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without any further protection. All the outrages—burglaries, thefts, and murders—which were then so common in Paris, crowded upon her mind; she was sure it was a band of cut-throats who were making all this disturbance outside; they must be well aware how lonely the house stood, and if let in would perpetrate some wicked deed against her mistress; and so she remained in her room, trembling and quaking with fear, and cursing Baptiste and his sister's wedding as well.

Meanwhile the hammering at the door was being continued; and she fancied she heard a voice shouting at intervals, "Oh! do open the door! For God's sake, do open the door!" At last La Martinière's anxiety rose to such a pitch that, taking up the lighted candle, she ran out into the passage. There she heard quite plainly the voice of the person knocking, "For God's sake! do open the door, please!" "Certainly," thought she, "that surely is not the way a robber would knock. Who knows whether it is not some poor man being pursued and wants protection from Mademoiselle, who is always ready to do an act of kindness? But let us be cautious." Opening a window, she called out, asking who was down there making such a loud noise at the house-door so late at night, awakening everybody up out of their sleep; and she endeavoured to give her naturally deep voice as manly a tone as she possibly could.

By the glimmer of the moon, which now broke through the dark clouds, she could make out a tall figure, enveloped in a light-grey mantle, having his broad-brimmed hat pulled down right over his eyes. Then she shouted in a loud voice, so as to be heard by the man below, "Baptiste, Claude, Pierre, get up and go and see who this good-for-nothing vagabond is,

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