

CHASTE ISABELLE A Parade By Thomas Gueulette

Translated and adapted by Frank J. Morlock C 2002

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Etext by Dagny

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LEANDRE
ISABELLE
CASSANDRE
VILLEBREQUIN
GILLES

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GILLES: It seems to me, Master, there were big doings in your neighborhood last night. The old geezers played all night; yesterday evening they were a curious sight.

LEANDRE: All these splendors are causing me a sorrowful sorrow; for finally, Mr. Cassandre and Mr. Villebrequin are two characters who have means.

GILLES: By Jove, I think they have means.

LEANDRE: Finally, the two of them are amorous of my charming Isabelle.

GILLES: Yes, my word, these old fools smell fresh meat, they want it.

LEANDRE: If you are not going to assuage my misfortune, you can count that you won't have Mr. Leandre for your master any more.

GILLES: Oh well, what's to be done?

LEANDRE: Got to put them in a funk, make them change their decision.

GILLES: Yes, we must separate them from this venereal fever which is torturing them.

LEANDRE: You put your nose on it exactly, that's where the prick is.

GILLES: I know quite well, too, where the prick is.

LEANDRE: Shut up! An honest man must never speak of his mistress.

GILLES: What I'm saying about her isn't to talk about her, but in the end a throat that's been cut and a deflowered girl, there's no remedy.

LEANDRE: That is true; but don't you know that there's always a way to rebuild a virgin, and that these old, old fogies are preventing me from getting in.

GILLES: By Jove, that girl there is less afraid of the entering than the leaving, that girl—there, she would like you always to stay in.

LEANDRE: You see quite well it's necessary to prevent these gentlemen from prowling around her,

GILLES: Oh,! in that case, our master, close your ass and open your ears.

LEANDRE: I consent to it, well?

GILLES: It's necessary for you to get rid of Mr. Cassandre and Mr. Villebrequin, right?

LEANDRE: No question. But how will you do it?

GILLES: By Jove, if necessary I will persuade them that an ass is a parakeet. Go, leave it to me to do, but I see Miz Isabelle coming.

LEANDRE: We mustn't tell her anything of our sham, she is so modest and natural.

GILLES: I will leave you two together, by Jove you've no need of me to tune yourselves up, meanwhile, I am

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going to take a good cleansing enema to my paunch.

(EXIT Gilles.)

ISABELLE: (entering) Ah, good day then, Leandre, why didn't you come to our place yesterday, as you usually do?

LEANDRE: Charming Isabelle, you were embarrassed, you had the old geezer, the curio.

ISABELLE: You know quite well there's always a place for you. You have something against me?

LEANDRE: Rather against God.

ISABELLE: (laughing) Ah, ah! and me, too.

LEANDRE: Charming Isabelle, you don't leave much to be desired. But Mr. Cassandre and Mr. Villebrequin are causing me pain, they ogle you; yet you do nothing to get out of it.

ISABELLE: That's what I was thinking on behalf of my dear lover.

LEANDRE: Gilles is preparing a sham.

ISABELLE: I will prepare a better one than he. My dear Leandre, let me do it. I see some one coming. Go away, withdraw.

LEANDRE: I've always done what you wanted. How lucky I am to love a person as honest as you, and who is up to snuff.

ISABELLE: Goodbye, my dear lover.

(EXIT Leandre, Enter Villebrequin.)

VILLEBREQUIN: I believe that there she is, this adorable Isabelle. Hello my beautiful lil' angel of Paradise.

ISABELLE: (taking him under chin) Your servant, Mr. Villebrequin.

VILLEBREQUIN: This girl ravishes me, she's modesty itself.

ISABELLE: Ah! Not at all, sir.

VILLEBREQUIN: Why, my beautiful child, I would really like you to come spend the day in my house, my wife's in the countryside.

ISABELLE: Sir, I never go to town.

VILLEBREQUIN: It's that I'm so afraid of catching cold; the colds are bad this year.

ISABELLE: If you'd like to come sup in my chamber I will have a salad.

VILLEBREQUIN: I'm all for that, my pretty.

ISABELLE: Isn't that better than spending your money the way you did yesterday?

VILLEBREQUIN: Yesterday, I made you see a curiosity, you will show me your little trick.

ISABELLE: You have only to speak. But, if you want to, you can loan me ten shillings to give you a supper.

VILLEBREQUIN: By Saint John, I didn't think of that; but ten shillings, that's a lot.

ISABELLE: Because I intend to make you a bargain, and after the meal comes the dance, moreover I have to pay my rent.

VILLEBREQUIN: Here, my pretty, I will eat less than a party.

ISABELLE: I will wait for you this evening at eight o'clock precisely; only knock at the door.

VILLEBREQUIN: Yes, my charmer, let me satisfy my impatience.

(EXIT Villebrequin.)

ISABELLE: (alone) Now there's one already fleeced and I intend to deserve the esteem of my dear Leandre, by getting rid of the other one. Good, I see he's coming here. (ENTER Cassandre) Hello my darling, my everything, I bet you were thinking of me.

CASSANDRE: You guessed it, my charmer. By the way, do you know I really wanted to dance very much myself yesterday, 'cause it cost me six sou for the hurdy-gurdy.

ISABELLE: I really believe it, but my dear Cassandre, I don't like to see you spend your money like that.

CASSANDRE: I don't like it much either; but you enchant me by speaking this speech, adorable little pretty-pretty, also I'll never do it again, but I wanted to divert you.

ISABELLE: It's not the blind that I love the best.

CASSANDRE: I believe it; let's go up to your place.

ISABELLE: Oh, for the moment I can't, but if you want to come this evening at eight o'clock, I will give you supper.

CASSANDRE: You will give me supper? You are adorable, never have I known anything so charming as

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you.

ISABELLE: Ah! as for me, I love you, although I've never loved anything and I don't know what it is to do so.

CASSANDRE: So much the better, my darling, I will show it to you. How full of happiness I am!

ISABELLE: In that case I can wait for you this evening at eight o'clock precisely. When it tolls at the little Convent, just rap at the gate.

CASSANDRE: I'd sooner lose my life, than lose such a lucky piece of luck.

ISABELLE: You really love me so much then?

CASSANDRE: I'm dying of love; see how I'm coughing.

ISABELLE: So that I don't have to do anything? For in the end if you come to our place it won't be for nothing.

CASSANDRE: I'm really counting on that.

ISABELLE: If that's the case, I can beg you to do me a pleasure.

CASSANDRE: Speak, pretty one, what can I do?

ISABELLE: My good friend, can you loan me thirty shillings?

CASSANDRE: But, do you know what thirty shillings are?

ISABELLE: Yes, my dear lover, it's because I know it that I am begging you to loan me them, I don't have enough to give you a supper.

CASSANDRE: As for me, I don't care to make a good buy; sobriety gives health, and health is the greatest of all goods. A salad, and let 'em love me, will satisfy me marvelously.

ISABELLE: Why, it's not so much for having supper; it's for having two chairs and a table.

CASSANDRE: We'll forego that; we'll eat on the bed.

ISABELLE: I have too much honor to receive you like that; I thought that you loved me; but you don't love me. I am very unhappy.

CASSANDRE: Well, my darling, I can't hold out any longer. Would you like fifteen?

ISABELLE: No, you don't love me. . . . I am indeed mistaken .

CASSANDRE: In good faith, I can't give you more — think of it carefully.

ISABELLE: (weeping) No, hoo, hoo —

CASSANDRE: I'm going; I can't see you in this affliction.

ISABELLE: Hoo, hoo, hoo—

CASSANDRE: (returning) Would you take eighteen?

ISABELLE: No, I am really unhappy.

CASSANDRE: Come on, you've got to be reasonable as well, and diminish something on your side; I will place twenty and that's all I can do.

ISABELLE: And as for me, in good conscience, I cannot. They love you and this is what happens.

CASSANDRE: Why, also thirty!

ISABELLE: I'm not worth it, right. Hoo, hoo!

CASSANDRE: You're worth all you can be worth. But thirty shillings!

ISABELLE: There's only one word that will do: either you want it or you don't want it.

CASSANDRE: Judge by the excess of my love. Here.

ISABELLE: Why that's only fifteen.

CASSANDRE: I will give you the rest after supper.

ISABELLE: That being the case, it can't be done. What! You have esteem for me, and you are not proud of your Isabelle?

CASSANDRE: Here's the other fifteen.

ISABELLE: (laughing) Till this evening when eight o'clock strikes. I await you. Knock at the gate, and be very careful to be noticed. How happy I am to have a lover like Mr. Cassandre.

CASSANDRE: Till tonight, my pretty, I'll be careful not to miss it. Thirty shillings. What love makes you do! Thirty shillings, thirty shillings!

(EXIT Cassandre.)

ISABELLE: (alone) And from the two of them! My dear lover will no longer reproach me with not knowing

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how to earn my bread. For we have wherewithal to do it. But isn't that him I see coming?

LEANDRE: (entering) Well, my charmer, what have you done?

ISABELLE: I've earned thirty shillings.

LEANDRE: Now that's what they call knowing how to live.

ISABELLE: It's for our supper.

LEANDRE: There has to be a little order in all that one does, and you go to work too fast, I've already told you that.

ISABELLE: That's true, I get a bit carried away, but I will correct myself; I am doing it for the best.

LEANDRE: You are a bit too well known in the neighborhood; you must move.

ISABELLE: I will do all that you like, my dear lover; I shall have soon changed residence you know.

LEANDRE: I'll take care of everything since you have cash.

ISABELLE: Willingly. I will leave the neighborhood very soon if you find it agreeable, for I've given a rendezvous at eight o'clock to these two old geezers, and I would much prefer for them to find me out of the nest.

LEANDRE: That wouldn't be honest; they must find you at home, but don't open.

ISABELLE: Ah! my dear lover, I really think they can never open; don't be uneasy for you are a bit jealous, and quite assuredly you are very wrong.

LEANDRE: I am going to disguise myself; let me do it and we will see a fine sport.

ISABELLE: Ah! my dear lover, don't kill them.

LEANDRE: As for me, I am not killing anybody; but I intend to avenge myself for the insolence they've had in making dishonest proposals to you.

ISABELLE: I am going back to our place, and I will await you with an expectant expectation.

(EXIT Isabelle.)

VILLEBREQUIN: (entering) Now's the hour or I am much deceived .

CASSANDRE: (entering) When will it be a little sooner, impatience always gives pleasure to beautiful; people. Let's rap!

BOTH AT THE SAME TIME: Who goes there? It is I, charming Isabelle. Who you?

CASSANDRE, VILLEBREQUIN: You? You? Yes, I — Me!

CASSANDRE: Go, you are an old fool.

VILLEBREQUIN: Here's a handsome amorous gallant of seventy years.

CASSANDRE: That's not true; I'm only sixty-eight, come plum time. Aren't you older?

VILLEBREQUIN: I'm as old as I am, that's not your affair.

CASSANDRE: But what are you asking for at this gate?

VILLEBREQUIN: For that matter, what are you asking for?

CASSANDRE: I want you to get out of here.

VILLEBREQUIN: I'm not going, and I will kick you out.

CASSANDRE: You'll kick me out, old fool?

VILLEBREQUIN: We'll see about that, old run-down clock.

(ENTER LEANDRE AND GILLES dressed as an ARCHER, Police of the night watch.)

LEANDRE: What uproar is this that I hear down there?

CASSANDRE, VILLEBREQUIN: (at the same time) It's not me, it's this old fool. Sir, he's the one who is wrong. Sir, I will give you—

LEANDRE: Give it to me right away. (after having taken the money he says to GILLES) Sir, do your duty.

(Gilles leads them away.)

LEANDRE: (To Isabelle who is in her house) Come, miss, come down. We can now slave at our leisure, and enjoy the sweet fruit of our chaste loves.

GILLES: (releasing them in the wings) Go, gentlemen, make peace, believe me, I am going to drink to your health. Now that's what it is to dine abroad.

(Cassandre and Villebrequin are tied and bound face to face; they struggle, fall to the earth, and fight, soon up, soon down, and they go rolling out.

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CURTAIN