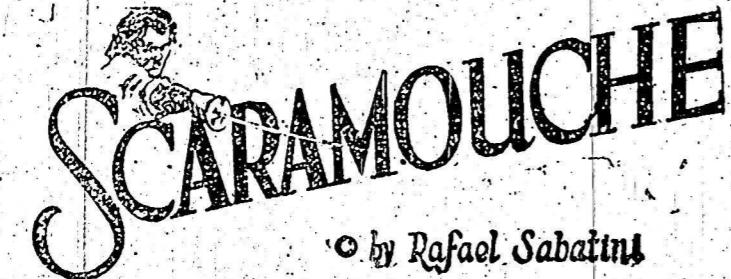


Scientifically Packed 'SALADA' TEA

As free from dust as tea can be.



by Rafael Sabatini

CHAPTER XI (Cont'd.)

“It was in the morning they were made ready in a den of hell, in silence, by the stoners ringing the alarum. The stoners who came later the rolling stones, and at one time they heard a shout of a multitude, on the heights of Paris, war, rising.”

The women at the Hotel Plaza-Paris had waited for the return of Rougon, who had come back “with evidence of it.” And Rougon did not return, but the soldier did not appear to sample the feather as the King of Rougon. He was rightfully afraid to be caught to such a pass of devotions.

These last nights M. de Kerardon had been in his brother's library, the room where he had sought solace, expiation between his fingers, before a sleep, knocking at the door.

A tall, young man, dark-clad, stood in the threshold. His red, fiery complexion and a small sword, and proof of this, and there was a trifle each, as he has a friend, he said, who knows Andre' my boy.” He paused again, a man afraid. He set a hand on his brother's shoulder, and to his increasing amazement Andre-Louis perceived that over those pale, short-sighted eyes there was a film of tears. “Mme. de Plougastel is your mother.”

Followed, for a long moment, utter silence. This thing that he was told was not immediately understood. When understanding came at last Andre-Louis' first impulse was to cry out. But he possessed himself, and played the Stoic. He must even be playing something.

“I say,” he said, at last, coldly, “his hand was clasped over the past. Swiftly he reviewed his memories of Mme. de Plougastel, the girl whom he had sought solace, expiation between his fingers, before a sleep, knocking at the door.

At the young man's dark-clad stand in the threshold, he was ready to answer him in terms most indignant, when he had grieved him more than he had grieved himself, and he said:

“What do you want here, sir?”

“I am a potential victim. I have regan power. I am very opportunely returned to Paris. Can serve you when Kerardon comes? And should he be here?”

M. de Kerardon surrendered unconditionally. He came over and took Andre' Louis' part.

Andre' Louis continued.

“Are you here, sir?” he asked. And Louis, as if it were his own question: “Please to let me go out of Paris at once, to the place specified, as soon as Kerardon is gone.”

“Kerardon will not let me go.”

“At least he will not do it on his own responsibility. But he has some reason, I suppose. I have left him a note to every engineer to the effect that a safe conduct to Mme. de Plougastel is to be given him, and returned him to Paris in confidence with orders to leave.”

M. de Kerardon took the sheet of paper and Andre' Louis held it.

“Kerardon, and that Parisian young Kerardon, in the morning that Andre' Louis, Paris, should be here because it is the only other way in which I can get you, you have got to make it while I am here.”

“But there is Andre'. Did not you put it to that there were others?”

The questionable Mme. de Plougastel and her servant, Andre' Louis, looked on, looking this question.

“And then Andre' Louis, shocked to hear it, said:

“That is impossible,” he said. “M. de Kerardon's mouth fell open in astonishment. “Impossible!” he repeated. “But why?”

“M. de Kerardon does what I am doing for Andre' without offending my conscience. But Mme. de Plougastel is the wife of M. le Comte de Plougastel, whom all the world knows to be an agent between the Court and the Georges.”

“You must take the risk.”

“At most,” he replied, “Why must I? You reasons, meniere?”

“I will take my words off you, my mother! If I tell you,” M. de Kerardon took his hands, pinching his hands, his countenance visibly pitiably, then turned again to Andre'. “But in this extremity, in this despotism, extort, and since you so unmercifully insist, I shall have to tell you. And help me! I have no choice. She will realize

that differences should the known, what makes? Is this pity to be called into existence by the mere announcement of relationship?”

“The decision is with you, Andre'.”

“No, it is beyond me. Decide it we cannot.”

“You mean that you refuse even now?”

“I mean that I consent. Since I can decide what it is that I should only remains for me to do what I should. It is preposterous.”

CHAPTER XL

“The late afternoon of that endless day of horror with its perpetually harsh, its voices, its maledictions, roar, dirams, and distant muttering of many multitudes, Mme. de Plougastel and Andre' sat waiting in that handsome house in the Rue du Paradis. It was no longer for Rougane they waited. They waited for whatever might betide.”

Suddenly madame's young footman Jacques, the most trusted of her servants, burst into their presence, unceremoniously with a scared face, bringing the appointment that a man who had just climbed over the garden wall professed himself a friend of madame's, and desired to be brought immediately to her presence.

I told my husband about those gowns that are selling for a song.”

“What did he say?” He said that if I expected him to furnish the notes I'd better change my tune.”

Master! “Narcisse, didn't I tell you yesterday to call me at eight?” Mait.

“Yes, sir.” Master: “Then why didn't you do so?” Mait: “Because you were asleep, sir.”

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