that the inquiring eye of philosophy is absolutely unable to perceive any grounds for discrimination, there is then just as much evil in killing animals as men, or just as little, and whatever be the distinctions we make, they will be found to stem from our pride's prejudices, than which, unhappily, nothing is more absurd. Let us all the same press on to the question. You cannot deny it is one and the same, to destroy a man or a beast; but is not the destruction of all living animals decidedly an evil, as the Pythagoreans believed, and as they who dwell on the banks of Ganges yet believe? Before answering that, we remind the reader that we are examining the question only in terms of Nature and in relation to her; later on, we will envisage it with reference to men.

Now then, what value can Nature set upon individuals whose making costs her neither the least trouble nor the slightest concern? The worker values his work according to the labor it entails and the time spent creating it. Does man cost Nature anything? And, under the supposition that he does, does he cost her more than an ape or an elephant? I go further: what are the regenerative materials used by Nature? Of what are composed the beings which come into life? Do not the three elements of which they are formed result from the prior destruction of other bodies? If all individuals were possessed of eternal life, would it not become impossible for Nature to create any new ones? If Nature denies eternity to beings, it follows that their destruction is one of her laws. Now, once we observe that destruction is so useful to her that she absolutely cannot dispense with it, and that she cannot achieve her creations without drawing from the store of destruction which death prepares for her, from this moment onward the idea of annihilation which we attach to death ceases to be real; there is no more veritable annihilation; what we call the end of the living animal is no longer a true *finis*, but a simple transformation, a transmutation of matter, what every modern philosopher acknowledges as one of Nature's fundamental laws. According to these irrefutable prin-

ciples, death is hence no more than a change of form, an imperceptible passage from one existence into another, and that is what Pythagoras called metempsychosis.

These truths once admitted, I ask whether it can ever be proposed that destruction is a crime? Will you dare tell me, with the design of preserving your absurd illusions, that transmutation is destruction? No, surely not; for, to prove that, it would be necessary to demonstrate matter inert for an instant, for a moment in repose. Well, you will never detect any such moment. Little animals are formed immediately a large animal expires, and these little animals' lives are simply one of the necessary effects determined by the large animal's temporary sleep. Given this, will you dare suggest that one pleases Nature more than another? To support that contention, you would have to prove what cannot be proven: that elongated or square are more useful, more agreeable to Nature than oval or triangular shapes; you would have to prove that, with what regards Nature's sublime scheme, a sluggard who fattens in idleness is more useful than the horse, whose service is of such importance, or than a steer, whose body is so precious that there is no part of it which is not useful; you would have to say that the venomous serpent is more necessary than the faithful dog.

Now, as not one of these systems can be upheld, one must hence consent unreservedly to acknowledge our inability to annihilate Nature's works; in light of the certainty that the only thing we do when we give ourselves over to destroying is merely to effect an alteration in forms which does not extinguish life, it becomes beyond human powers to prove that there may exist anything criminal in the alleged destruction of a creature, of whatever age, sex, or species you may suppose it. Led still further in our series of inferences proceeding one from the other, we affirm that the act you commit in juggling the forms of Nature's different productions is of advantage to her, since thereby you supply her the primary material for her reconstructions, tasks which would be compromised were you to desist from destroying.

Well, let *her* do the destroying, they tell you; one ought to let her do it, of course, but they are Nature's impulses man follows when he indulges in homicide; it is Nature who advises him, and the man who destroys his fellow is to Nature what are the plague and

famine, like them sent by her hand which employs every possible means more speedily to obtain of destruction this primary matter, itself absolutely essential to her works.

Let us deign for a moment to illumine our spirit by philosophy's sacred flame; what other than Nature's voice suggests to us personal hatreds, revenges, wars, in a word, all those causes of perpetual murder? Now, if she incites us to murderous acts, she has need of them; that once grasped, how may we suppose ourselves guilty in her regard when we do nothing more than obey her intentions?

But that is more than what is needed to convince any enlightened reader, that for murder ever to be an outrage to Nature is impossible.

Is it a political crime? We must avow, on the contrary, that it is; unhappily, merely one of policy's and politics' greatest instruments. Is it not by dint of murders that France is free today? Needless to say, here we are referring to the murders occasioned by war, not to the atrocities committed by plotters and rebels; the latter, destined to the public's execration, have only to be recollected to arouse forever general horror and indignation. What study, what science, has greater need of murder's support than that which tends only to deceive, whose sole end is the expansion of one nation at another's expense? Are wars, the unique fruit of this political barbarism, anything but the means whereby a nation is nourished, whereby it is strengthened, whereby it is buttressed? And what is war if not the science of destruction? A strange blindness in man, who publicly teaches the art of killing, who rewards the most accomplished killer, and who punishes him who for some particular reason does away with his enemy! Is it not high time errors so savage be repaired?

Is murder then a crime against society? But how could that reasonably be imagined? What difference does it make to this murderous society, whether it have one member more, or less? Will its laws, its manners, its customs be vitiated? Has an individual's death ever had any influence upon the general mass? And after the loss of the greatest battle, what am I saying? after the obliteration of half the world—or, if one wishes, of the entire world—would the little number of survivors, should there be any, notice even the

faintest difference in things? No, alas. Nor would Nature notice any either, and the stupid pride of man, who believes everything created for him, would be dashed indeed, after the total extinction of the human species, were it to be seen that nothing in Nature had changed, and that the stars' flight had not for that been retarded. Let us continue.

What must the attitude of a warlike and republican state be toward murder?

Dangerous it should certainly be, either to cast discredit upon the act, or to punish it. Republican mettle calls for a touch of ferocity: if he grows soft, if his energy slackens in him, the republican will be subjugated in a trice. A most unusual thought comes to mind at this point, but if it is audacious it is also true, and I will mention it. A nation that begins by governing itself as a republic will only be sustained by virtues because, in order to attain the most, one must always start with the least. But an already old and decayed nation which courageously casts off the yoke of its monarchical government in order to adopt a republican one, will only be maintained by many crimes; for it is criminal already, and if it were to wish to pass from crime to virtue, that is to say, from a violent to a pacific, benign condition, it should fall into an inertia whose result would soon be its certain ruin. What happens to the tree you would transplant from a soil full of vigor to a dry and sandy plain? All intellectual ideas are so greatly subordinate to Nature's physical aspect that the comparisons supplied us by agriculture will never deceive us in morals.

Savages, the most independent of men, the nearest to Nature, daily indulge in murder which amongst them goes unpunished. In Sparta, in Lacedaemon, they hunted Helots, just as we in France go on partridge shoots. The freest of people are they who are most friendly to murder: in Mindanao, a man who wishes to commit a murder is raised to the rank of warrior brave, he is straightway decorated with a turban; amongst the Caraguos, one must have killed seven men to obtain the honors of this headdress: the inhabitants of Borneo believe all those they put to death will serve them when they themselves depart life; devout Spaniards made a vow to St. James of Galicia to kill a dozen Americans every day; in the kingdom of Tangut, there is selected a strong and vigorous

young man: on certain days of the year he is allowed to kill whom-ever he encounters! Was there ever a people better disposed to murder than the Jews? One sees it in every guise, upon every page of their history.

Now and again, China's emperor and mandarins take measures to stir up a revolt amongst the people, in order to derive, from these maneuvers, the right to transform them into horrible slaughters. May that soft and effeminate people rise against their tyrants; the latter will be massacred in their turn, and with much greater justice; murder, adopted always, always necessary, will have but changed its victims; it has been the delight of some, and will become the felicity of others.

An infinite number of nations tolerates public assassinations; they are freely permitted in Genoa, Venice, Naples, and throughout Albania; at Kachoa on the San Domingo River, murderers, undisguised and unashamedly, upon your orders and before your very eyes cut the throat of the person you have pointed out to them; Hindus take opium to encourage themselves to murder; and then, rushing out into the street, they butcher everyone they meet; English travelers have found this idiosyncrasy in Batavia, too.

What people were at once greater and more bloodthirsty than the Romans, and what nation longer preserved its splendor and freedom? The gladiatorial spectacles fed its bravery, it became warlike through the habit of making a game of murder. Twelve or fifteen hundred victims filled the circus' arena every day, and there the women, crueler than the men, dared demand that the dying fall gracefully and be sketched while still in death's throes. The Romans moved from that to the pleasures of seeing dwarfs cut each other to pieces; and when the Christian cult, then infecting the world, came to persuade men there was evil in killing one another, the tyrants immediately enchained that people, and every-one's heroes became their toys.

Everywhere, in short, it was rightly believed that the murderer—that is to say, the man who stifled his sensibilities to the point of killing his fellow man, and of defying public or private vengeance—everywhere, I say, it was thought such a man could only be very courageous, and consequently very precious to a warlike or republican community. We may discover certain nations which, yet more

ferocious, could only satisfy themselves by immolating children, and very often their own, and we will see these actions universally adopted, and upon occasion even made part of the law. Several savage tribes kill their children immediately they are born. Mothers, on the banks of the Orinoco, firm in the belief their daughters were born only to be miserable, since their fate was to become wives in this country where women were found insufferable, immolated them as soon as they were brought into the light. In Taprobane and in the kingdom of Sopit, all deformed children were immolated by their own parents. If their children are born on certain days of the week, the women of Madagascar expose them to wild beasts. In the republics of Greece, all the children who came into the world were carefully examined, and if they were found not to conform to the requirements determined by the republic's defense, they were sacrificed on the spot: in those days, it was not deemed essential to build richly furnished and endowed houses for the preservation of mankind's scum.²⁰ Up until the transferal of the seat of the Empire, all the Romans who were not disposed to feed their offspring flung them upon the dung heaps. The ancient legislators had no scruple about condemning children to death, and never did one of their codes repress the rights of a father over his family. Aristotle urged abortion; and those ancient republicans, filled with enthusiasm, with patriotic fervor, failed to appreciate this commiseration for the individual person that one finds in modern nations: they loved their children less, but their country more. In all the cities of China, one finds every morning an incredible number of children abandoned in the streets; a dung cart picks them up at dawn, and they are tossed into a moat; often, midwives themselves disencumbered mothers by instantly plunging their issue into vats of boiling water, or by throwing it into the river. In Peking, infants were put into little reed baskets that were left on the canals; every day, these canals were skimmed clean, and the famous traveler Duhalde calculates as above thirty thousand the number of infants collected in the course of each search.

²⁰ It must be hoped the nation will eliminate this expense, the most useless of all; every individual born lacking the qualities to become useful someday to the republic, has no right to live, and the best thing for all concerned is to deprive him of life the moment he receives it.

It cannot be denied that it is extraordinarily necessary, extremely politic to erect a dike against overpopulation in a republican system; for entirely contrary reasons, the birth rate must be encouraged in a monarchy; there, the tyrants being rich only through the number of their slaves, they assuredly have to have men; but do not doubt for a minute that populousness is a genuine vice in a republican government. However, it is not necessary to butcher people to restrain it, as our modern decemvirs used to say; it is but a question of not leaving it the means of extending beyond the limits its happiness prescribes. Beware of too great a multiplication in a race whose every member is sovereign, and be certain that revolutions are never but the effect of a too numerous population. If, for the State's splendor, you accord your warriors the right to destroy men, for the preservation of that same State grant also unto each individual the right to give himself over as much as he pleases, since this he may do without offending Nature, to ridding himself of the children he is unable to feed, or to whom the government cannot look for assistance; in the same way, grant him the right to rid himself, at his own risk and peril, of all enemies capable of harming him, because the result of all these acts, in themselves of perfect inconsequence, will be to keep your population at a moderate size, and never large enough to overthrow your regime. Let the monarchists say a State is great only by reason of its extreme population: this State will forever be poor, if its population surpasses the means by which it can subsist, and it will flourish always if, kept trimly within its proper limits, it can make traffic of its superfluity. Do you not prune the tree when it has overmany branches? and do not too many shoots weaken the trunk? Any system which deviates from these principles is an extravagance whose abuses would conduct us directly to the total subversion of the edifice we have just raised with so much trouble; but it is not at the moment the man reaches maturity one must destroy him in order to reduce population. It is unjust to cut short the days of a well-shaped person; it is not unjust, I say, to prevent the arrival in the world of a being who will certainly be useless to it. The human species must be purged from the cradle; what you foresee as useless to society is what must be stricken out of it; there you have the only reasonable means to the diminishment of a population, whose ex-

cessive size is, as we have just proven, the source of certain trouble.

The time has come to sum up.

Must murder be repressed by murder? Surely not. Let us never impose any other penalty upon the murderer than the one he may risk from the vengeance of the friends or family of him he has killed. "I grant you pardon," said Louis XV to Charolais who, to divert himself, had just killed a man; "but I also pardon whoever will kill you." All the bases of the law against murderers may be found in that sublime motto.²¹

Briefly, murder is a horror, but an often necessary horror, never criminal, which it is essential to tolerate in a republican State. I have made it clear the entire universe has given an example of it; but ought it be considered a deed to be punished by death? They who respond to the following dilemma will have answered the question:

Is it or is it not a crime?

If it is not, why make laws for its punishment? And if it is, by what barbarous logic do you, to punish it, duplicate it by another crime?

We have now but to speak of man's duties toward himself. As the philosopher only adopts such duties in the measure they conduce to his pleasure or to his preservation, it is futile to recommend their practice to him, still more futile to threaten him with penalties if he fails to adopt them.

The only offense of this order man can commit is suicide. I will not bother demonstrating here the imbecility of the people who make of this act a crime; those who might have any doubts upon the matter are referred to Rousseau's famous letter. Nearly all early governments, through policy or religion, authorized suicide. Before the Areopagites, the Athenians explained their reasons

²¹ The Salic Law only punished murder by exacting a simple fine, and as the guilty one easily found ways to avoid payment, Childebert, king of Austrasia, decreed, in a writ published at Cologne, the death penalty, not against the murderer, but against him who would shirk the murderer's fine. Riparian Law similarly ordained no more against this act than a fine proportionate to the individual killed. A priest was extremely costly: a leaden tunic, cut to his measurements, was tailored for the assassin, and he was obliged to produce the equivalent of this tunic's weight in gold; in default of which the guilty one and his family remained slaves of the Church.

for self-destruction; then they stabbed themselves. Every Greek government tolerated suicide; it entered into the ancient legislators' scheme; one killed oneself in public, and one made of one's death a spectacle of magnificence.

The Roman Republic encouraged suicide; those so greatly celebrated instances of devotion to country were nothing other than suicides. When Rome was taken by the Gauls, the most illustrious senators consecrated themselves to death; as we imitate that spirit, we adopt the same virtues. During the campaign of '92, a soldier, grief-stricken to find himself unable to follow his comrades to the Jemappes affair, took his own life. Keeping ourselves at all times to the high standard of those proud republicans, we will soon surpass their virtue: it is the government that makes the man. Accustomed for so long to despotism, our courage was utterly crippled; despotism depraved our manners; we are being reborn; it will shortly be seen of what sublime actions the French genius and character are capable when they are free; let us maintain, at the price of our fortunes and our lives, this liberty which has already cost us so many victims, of whom we regret not one if we attain our objective; every one of them sacrificed himself voluntarily; let us not permit their blood to have been shed in vain; but union . . . union, or we will lose the fruit of all our struggles. Upon the victories we have just achieved let us seat excellent laws; our former legislators, still slaves of the despot we have just slaughtered, had given us nothing, but laws worthy of that tyrant they continued to reverence: let us re-do their work, let us consider that it is at last for republicans we are going to labor; may our laws be gentle, like the people they must rule.

In pointing out, as I have just done, the nullity, the indifference of an infinite number of actions our ancestors, seduced by a false religion, beheld as criminal, I reduce our labor to very little. Let us create few laws, but let them be good; rather than multiplying hindrances, it is purely a question of giving an indestructible quality to the law we employ, of seeing to it that the laws we promulgate have, as ends, nothing but the citizen's tranquillity, his happiness, and the glory of the republic. But, Frenchmen, after having driven the enemy from your lands, I should not like your zeal to broad-

cast your principles to lead you further afield; it is only with fire and steel you will be able to carry them to the four corners of the earth. Before taking upon yourselves such resolutions, remember the unsuccess of the crusades. When the enemy will have fled across the Rhine, heed me, guard your frontiers, and stay at home behind them. Revive your trade, restore energy and markets to your manufacturing; cause your arts to flourish again, encourage agriculture, both so necessary in a government such as yours, and whose aim must be to provide for everyone without standing in need of anyone. Leave the thrones of Europe to crumble of themselves: your example, your prosperity will soon send them flying, without your having to meddle in the business at all.

Invincible within, and by your administration and your laws a model to every race, there will not be a single government which will not strive to imitate you, not one which will not be honored by your alliance; but if, for the vainglory of establishing your principles outside your country, you neglect to care for your own felicity at home, despotism, which is no more than asleep, will awake, you will be rent by intestine disorder, you will have exhausted your monies and your soldiers, and all that, all that to return to kiss the manacles the tyrants, who will have subjugated you during your absence, will impose upon you; all you desire may be wrought without leaving your home: let other people observe you happy, and they will rush to happiness by the same road you have traced for them.²²

EUGENIE, to *Dolmancé*—Now, it strikes me as a very solidly composed document, that one, and it seems to me in such close agreement with your principles, at least with many of them, that I should be tempted to believe you its author.

DOLMANCÉ—Indeed my thinking does correspond with some part of these reflections, and my discourses—they've proven it to you—even lend to what has just been read to us the appearance of a repetition. . . .

²² Let it be remembered that foreign warfare was never proposed save by the infamous Dumouriez.

EUGENIE—That I did not notice; wise and good words cannot be too often uttered; however, I find several amongst these principles a trifle dangerous.

DOLMANCE—In this world there is nothing dangerous but pity and beneficence; goodness is never but a weakness of which the ingratitude and impertinence of the feeble always force honest folk to repent. Let a keen observer calculate all of pity's dangers, and let him compare them with those of a staunch, resolute severity, and he will see whether the former are not the greater. But we are straying, Eugénie; in the interests of your education, let's compress all that has just been said into this single word of advice: Never listen to your heart, my child; it is the most untrustworthy guide we have received from Nature; with greatest care close it up to misfortune's fallacious accents; far better for you to refuse a person whose wretchedness is genuine than to run the great risk of giving to a bandit, to an intriguer, or to a caballer: the one is of a very slight importance, the other may be of the highest disadvantage.

LE CHEVALIER—May I be allowed to cast a glance upon the foundations of Dolmance's principles? for I would like to try to annihilate them, and may be able to. Ah, how different they would be, cruel man, if, stripped of the immense fortune which continually provides you with the means to gratify your passions, you were to languish a few years in that crushing misfortune out of which your ferocious mind dares to fashion knouts wherewith to lash the wretched! Cast a pitying look upon them, and stifle not your soul to the point where the piercing cries of need shall never more be heard by you; when your frame, weary from naught but pleasure, languorously reposes upon swansdown couches, look ye at those others wasted by the drudgeries that support your existence, and at their bed, scarcely more than a straw or two for protection against the rude earth whereof, like beasts, they have nothing but the chill crust to lie down upon; cast a glance at them while surrounded by succulent meats wherewith every day twenty of Comus' students awake your sensuality, cast a glance, I say, at those wretches in yonder wood, disputing with wolves the dry soil's bitter root; when the most affecting objects of Cythera's temple are with games, charms, laughter led to your impure bed, consider that poor luck-

less fellow stretched out near his grieving wife: content with the pleasures he reaps at the breast of tears, he does not even suspect the existence of others; look ye at him when you are denying yourself nothing, when you are swimming in the midst of glut, in a sea of surfeit; behold him, I say, doggedly lacking even the basic necessities of life; regard his disconsolate family, his trembling wife who tenderly divides herself between the cares she owes her husband, languishing near her, and those Nature enjoins for love's offspring, deprived of the possibility to fulfill any of those duties so sacred unto her sensitive heart; if you can do it, without a tremor hear her beg of you the leavings your cruelty refuses her!

Barbaric one, are these not at all human beings like you? and if they are of your kind, why should you enjoy yourself when they lie dying? Eugénie, Eugénie, never slay the sacred voice of Nature in your breast: it is to benevolence it will direct you despite yourself when you extricate from out of the fire of passions that absorb it the clear tenor of Nature. Leave religious principles far behind you—very well, I approve it; but abandon not the virtues sensibility inspires in us; 'twill never be but by practicing them we will taste the sweetest, the most exquisite of the soul's delights. A good deed will buy pardon for all your mind's depravities, it will soothe the remorse your misconduct will bring to birth and, forming in the depths of your conscience a sacred asylum whereunto you will sometimes repair, you will find there consolation for the excesses into which your errors will have dragged you. Sister, I am young, yes, I am libertine, impious, I am capable of every mental obscenity, but my heart remains to me, it is pure and, my friends, it is with it I am consoled for the irregularities of this my age.

DOLMANCE—Yes, Chevalier, you are young, your speeches illustrate it; you are wanting in experience; the day will come, and I await it, when you will be seasoned; then, my dear, you will no longer speak so well of mankind, for you will have its acquaintance. 'Twas men's ingratitude dried out my heart, their perfidy which destroyed in me those baleful virtues for which, perhaps, like you, I was also horn. Now, if the vices of the one establish these dangerous virtues in the other, is it not then to render youth a great service when one throttles those virtues in youth at an early hour? Oh, my

friend, how you do speak to me of remorse! Can remorse exist in the soul of him who recognizes crime in nothing? Let your principles weed it out of you if you dread its sting; will it be possible to repent of an action with whose indifference you are profoundly penetrated? When you no longer believe evil anywhere exists, of what evil will you be able to repent?

LE CHEVALIER—It is not from the mind remorse comes; rather, 'tis the heart's issue, and never will the intellect's sophistries blot out the soul's impulsions.

DOLMANCE—However, the heart deceives, because it is never anything but the expression of the mind's miscalculations; allow the latter to mature and the former will yield in good time; we are constantly led astray by false definitions when we wish to reason logically: I don't know what the heart is, not I; I only use the word to denote the mind's frailties. One single, one unique flame sheds its light in me: when I am whole and well, sound and sane, I am never misled by it; when I am old, hypochondriacal, or pusillanimous, it deceives me; in which case I tell myself I am sensible, but in truth I am merely weak and timid. Once again, Eugénie, I say it to you: be not abused by this perfidious sensibility; be well convinced of it, it is nothing but the mind's weakness; one weeps not save when one is afraid, and that is why kings are tyrants. Reject, spurn the Chevalier's insidious advice; in telling you to open your heart to all of misfortune's imaginary ills, he seeks to fashion for you a host of troubles which, not being your own, would soon plunge you into an anguish and that for no purpose. Ah, Eugénie, believe me when I tell you that the delights born of apathy are worth much more than those you get of your sensibility; the latter can only touch the heart in one sense, the other titillates and overwhelms all of one's being. In a word, is it possible to compare permissible pleasures with pleasures which, to far more piquant delights, join those inestimable joys that come of bursting socially imposed restraints and of the violation of every law?

EUGENIE—You triumph, Dolmancé, the laurel belongs to you! The Chevalier's harangue did but barely brush my spirit, yours seduces and entirely wins it over. Ah, Chevalier, take my advice:

speak rather to the passions than to the virtues when you wish to persuade a woman.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, to the Chevalier—Yes, my friend, fuck us to be sure, but let us have no sermons from you: you'll not convert us, and you might upset the lessons with which we desire to saturate this charming girl's mind.

EUGENIE—Upset? Oh, no, no; your work is finished; what fools call corruption is by now firmly enough established in me to leave not even the hope of a return, and your principles are far too thoroughly riven into my heart ever to be destroyed by the Chevalier's casuistries.

DOLMANCE—She is right, let us not discuss it any longer, Chevalier; you would come off poorly in this debate, and we wish nothing from you but excellence.

LE CHEVALIER—So be it; we are met here for a purpose very different, I know, from the one I wished to achieve; let's go directly to that destination, I agree with you; I'll save my ethics for others who, less besotted than you, will be in a better way to hear me.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Yes, dear brother, yes, exactly, give us nothing but your fuck; we'll forgo your morals; they are too gentle and mild for roués of our ilk.

EUGENIE—I greatly fear, Dolmancé, that this cruelty you recommend with such warmth may somewhat influence your pleasures; I believe I have already remarked something of the sort: you are hard when you take your pleasure; and I too might be able to confess to feeling a few dispositions to viciousness. . . . In order to clear my thoughts on the matter, please do tell me with what kind of an eye you view the object that serves your pleasures?

DOLMANCE—As absolutely null, that is how I view it, my dear; whether it does or does not share my enjoyment, whether it feels contentment or whether it doesn't, whether apathy or even pain, provided I am happy, the rest is absolutely all the same to me.

EUGENIE—Why, it is even preferable to have the object experience pain, is it not?

DOLMANCE—To be sure, 'tis by much to be preferred; I have given you my opinion on the matter; this being the case, the repercussion within us is much more pronounced, and much more energetically and much more promptly launches the animal spirits in the direction necessary to voluptuousness. Explore the seraglios of Africa, those of Asia, those others of southern Europe, and discover whether the masters of these celebrated harems are much concerned, when their pricks are in the air, about giving pleasure to the individuals they use; they give orders, and they are obeyed, they enjoy and no one dares make them answer; they are satisfied, and the others retire. Amongst them are those who would punish as a lack of respect the audacity of partaking of their pleasure. The king of Acahem pitilessly commands to be decapitated the woman who, in his presence, has dared forget herself to the point of sharing his pleasure, and not infrequently the king performs the beheading himself. This despot, one of Asia's most interesting, is exclusively guarded by women; he never gives them orders save by signs; the cruelest death is the reward reserved for her who fails to understand him, and the tortures are always executed either by his hand or before his eyes.

All that, Eugénie, is founded entirely upon the principles I have already developed for you. What is it one desires when taking one's pleasure? that everything around us be occupied with nothing but ourselves, think of naught but of us, care for us only. If the objects we employ know pleasure too, you can be very sure they are less concerned for us than they are for themselves, and lo! our own pleasure consequently disturbed. There is not a living man who does not wish to play the despot when he is stiff: it seems to him his joy is less when others appear to have as much as he; by an impulse of pride, very natural at this juncture, he would like to be the only one in the world capable of experiencing what he feels: the idea of seeing another enjoy as he enjoys reduces him to a kind of equality with that other, which impairs the unspeakable charm *despotism* causes him to feel.²³ 'Tis false as well to say there is pleasure in

²³ The poverty of the French language compels us to employ words which, today, our happy government, with so much good sense, disfavors; we hope our enlightened readers will understand us well and will not at all confound absurd political despotism with the very delightful despotism of libertinage's passions.

affording pleasure to others; that is to serve them, and the man who is erect is far from desiring to be useful to anyone. On the contrary, by causing them hurt he experiences all the charms a nervous personality relishes in putting its strength to use; 'tis then he dominates, is a *tyrant*; and what a difference is there for the *amour-propre*! Think not that it is silent during such episodes.

The act of enjoyment is a passion which, I confess, subordinates all others to it, but which simultaneously unites them. This desire to dominate at this moment is so powerful in Nature that one notices it even in animals. See whether those in captivity procreate as do those others that are free and wild; the camel carries the matter further still: he will engender no more if he does not suppose himself alone: surprise him and, consequently, show him a master, and he will fly, will instantly separate himself from his companion. Had it not been Nature's intent that man possess this feeling of superiority, she would not have created him stronger than the beings she destines to belong to him at those moments. The debility to which Nature condemned woman incontestably proves that her design is for man, who then more than ever enjoys his strength, to exercise it in all the violent forms that suit him best, by means of tortures, if he be so inclined, or worse. Would pleasure's climax be a kind of fury were it not the intention of this mother of humankind that behavior during copulation be the same as behavior in anger? What well-made man, in a word, what man endowed with vigorous organs does not desire, in one fashion or in another, to molest his partner during his enjoyment of her? I know perfectly well that whole armies of idiots, who are never conscious of their sensations, will have much trouble understanding the systems I am establishing; but what do I care for these fools? 'Tis not to them I am speaking; soft-headed women-worshippers, I leave them prostrate at their insolent Dulcineas' feet, there let them wait for the sighs that will make them happy and, basely the slaves of the sex they ought to dominate, I abandon them to the vile delights of wearing the chains wherewith Nature has given them the right to overwhelm others! Let these beasts vegetate in the abjection which defiles them—'twould be in vain to preach to them!—, but let them not denigrate what they are incapable of understanding, and let them be persuaded that those who wish to establish their principles

pertinent to this subject only upon the free outbursts of a vigorous and untrammelled imagination, as do we, you, Madame, and I, those like ourselves, I say, will always be the only ones who merit to be listened to, the only ones proper to prescribe laws unto them and to give lessons! . . .

Goddamn! I've an erection! . . . Get Augustin to come back here, if you please. (*They ring; he reappears.*) 'Tis amazing how this fine lad's superb ass does preoccupy my mind while I talk! All my ideas seem involuntarily to relate themselves to it. . . . Show my eyes that masterpiece, Augustin . . . let me kiss it and caress it, oh! for a quarter of an hour. Hither, my love, come, that I may, in your lovely ass, render myself worthy of the flames with which Sodom sets me aglow. Ah, he has the most beautiful buttocks . . . the whitest! I'd like to have Eugénie on her knees; she will suck his prick while I advance; in this manner, she will expose her ass to the Chevalier, who'll plunge into it, and Madame de Saint-Ange, astride Augustin's back, will present her buttocks to me: I'll kiss them; armed with the cat-o'-nine-tails, she might surely, it should seem to me, by bending a little, be able to flog the Chevalier who, thanks to this stimulating ritual, might resolve not to spare our student. (*The position is arranged.*) Yes, that's it; let's do our best, my friends; indeed, it is a great pleasure to commission you to execute *tableaux*; in all the world, there's not an artist fitter than you to realize them! . . . This rascal does have a nipping tight ass! . . . 'tis all I can do to get a foothold in it. Would you do me the great kindness, Madame, of allowing me to bite and pinch your lovely flesh while I'm at my fuckery?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—As much as you like, my friend; but, I warn you, I am ready to take my revenge: I swear that, for every vexation you give me, I'll blow a fart into your mouth.

DOLMANCE—By God, now! that is a threat! . . . quite enough to drive me to offend you, my dear. (*He bites her.*) Well! Let's see if you'll keep your word. (*He receives a fart.*) Ah, fuck, delicious! delicious! . . . (*He slaps her and immediately receives another fart.*) Oh, 'tis divine, my angel! Save me a few for the critical moment . . . and, be sure of it, I'll then treat you with the extremest cruelty . . . most barbarously I'll use you. . . . Fuck! I can

tolerate this no longer . . . I discharge! . . . (*He bites her, strikes her, and she farts uninterruptedly.*) Dost see how I deal with you, my fine fair bitch! . . . how I dominate you . . . once again here . . . and there . . . and let the final insult be to the very idol at which I sacrificed! (*He bites her asshole; the circle of debauchees is broken.*) And the rest of you—what have you been up to, my friends?

EUGENIE, *spewing forth the fuck from her mouth and her ass*—Alas! dear master . . . you see how your disciples have accommodated me! I have a mouthful of fuck and half a pint in my ass, 'tis all I am disgorging on both ends.

DOLMANCE, *sharply*—Hold there! I want you to deposit in my mouth what the Chevalier introduced into your behind.

EUGENIE, *assuming a proper position*—What an extravagance!

DOLMANCE—Ah, there's nothing that can match fuck drained out of the depths of a pretty behind . . . 'tis a food fit for the gods. (*He swallows some.*) Behold, 'tis neatly wiped up, eh? (*Moving to Augustin's ass, which he kisses.*) Mesdames, I am going to ask your permission to spend a few moments in a nearby room with this young man.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—But can't you do here all you wish to do with him?

DOLMANCE, *in a low and mysterious tone*—No; there are certain things which strictly require to be veiled.

EUGENIE—Ah, by God, tell us what you'd be about!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I'll not allow him to leave if he does not.

DOLMANCE—You then wish to know?

EUGENIE—Absolutely.

DOLMANCE, *dragging Augustin*—Very well, Mesdames, I am going . . . but, indeed, it cannot be said.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Is there, do you think, any conceivable infamy we are not worthy to hear of and execute?

LE CHEVALIER—Wait, sister. I'll tell you. (*He whispers to the two women.*)

EUGENIE, *with a look of revulsion*—You are right, 'tis hideous.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Why, I suspected as much.

DOLMANCE—You see very well I had to be silent upon this caprice; and you grasp now that one must be alone and in the deepest shadow in order to give oneself over to such turpitudes.

EUGENIE—Do you want me to accompany you? I'll frig you while you amuse yourself with Augustin.

DOLMANCE—No, no, this is an *affaire d'honneur* and should take place between men only; a woman would only disturb us. . . . At your service in a moment, dear ladies. (*He goes out, taking Augustin with him.*)

DIALOGUE THE SIXTH

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, EUGENIE,
LE CHEVALIER

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Indeed, brother, your friend is greatly a libertine.

LE CHEVALIER—Then I've not deceived you in presenting him as such.

EUGENIE—I am persuaded there is not his equal anywhere in the world. . . . Oh, my dearest, he is charming; I do hope we will see him often.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I hear a knock . . . who might it be? . . . I gave orders . . . it must be very urgent. Go see what it is, Chevalier, if you will be so kind.

LE CHEVALIER—A letter Lafleur has brought; he left hastily, saying he remembered the instructions you had given him, but that the matter appeared to him as important as it was pressing.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Ah ha! what's this? 'Tis your father, Eugénie!

EUGENIE—My father! . . . then we are lost! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Let's read it before we get upset. (*She reads.*)

Would you believe it, my dear lady? my unbearable wife, alarmed by my daughter's journey to your house, is leaving immediately, with the intention of bringing Eugénie home. She imagines all sorts of things . . . which, even were one to suppose them real, would, in truth, be but very ordinary and human indeed. I request you to punish her impertinence with exceeding rigor; yesterday, I chastised her for something similar: the lesson was not sufficient. Therefore, mystify her well, I beseech you on bended knee, and believe that, no matter to what lengths you carry things, no complaint will be heard from me. . . 'Tis a very long time this whore's been oppressing me . . . indeed. . . Do you follow me? what you do will be well done: that is all I can say to you. She will arrive shortly after my letter; keep yourself in readiness. Adieu; I should indeed like to be numbered in your company. Do not, I beg of you, return Eugénie to me until she is instructed. I am most content to leave the first gatherings to your hands, but be well convinced however that you will have labored in some sort in my behalf.

Why, there, Eugénie! you see? There is nothing over which to be disturbed; it must be admitted, though, that the little wife in question is a mightily insolent one.

EUGENIE—The slut! Ha! since Papa gives us a free hand, we must, by God, receive the creature in the manner she deserves.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Hither, kiss me, my heart. How comforted I am thus to perceive such dispositions in you! . . . Well, be at ease; I guarantee you we will not spare her. Eugénie, you desired a victim, and behold! here is one both Nature and fate are giving you.

EUGENIE—We will enjoy the gift, my dear, I swear to you we'll put her to use!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—How eager I am to know how Dolmancé will react to the news.

DOLMANCE, *entering with Augustin*—'Tis the best news possible, Madame; I was not so far away I could not overhear; Madame de Mistival's arrival is very opportune. . . You are firmly determined, I trust, to satisfy her husband's expectations?

EUGENIE, *to Dolmancé*—Satisfy them? . . . to surpass them, my love . . . oh, may the earth sink beneath me if you see me falter whatever be the horrors to which you condemn the tramp! . . . Dear friend, entrust to me the supervision of the entire proceedings. . .

DOLMANCE—Allow your friend and me to take charge; you others need merely obey the orders we give you . . . oh, the insolent creature! I've never seen anything like it! . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Clumsy fool! Well, shall we rather more decently deck ourselves in order to receive her?

DOLMANCE—On the contrary; from the instant she enters, nothing must prevent her from being very sure of the manner in which we have been spending the time with her daughter. Let us all be rather in the greatest disorder.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I hear sounds; 'tis she! . . . Courage, Eugénie; remember our principles. . . Ah, by God! 'twill be a delightful scene! . . .

DIALOGUE THE SEVENTH AND LAST

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, EUGENIE,
LE CHEVALIER, AUGUSTIN, DOLMANCE,
MADAME DE MISTIVAL

MADAME DE MISTIVAL, to *Madame de Saint-Ange*—I beg your forgiveness, Madame, for arriving unannounced at your house; but I hear that my daughter is here and as her few years do not yet permit her to venture abroad alone, I beg you, Madame, to be so very good as to return her to me, and not to disapprove my request or behavior.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—This behavior is eminently impolite, Madame; one would say, upon hearing your words, that your daughter is in bad hands.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Faith! if one must judge by the state I find her in, and you, Madame, and your company, I believe I am not greatly mistaken in supposing her in no good sort while she is here.

DOLMANCE—Madame, this is an important beginning and, without being exactly informed of the degree of familiarity which obtains between Madame de Saint-Ange and you, I see no reason to pretend that I would not, were I in her place, already have had you pitched out of the window.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—I do not completely understand what you mean by “pitched out of the window.” Be advised, Monsieur, that I am not a woman to be pitched out of windows; I have no idea who you are, but from your language and the state I observe you to be in, it is not impossible to arrive at a speedy conclusion concerning your manners. Eugénie! Follow me.

EUGENIE—I beg your pardon, Madame, but I cannot enjoy that honor.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—What! my daughter resists me!

DOLMANCE—Nay, 'tis worse yet: 'tis a case of formal disobedience, as you observe, Madame. Believe me, do not tolerate it in her. Would you like me to have whips brought in to punish this intractable child?

EUGENIE—I should be greatly afraid, were they to be sent for, that they would be employed rather upon Madame than upon me.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Impertinent creature!

DOLMANCE, *approaching Madame de Mistival*—Softly, my sweet, we'll have no invectives here; all of us are Eugénie's protectors, and you might regret your hastiness with her.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—What! my daughter is to disobey me and I am not to be able to make her sensible of the rights I have over her!

DOLMANCE—And what, if you please, are these rights, Madame? Do you flatter yourself they are legitimate? When Monsieur de Mistival, or whoever it was, spurted into your vagina the several drops of fuck that brought Eugénie into being, did you then, in the act, have her in mind? Eh? I dare say you did not. Well, then, how can you expect her to be beholden to you today for your having discharged when years ago someone fucked your nasty cunt? Take notice, Madame: there is nothing more illusory than fathers' and mothers' sentiments for their children, and children's for the authors of their days. Nothing supports, nothing justifies, nothing establishes such feelings, here in currency, there held in contempt, for there are countries where parents kill their

children, others where the latter cut the throats of those whence they have breath. Were reciprocal love to have some natural sanction, consanguinity's power would no longer be chimerical and, without being seen, without mutually being known, parents would distinguish, would adore their sons and, reversibly, these would discern their unknown fathers, would fly into their arms and would do them reverence. Instead of which, what is it we see? Reciprocal hatreds inveterate; children who, even before reaching the age of reason, have never been able to suffer the sight of their fathers; fathers sending away their children because never could they endure their approach. Those alleged instincts are hence fictitious, absurd; self-interest only invents them, usage prescribes, habit sustains, but never did Nature engrave them in our hearts. Tell me: do animals know these feelings? no, surely not; however, 'tis always them one must consult when one wishes to be acquainted with Nature. O fathers! have no qualms regarding the so-called injustices your passions or your interest leads you to work upon these beings, for you nonexistent, to which a few drops of your sperm has given life; to them you owe nothing, you are in the world not for them but for yourselves: great fools you would be to be troubled about, to be occupied with anything but your own selves; for yourselves alone you ought to live; and you, dear children, you who are far more exempted—if it is possible to be far more exempted—from this filial piety whose basis is a true chimera, you must be persuaded also that you owe nothing to those individuals whose blood hatched you out of the darkness. Pity, gratitude, love—not one of these sentiments is their due; they who have given you existence have not a single right to require them from you; they labor for themselves only: let them look after themselves; but the greatest of all the duperies would be to give them either the help or the ministry no relationship can possibly oblige you to give; no law enjoins you, there is no prescription and if, by chance, you should hear some inner voice speaking to you—whether it is custom that inspires these announcements, whether it is your character's moral effect that produces these twinges—, unhesitatingly, remorselessly throttle those absurd sentiments . . . local sentiments, the fruit of geographical accident, climate, which Nature repudiates and reason disavows always!

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—But the care I have lavished upon her, the education I have given her! . . .

DOLMANCE—Why, as for the care, 'tis never but the effect of convention or of vanity; having done no more for her than what is dictated by the customs of the country you inhabit, assuredly, Eugénie owes you nothing. As for her education, it appears to have been damnably poor, for we here have been obliged to replace all the principles you had put into her head; not one of the lot you gave her provides for her happiness, not one is not absurd or illusory. You spoke to her of God as if there were some such thing; of virtue as if it were necessary; of religion as if every religious cult were something other than the result of the grossest imposture and the most signal imbecility; of Jesus Christ as if that rascal were anything but a cheat and a bandit. You have told her that it is sinful to *fuck*, whereas to *fuck* is life's most delicious act; you have wished to give her good manners, as if a young girl's happiness were not inseparable from debauchery and immorality, as if the happiest of all women had not incontestably to be she who wallows most in filth and in libertinage, she who most and best defies every prejudice and who most laughs reputation to scorn. Ah, Madame, disabuse yourself: you have done nothing for your daughter, in her regard you have not fulfilled a single one of the obligations Nature dictates: Eugénie owes you naught but hatred.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Oh merciful heaven! my Eugénie is doomed, 'tis evident. . . . Eugénie, my beloved Eugénie, for the last time heed the supplications of her who gave you your life; these are orders no longer, but prayers; unhappily, it is only too true that you are amidst monsters here; tear yourself from this perilous commerce and follow me; I ask it of you on my knees! (*She falls to her knees.*)

DOLMANCE—Ah, very pretty! a tearful scene! . . . To it, Eugénie! Be tender.

EUGENIE, *half-naked, as the reader surely must remember*—Here you are, my dear little Mamma, I bring you my buttocks. . . . There they are, positively at the level of your lips; kiss them, my sweet, suck them, 'tis all Eugénie can do for you. . . . Remember,

DOLMANCÉ: I shall always show myself worthy of having been your pupil.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL, *thrusting Eugénie away, with horror*—Monster! I disown you forever, you are no longer my child!

EUGENIE—Add a few curses to it, if you like, my dearest Mother, in order to render the thing more touching yet, and you will see me equally phlegmatic.

DOLMANCÉ—Softly, Madame, softly; there is insult here; in our view, you have just rather too harshly repulsed Eugénie; I told you that she is in our safekeeping: a punishment is needed for this crime; have the kindness to undress yourself, strip to the skin, so as to receive what your brutality deserves.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Undress myself! . . .

DOLMANCÉ—Augustin, act as this lady's maid-in-waiting, since she resists. (*Augustin goes brutally to work; Madame de Mistival seeks to protect herself.*)

MADAME DE MISTIVAL, *to Madame de Saint-Ange*—My God, where am I? Are you aware, Madame, of what you are allowing to be done to me in your house? Do you suppose I shall make no complaint?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—It is by no means certain you will be able to.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Great God! then I am to be killed here!

DOLMANCÉ—Why not?

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—One moment, gentlemen. Before exposing this charming beauty's body to your gaze, it would be well for me to forewarn you of the condition you are going to find it in. Eugénie has just whispered the entire story into my ear: yesterday, her husband used the whip on her, all but broke his arm beating her for some minor domestic mismanagement . . . and, Eugénie assures me, you are going to find her ass' cheeks looking like moire taffeta.

DOLMANCÉ, *immediately Madame de Mistival is naked*—Well, by God, 'tis the absolute truth! I don't believe I've ever seen a body more mistreated than this . . . but, by Jesus! she's got as many cuts before as she has behind! . . . Yet . . . I believe I espy a very fine ass here. (*He kisses and fondles it.*)

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Leave me alone, leave me, else I'll cry for help!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *coming up to her and seizing her by the arm*—Listen to me, whore! I'm going to explain everything to you! . . . You are a victim sent us by your own husband; you have got to submit to your fate; nothing can save you from it . . . what will it be? I've no idea; perhaps you'll be hanged, wheeled, quartered, racked, burned alive; the choice of torture depends upon your daughter: 'tis she will give the order for your period; but, my whore, you are going to suffer . . . oh, yes, you will not be immolated until after having undergone an infinite number of preliminary embarrassments. As for your cries, I warn you they will be to no purpose: one could slaughter a steer in this chamber without any risk of having his bellowings overheard. Your horses, your servants have already left; once again, my lovely one, your husband authorizes what we are doing, and your coming here is nothing but a trap baited for your simplicity and into which, you observe, you could not have fallen better.

DOLMANCÉ—I hope that Madame is now perfectly tranquilized.

EUGENIE—Thus to be forewarned is certainly to have been the object of a very ample consideration.

DOLMANCÉ, *still feeling and slapping her buttocks*—Indeed, Madame, 'tis clear you have a warm friend in Madame de Saint-Ange. . . . Where, these days, does one come across such candor? What forthrightness in her tone when she addresses you! . . . Eugénie, come here and place your buttocks beside your mother's. . . . I'd like to make a comparison of your asses. (*Eugénie obeys.*) My goodness! yours is splendid, my dear, but, by God, Mamma's is not bad either . . . not yet . . . in another instant I'll be amusing myself fucking you both. . . . Augustin, lay a hand upon Madame.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Merciful heavens! what an outrage!

DOLMANCE, *continuing throughout to realize his projects, and beginning them with an embuggery of the mother*—Why, not at all! Nothing easier! . . . Look ye! You scarcely felt it! . . . Ha! 'tis clear your husband has many times trod the path! Your turn now, Eugénie. . . . What a difference! . . . There, I'm content; I simply wished to volley the ball a little, to put myself into shape . . . well, a little order now. First, Mesdames, you, Saint-Ange, and you, Eugénie, have the goodness to arm yourselves with artificial pricks in order, one after the other, to deal this respectable lady, now in the cunt, now in the ass . . . the most fearsome strokes. The Chevalier, Augustin, and I, acting with our own members, will relieve you with a prompt exactitude. I am going to begin and, as you may well believe, it is once again her ass which will receive my homage. During the games, parenthetically, each is invited to decide for himself what torture he wishes to inflict upon her; but bear it in mind: the suffering must increase gradually, so as not to kill her off beforetimes. . . . Augustin, dear boy, console me, by bugging me, for the obligation I am under to sodomize this ancient cow. Eugénie, let me kiss your beautiful behind while I bugger mamma, and you, Madame, bring yours near, so that I can handle it . . . socratize it. One must be walled round by asses when 'tis an ass one fucks.

EUGENIE—What, my friend, what are you going to do to this bitch? While losing your sperm, to what do you intend to condemn her?

DOLMANCE, *all the while plying his whip*—The most natural thing in the world: I am going to depilate her and lacerate her thighs with pincers.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL, *understanding this dual vexation*—The monster! Criminal! he is mutilating me! . . . oh, God Almighty!

DOLMANCE—Implore him not, my dove: he will remain deaf to your voice, as he is to that of every other person: never has this powerful figure bothered to entangle himself in an affair concerning merely an ass.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Oh, how you are hurting me!

DOLMANCE—Incredible effects of the human mind's idiosyncrasies! . . . You suffer, my best beloved, you weep and, wondrous thing! I discharge . . . ah, double whore! I'd strangle you if I did not wish to leave the pleasure of it to others. She's yours, Saint-Ange. (*Madame de Saint-Ange embuggers and encunts her with her dildo; she bestows a few blows of her fist upon her; the Chevalier succeeds her; he too avails himself of the two avenues and, as he discharges, boxes her ears. 'Tis Augustin who comes next: he acts in like wise and ends with a few digs with his fingers, pokes, pulls, and punches. During these various attacks, Dolmancé has sent his engine straying about all the agents' asses, the while urging them on with his remarks.*) Well, pretty Eugénie, fuck your mother, first of all, encunt her.

EUGENIE—Come, dear lovely Mamma, come, let me serve you as a husband. 'Tis a little thicker than your spouse's, is it not, my dear? Never mind, 'twill enter. . . . Ah, Mother dear, you cry, you scream, scream when your daughter fucks you! . . . And you, Dolmancé, you bugger me! . . . Here I am; at one stroke incestuous, adulteress, sodomite, and all that in a girl who only lost her maidenhead today! . . . What progress, my friends! . . . with what rapidity I advance along the thorny road of vice! . . . Oh, right enough, I am a doomed girl! . . . I believe, dear Mother, you are discharging. . . . Dolmancé, look at her eyes! she comes, it's certain, is it not? Ah, whore! I'm going to teach you to be a libertine . . . well, bitch, what do you think of that? (*She squeezes, twists, wrenches her mother's breasts.*) Ah, fuck, Dolmancé . . . fuck, my gentle friend, I am dying! . . . (*As she discharges, Eugénie showers ten or twelve jarring blows upon her mother's breast and sides.*)

MADAME DE MISTIVAL, *about to lose consciousness*—Have pity upon me, I beg of you . . . I . . . I am not well . . . I am fainting. . . . (*Madame de Saint-Ange seems to wish to aid her; Dolmancé lifts a restraining hand.*)

DOLMANCE—Why, no, leave her in her swoon; there is nothing so lubricious as to see a woman who has fainted; we'll flog her: that should restore her to her senses. . . . Eugénie, come, stretch out

upon your victim's body . . . 'tis here I wish to discover whether you are steadfast. Chevalier, fuck her as she lies upon her failing mother, and let her frig us, Augustin and me, with each of her hands. You, Saint-Ange, frig her while she's being fucked.

LE CHEVALIER—Indeed, Dolmancé, 'tis horrible, what you have us do; this at once outrages Nature, heaven, and the most sacred laws of humanity.

DOLMANCÉ—Nothing diverts me like the weighty outbursts of the Chevalier's virtuosity; but in all we are doing, where the devil does he see the least outrage to Nature, to heaven, and to mankind? My friend, it is from Nature roués obtain the principles they put into action; I've told you a thousand times over that Nature, who for the perfect maintenance of the laws of her general equilibrium, has sometimes need of vices and sometimes of virtues, inspires now this impulse, now that one, in accordance with what she requires; hence, we do no kind of evil in surrendering ourselves to these impulses, of whatever sort you may suppose them to be. With what regards heaven, my dear Chevalier, I beg of you, let us no more dread its effects: one single motor is operative in this universe, and that motor is Nature. The miracles—rather, the physical effects—of this mother of the human race, differently interpreted by men, have been deified by them under a thousand forms, each more extraordinary than the other; cheats and intriguers, abusing their fellows' credulity, have propagated their ridiculous daydreams, and that is what the Chevalier calls heaven, that is what he fears offending! . . . Humanity's laws are violated, he adds, by the petty stuff and nonsense in which we are indulging ourselves this afternoon. Get it into your head once and for all, my simple and very fainthearted fellow, that what fools call *humaneness* is nothing but a weakness born of fear and egoism; that this chimerical virtue, enslaving only weak men, is unknown to those whose character is formed by stoicism, courage, and philosophy. Then act, Chevalier, act and fear nothing; were we to pulverize this whore, there'd not be a suspicion of crime in the thing: it is impossible for man to commit a crime; when Nature inculcated in him the irresistible desire to commit crime, she most prudently arranged to put beyond his reach those acts which could disturb her

operations or conflict with her will. Ha, my friend, be sure that all the rest is entirely permitted, and that she has not been so idiotic as to give us the power of discomfiting her or of disturbing her workings. The blind instruments of her inspirations, were she to order us to set fire to the universe, the only crime possible would be in resisting her: all the criminals on earth are nothing but the agents of her caprices . . . well, Eugénie, take your place. But what do I see? . . . she's turning pale! . . .

EUGENIE, *lying down upon her mother*—Turning pale! I! God no! you'll very soon see the contrary! (*The attitude is executed; Madame de Mistival remains unconscious. When the Chevalier has discharged, the group is broken.*)

DOLMANCÉ—What! the bitch is not yet awake! Whips! I say, bring me whips! . . . Augustin, run and gather me a handful of thorns from the garden. (*While waiting, he slaps her face.*) Oh, upon my soul, I fear she may be dead; nothing seems to have any effect upon her.

EUGENIE, *with irritation*—Dead! dead! what's this? Then I'll have to go about wearing black this summer, and I have had the prettiest dresses made for me!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Ah! the little monster! (*She bursts into laughter.*)

DOLMANCÉ, *taking the thorns from Augustin, who returns*—We shall see whether this final remedy will not have some results. Eugénie, suck my prick while I labor to restore a mother to you and, Augustin, do you give me back the blows I am going to strike this stricken lady. I should not be sorry, Chevalier, to see you embuget your sister: you would adopt such a posture as to permit me to kiss your buttocks during the operation.

LE CHEVALIER—Well, let's comply with it, since there seems no way of persuading this scoundrel that all he is having us do is appalling. (*The stage is set; as the whipping of Madame de Mistival proceeds, she comes slowly to life.*)

DOLMANCÉ—Why, do you see the medicine's effects? I told you it would not fail us.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL, *opening her eyes*—Oh heavens! why do you recall me from the grave's darkness? Why do you plunge me again into life's horrors?

DOLMANCE, *whipping her steadily*—Indeed, mother dear, it is because much conversation remains to be held. Must you not hear your sentence pronounced? must it not be executed? . . . Come, let's gather round our victim: let her kneel in the center of the circle and, trembling, hear what will be announced to her. Madame de Saint-Ange, will you please begin. (*The following speeches are pronounced while the actors are in full action.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I condemn her to be hanged.

LE CHEVALIER—Cut into eighty thousand pieces, after the manner of the Chinese.

AUGUSTIN—As for me, by Gar, I'd let her get off with being broken alive.

EUGENIE—Into my pretty little mamma's body there will be driven wicks garnished with sulphur and I will undertake to set them afire, one by one. (*The circle is dissolved.*)

DOLMANCE, *coolly*—Well, my friends, as your leader and instructor, I shall lighten the sentence; but the difference which will be discovered between what I decree and what you have demanded, this difference, I say, is that your sentences would be in the nature of the effects of mordant practical joking; mine, on the contrary, is going to be the cause of a little knavery. I have, waiting outside, a valet, and he is furnished with what is perhaps one of the loveliest members to be found in all of Nature; however, it distills disease, for 'tis eaten by one of the most impressive cases of syphilis I have yet anywhere encountered; I'll have my man come in: we'll have a coupling: he'll inject his poison into each of the two natural conduits that ornament this dear and amiable lady, with this consequence: that so long as this cruel disease's impressions shall last, the whore will remember not to trouble her daughter when Eugénie has herself fucked. (*Everyone applauds; the valet is called in. Dolmancé speaks now to him.*) Lapierre, fuck this woman; she is

exceptionally healthy; this amusement might cure you: at least, there may be some precedent for the miracle's success.

LAPIERRE—In front of everyone, Monsieur?

DOLMANCE—Are you afraid to exhibit your prick?

LAPIERRE—No, by God! for it's very attractive. . . . Let's to it, Madame, be so good as to ready yourself.

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Oh, my God! what a hideous damnation!

EUGENIE—Better that than to die, Mamma; at least I'll be able to wear some gay dresses this summer.

DOLMANCE—Meanwhile, we might amuse ourselves; my opinion would be for us all to flagellate one another: Madame de Saint-Ange will thrash Lapierre, so as to insure Madame de Mistival's obtaining a good encuntment; I'll flay Madame de Saint-Ange, Augustin will whip me, Eugénie will have at Augustin and herself will be very vigorously beaten by the Chevalier. (*All of which is arranged. When Lapierre has finished cunt-fucking, his master orders him to fuck Madame de Mistival's ass, and he does so. When all is completed, Dolmancé continues.*) Capital! Out with you, Lapierre. Wait. Here are five louis. Ha! by God, that was a better inoculation than Tronchin made in all his life!

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—I believe it is now of the highest importance to provide against the escape of the poison circulating in Madame's veins; consequently, Eugénie must very carefully sew your cunt and ass so that the virulent humor, more concentrated, less subject to evaporation and not at all to leakage, will more promptly cinder your bones.

EUGENIE—Excellent idea! Quickly, quickly, fetch me needle and thread! . . . Spread your thighs, Mamma, so I can stitch you together—so that you'll give me no more little brothers and sisters. (*Madame de Saint-Ange gives Eugénie a large needle, through whose eye is threaded a heavy red waxed thread; Eugénie sews.*)

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Oh, my God! the pain!

DOLMANCE, *laughing like a madman*—By God! excellent idea indeed! it does you honor, my dear; it would never have occurred to me.

EUGENIE, *from time to time pricking the lips of the cunt, occasionally stabbing its interior and sometimes using her needle on her mother's belly and mons veneris.*) Pay no attention to it, Mamma. I am simply testing the point.

LE CHEVALIER—The little whore wants to bleed her to death!

DOLMANCE, *causing himself to be frigged by Madame de Saint-Ange, as he witnesses the operation*—Ah, by God! how this extravagance stiffens me! Eugénie, multiply your stitches, so that the seam will be quite solid.

EUGENIE—I'll take, if necessary, over two hundred of them. . . . Chevalier, frig me while I work.

LE CHEVALIER, *obeying*—I've never seen a girl as vicious as this one!

EUGENIE, *much inflamed*—No invectives, Chevalier, or I'll prick you! Confine yourself to tickling me in the correct manner. A little asshole, if you please, my friend; have you only one hand? I can see no longer, my stitches go everywhere. . . . Look at it! do you see how my needle wanders. . . . to her thighs, her tits. . . . Oh, fuck! what pleasure! . . .

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—You are tearing me to pieces, vile creature! . . . Oh, how I blush that it was I who gave you life!

EUGENIE—Come, come, be quiet, Mother dear; it's finished.

DOLMANCE, *emerging, with a great erection, from Madame de Saint-Ange's hands*—Eugénie, allow me to do the ass; that part belongs to me.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—You're too stiff, Dolmancé, you'll make a martyr of her.

DOLMANCE—What matter! have we not written permission to make of her what we please? (*He turns Madame de Mistival*

upon her stomach, catches up the needle, and begins to sew her asshole.)

MADAME DE MISTIVAL, *screaming like a banshee*—Aië! aië! aië!

DOLMANCE, *driving the needle deep into her flesh*—Silence, bitch! or I'll make a hash of your buttocks. . . . Eugénie, frig me. . . .

EUGENIE—Willingly, but upon condition you prick her more energetically, for, you must admit, you are proceeding with strange forbearance. (*She frigs him.*)

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Work upon those two great cheeks for me!

DOLMANCE—Patience, I'll soon have her carved like a shank of beef; Eugénie, you are forgetting your lessons: you capped my prick!

EUGENIE—'Tis because this bitch's sufferings are inflaming my imagination to the point I no longer know exactly what I am doing.

DOLMANCE—Sweet fucking God! I'm beginning to go out of my mind! Saint-Ange, have Augustin bugger you in front of my eyes while your brother flies into your cunt, and above all dress me a panorama of asses: the picture will finish me. (*He stabs Madame de Mistival's buttocks while the posture he has called for is arranged.*) Here, Mamma dear, take this. . . . and again that! . . . (*He drives his needle into at least twenty places.*)

MADAME DE MISTIVAL—Oh pardon me, Monsieur, I beg your pardon a thousand thousand times over. . . . you are killing me. . . .

DOLMANCE, *wild with pleasure*—I should like to. . . . 'tis an age since I have had such an erection; never would I have thought it possible after so many consecutive ejaculations.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE, *executing the called-for attitude*—Are we as we should be, Dolmancé?

DOLMANCE—Augustin, turn a little to the right; I don't see enough ass; have him lean forward: I must see the hole.

EUGENIE—Ah fuck! look at the bugger bleed!

DOLMANCE—Rather a good deal of blood, isn't there? Well, are the rest of you ready? As for myself, one minute more and I'll spray life's very balm upon the wounds I have just opened.

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Yes, my heart, yes . . . I am coming . . . we arrive at the end at the same time. . . .

DOLMANCE, *who has finished his task, does nothing but increase his stabbing of the victim's buttocks as he discharges*—Ah triple bloody fucking God! . . . my sperm flows . . . 'tis lost, by bleeding little Jesus! . . . Eugénie, direct it upon the flanks I have just mutilated . . . oh fuck! fuck! 'tis done . . . over . . . I've no more . . . oh, why must weakness succeed passions so alive? . . .

MADAME DE SAINT-ANGE—Fuck! fuck me, brother, I discharge! . . . (*To Augustin:*) Stir yourself, great fucking-john! Don't you know that it is when I come that you've got to sink your tool deepest into my ass? . . . Ah, sacred name of God! how sweet it is, thus to be fucked by two men . . . (*The group disperses.*)

DOLMANCE—And now all's been said. (*To Madame de Mistival:*) Hey! whore, you may clothe yourself and leave when you wish. I must tell you that your husband authorized the doing of all that has just been done to you. We told you as much; you did not believe it. (*He shows her the letter.*) May this example serve to remind you that your daughter is old enough to do what she pleases; that she likes to fuck, loves to fuck, that she was born to fuck, and that, if you do not wish to be fucked yourself, the best thing for you to do is to let her do what she wants. Get out; the Chevalier will escort you home. Salute the company, whore! on your knees, bow down before your daughter, and beseech her pardon for your abominable use of her. . . . You, Eugénie, bestow two good smacks upon Madame your Mother and as soon as she gains the threshold, help her cross it with a few lusty kicks aimed at her ass. (*All this is done.*) Farewell, Chevalier; don't fuck Madame on the highway: remember, she's sewn up and has got the pox.

(*After the Chevalier's departure and Madame de Mistival's.*) And now, good friends, let's to dinner, and afterward the four of us will retire for the night . . . in the same bed. Well, we've had a fine active day. I never dine so heartily, I never sleep so soundly as when I have, during the day, sufficiently befouled myself with what our fools call crimes.