

ABBESS SIDES

89.

PLANCHET (cont.)

Who's the pipsqueak now?

START *(Light out on the room in Amiens. Music under as the scene shifts to the Carmelite Convent in Bethune. The ABBESS enters with MILADY in tow.)*

ABBESS

We were told to expect you last week, Lady de Winter.

MILADY

My business abroad took longer than expected.

(She looks around, takes off her cloak and sets in on a chair.)

Is this where I am to stay?

ABBESS

I'm afraid our accommodations aren't up to your ladyship's standards. The Carmelite sisters take a vow of poverty. We live a very simple life.

MILADY

Does this simple life include wine?

ABBESS

Yes, of course. I'll have Constance bring you some food and drink.

MILADY

(Startled)
Constance...?

ABBESS

Sister Constance, I mean. She is quite new to our order. So new that I sometimes forget...

MILADY

Of course. I understand. I just – I had a friend by that name... from Antwerp?

ABBESS

This young woman is from Paris.

MILADY

Ah...

ABBESS

In fact, she is our dear Queen's protégée.

MILADY

How delightful! Any friend of Her Majesty's is a friend of mine. I look forward to meeting her.

ABBESS

I will send her along directly.

(The ABBESS exits.)

END

MILADY

Constance Bonacieux! It has to be! So you have escaped and are hiding here, eh? I wonder if your lover knows. Oh, D'Artagnan... vengeance will soon be mine.

(CONSTANCE enters behind her carrying a tray with a simple decanter of wine, a glass, and a small loaf of bread.)

CONSTANCE

Lady de Winter?

MILADY

Come in my dear – come in.

CONSTANCE

The Abbess said you were hungry.

(CONSTANCE sets the tray on the table.)

MILADY

Yes, I am. Thank you.

CONSTANCE

Is there anything else you need?

MILADY

Just your company, if you have the time.

CONSTANCE

My company...?

MILADY

I don't mean to presume. You no doubt have duties to attend to. It's just that I dine alone so often.