

CHAPTER TWELVE

Castaway on the Riviera

THERE was no etiquette at these small drawing-rooms. People came and went at pleasure... Once abreast of the card-table, he placed himself opposite to Madame von Rosen, and, as soon as he had caught her eye, withdrew to the embrasure of a window. There she had speedily joined him.

'You did well to call me,' she said, a little wildly. 'These cards will be my ruin.'

'Leave them,' said Otto.

'I!' she cried, and laughed; 'they are my destiny. My only chance was to die of a consumption; now I must die in a garret.'

'You are bitter to-night,' said Otto.

'I have been losing,' she replied. 'You do not know what greed is.'

'I have come, then, in an evil hour,' said he.

'Ah, you wish a favour!' she cried, brightening beautifully...

'...I will put it in another way,' returned Otto. 'Did you ever steal?'

'Often!' cried the Countess. 'I have broken all the ten commandments; and if there were more to-morrow, I should not sleep till I had broken these...'¹

THE Riviera for which Louis was bound was a place for sinners and gamblers as well as the respectable rich, travelling in search of health. In hotel drawing rooms and on sunny promenades, well-to-do British citizens clung to life while the many English names on cemetery headstones bore witness to those who had lost their last gamble. Louis stepped off the train at Mentone on the eve of his 23rd birthday. At first he lost his bearings at the new, unfamiliar railway station but within a few minutes there was instant recall of his last time in Mentone, as a boy of 13 with his mother and cousin Jessie Warden: 'I was met by a great volley of odours out of the lemon and orange gardens, and the past linked on to the present and, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the whole scene fell before me into order and I was at home. I nearly danced again.'²

But at 23 he was carrying far more baggage and had paddled through too many quagmires. Poor Jessie Warden, once so full of life, had lain in her grave for six years now and Louis was no longer the innocent 'darling Lou' fussed over by his mother. On his birthday he avoided all reference to past differences and wrote her a long, chatty letter, noting how 'the sea makes the same noise in the shingle; and the lemon and orange gardens still discharge in the still air their fresh perfume; and the people have still brown comely faces; and the Pharmacie Gras still dispenses English medicines; and the invalids (Eheu!) still sit on the promenade and trifle with thin fingers in the fringes of shawls and wrappers...'³

Louis's own illness remained mysterious. He suffered hot sweats and a bad head which seemed to 'fill with blood' at the slightest exertion, together with a 'fanciful crawling in the spine' and cold feet. He found walking downhill or coming downstairs particularly difficult. Nervous exhaustion might have contributed to all this, but the symptoms are consistent also with secondary syphilis which could recur intermittently for several years. Louis still had a sense that his life might soon be cut short, and reflected in a letter to Colvin that 'the big hand is spread and waiting for us, probably only a small way on'.⁴

He wrote to Baxter: 'I am only gradually finding out how nearly done for I have been; I am awfully weary and nervous; I cannot read or write almost at all and I am not able to walk much.'⁵ Yet Louis was grateful that Fanny Sitwell had been able to have a quiet word with his father in London 'and explained to him a little that I was not the extremely cheerful destroyer of home-quiet that he had pictured to himself, and that I really was bothered about this wretched business'.⁶ Having escaped from the great Calvinist city of repression, Louis was already missing his friends: 'I wonder strangely what everyone is doing tonight - friends in London, Antwerp, Edinburgh; and me alone here up at the top of the house, with my two little windows shining, two little lighted beacons over the peaceful Mediterranean.'⁷

Already his little circle of friends was breaking up. Bob in Antwerp was lonely and wrote to Louis: 'I have been so accustomed to live entirely with you and see and do everything with, or with reference to you, that the being unable to tell you everything day by day, to hear what you say, and to have you for public audience

world and everything that I am now quite stumped... Success means you, life means you, friendship means you, everything means you.⁸

Bob was also in financial difficulty, to which Louis responded by sending 20 francs - then complained, typically, when Bob did not acknowledge his generosity.⁹ Meanwhile Baxter had a serious legal career to pursue in Edinburgh, while the beautiful, gifted Ferrier, unable to get to grips with life beyond university, was slipping into a personal hell of drink and despair. By now the Simp had turned 30 and become embroiled in the passionate liaison with 17-year-old Etta McKay which set the pious tongues of Edinburgh wagging. News of this had reached Louis in a letter from his mother, to which he replied sharply: 'Will you kindly ask the person who told you that about Simpson to close their mouths in which case they will probably catch no flies.'¹⁰

One can only imagine what the unco guid of Edinburgh would have made of Louis's love affair, albeit platonic and conducted by letter, with the wife of a clergyman. He poured his heart out daily to Mrs Sitwell, telling her how the doctor in Nice confirmed he had no lung disease, then harking back to the few days spent with her at Chepstow Place, 'and you were there in the mob cap and the maroon dressing gown. I was very happy'.¹¹ In the early days at Mentone he spent much time alone and crying, his whole life shipwrecked: 'To sit by the sea and to be conscious of nothing but the sound of the waves and the sunshine over all your body, is not unpleasant; but I was an Archangel once... O Medea, kill me, or make me young again!'¹²

But Louis could never succumb to the slough of despond for long, and soon he was acknowledging the profound impact the Vicar's wife had made on his life: 'I have been wondering to myself as to the change that has come over me since I knew you... it is more as if you had come to me with a sudden great light and, for the first time, I had seen what I am and about what I always had been really. If I never saw you again, and lived all my days in Arabia, I should be reminded of you continually; you have gone all over the house of my mind and left everywhere sweet traces of your passage... O I am proud - I am glorious! that I have been made of this honourable stuff.'¹³

Yet if Fanny Sitwell had saved Louis from his quagmire of depravity, his new chaste love and reformed ways caused much amusement among his friends. From Edinburgh the 'dissoloot Writer to the Signet' enquired: 'Are you still suffering from the paroxysm of virtue which characterised your last days here?'¹⁴ Louis replied to Baxter ruefully: 'Yes, I am as moral as ever; more moral. A man with a smashed-up constitution and "on a diet" can be moral at the lowest possible figure... My whole game is morality now; and I am very serious about it. Indeed I am very serious about everything, and go to the boghouse with as much solemnity as another man would go to church.'¹⁵

There was still the vexed question of Louis's troubled relationship with his father. He loved him dearly but could not be the son Tom Stevenson wanted him to be. Screwing up his courage, in 'a fearfully exciting letter to write', Louis had it out with him: 'I said that nothing would make me return to the life we had been leading for half a year back and that I had determined, in the interest of all three of us, to take my life into my own guidance and implored him to have some confidence in me.'¹⁶ Tom Stevenson, anxious not to upset his unstable son, telegraphed back immediately: 'Quite satisfied with your letter - keep mind easy.'¹⁷

Yet Louis's gesture of independence was little more than bravado. After long labours on his behalf by Colvin, the essay on Roads had at last been accepted by the Portfolio magazine and published under the pseudonym L.S. Stoneven, but the three-guinea fee would scarcely support his Riviera lifestyle for a week. At Mentone Louis subsisted as always on Tom Stevenson's bounty: 'I live here at the rate of more than three pounds a week and I do nothing for it. If I did not hope to get well and do good work yet and more than repay my debts to the world, I should consider it right to invest an extra franc or two in laudanum.'¹⁸ One Sunday in early December, Louis took opium and went out for a walk in a vineyard, where he discovered violets growing. That evening the latter-day De Quincey of Mentone wrote a rambling letter to Mrs Sitwell, who had once presented him with such a flower:

'The first violet. There is more secret trouble for the heart in the breath of this small flower, than in all the wines of all the vineyards of Europe. I cannot contain myself. I do not think so small a thing has ever given me such a princely festival of

pleasure. I am quite drunken at heart; and you do not know how the scent of this flower strikes in me the same thought, as the thought of what is most beautiful to me. My little violet, if you could speak I know what you would say! I feel as if my heart were a little bunch of violets in my bosom; and my brain is pleasantly intoxicated with the wonderful odour. I suppose I am writing nonsense but it does not seem nonsense to me. Is it not a wonderful odour; is it not something incredibly subtle and perishable? The first breath, veiled and timid as it seems, maddens and transfigures and transports you out of yourself; and yet if you seek to breathe it again, it is gone - It is like a wind blowing to one out of fairy land...'¹⁹

That same Sunday, with the same heightened sensibility, Louis penned a poem:

*Swallows travel to and fro,
And the great winds come and go,
And the steady breezes blow,
Bearing perfume, bearing love.
Breezes hasten, swallows fly,
Towered clouds forever ply,
And at noonday, you and I
See the same sunshine above.*²⁰

Continuing his letter the following day, he confessed: 'All yesterday, I was under the influence of opium; I had been rather seedy during the night and took a dose in the morning and, for the first time in my life it took effect upon me. I had a day of extraordinary happiness; and when I went to bed, there was something almost terrifying in the pleasures that besieged me in the darkness. Wonderful tremors filled me; my head swam in the most delirious but enjoyable manner; and the bed softly oscillated with me, like a boat in a very gentle ripple. It does not make me write good style apparently, which is just as well lest I should be tempted to renew the experiment; and some verses, which I wrote turn out, on inspection, to be not quite equal to "Kubla Khan"...'²¹

The verses were the last Louis would address to Mrs Sitwell as 'Claire'. He was reading George Sand and had found a name that took his fancy more - henceforth the clergyman's wife would be 'Consuelo', the gypsy who left her husband for her

lover. That winter Mrs Sitwell was unwell and took refuge from the Vicar's attentions at her sister's home in Paris. Meanwhile Colvin also was under the weather and made a health trip to Mentone to see Louis, finding him in better shape and spirits than at their last meeting. Almost immediately they set off for Monte Carlo. In the following two weeks Louis and Colvin got to know each other much better and there seems to have been no jealousy about Mrs Sitwell, although they wrote separately to her in Paris.

The two men went on boat trip and sat outside cafes. While Colvin went off for his daily constitutional, Louis would lounge in the sun outside the Casino. Yet he was not entirely idle and would sit discussing his literary projects with his mentor - the essays on Whitman and John Knox and also a projected collection of Covenanting stories. To this end he wrote to Baxter, asking him to call at Heriot Row and retrieve two stories from the box in his room - The Curate of Anstruther's Bottle and The Devil on Cramond Sands. As authorisation, Louis enclosed a handwritten certificate to present to his parents, complete with a comic stamp showing a silhouetted figure thumbing its nose.²²

Colvin was in the Casino at Monaco, observing only, when a player at one of the tables lost everything. The ruined Pole drew a pistol from his jacket and shot himself in the stomach, in full view of the assembled company. Casino staff were swift to remove the writhing body and mop up the blood, and the gambler's death occurred discreetly off-stage some time later. Louis learned all this at second hand, but the incident drew a cloud across the Monte Carlo sun. On the first day of 1874, Louis and Colvin returned to Mentone and took up residence at the Hotel Mirabeau. There Louis encountered one of the most fascinating women he would ever meet, provoking deeply ambivalent feelings.

She was tall, slim as a nymph, and of a very airy carriage; and her face, which was already beautiful in repose, lightened and changed, flashed into smiles, and glowed with lovely colour at the touch of animation. She was a good vocalist; and, even in speech, her voice commanded a great range of changes, the low notes rich with tenor quality, the upper ringing, on the brink of laughter, into music. A gem of many facets and variable hues of fire; a woman who withheld the better portion of her beauty, and then, in a caressing second, flashed it like a

*weapon full on the beholder; now merely a tall figure and a sallow handsome face, with the evidences of a reckless temper; anon opening like a flower to life and colour, mirth and tenderness...*²³

*... there is about the court a certain lady of a dishevelled reputation... wife or widow of a cloudy count, no longer in her second youth, and already bereft of some of her attractions, who unequivocally occupies the station of the Baron's mistress... She is one rather to make than to prevent a scandal, and she values none of those bribes - money, honours, or employment - with which the situation might be gilded. Indeed, as a person frankly bad, she pleased me... like a piece of nature.*²⁴

The model for Louis's fictitious Countess von Rosen, described in his novel *Prince Otto*, was the Princess Nadia Zassetsky, a sophisticated woman in her fifth decade. The identity and whereabouts of any 'cloudy count' who might have been her husband was left vague, but she claimed to be the mother of ten children. Despite this she retained a powerful allure, combining all the features with which Louis would endow his fictional Countess von Rosen, plus a few more he could never express in his novel *Prince Otto* for fear of offending Mrs Grundy. In fictionalising Nadia Zassetsky years later he would complain: 'To be quite frank, there is a risqué character. The Countess von Rosen, a jolly, elderly - how shall I say? - fuckstress; whom I try to handle, so as to please this rotten public, and damn myself the while for ruining good material. I could, an I dared, make her jump.'²⁵

On a sadder note there was another reason why Louis could not take his eyes off Nadia Zassetsky. He confided to his mother how she 'puts me a little in mind of poor Jessie Warden curiously enough; she has some of the same manner and grimaces; when I see her playing games that I have often played with Jessie, I catch myself often comparing the two.'²⁶

Madame la Princesse and her sister, Madame Sophie Garschine, had left their homes in Georgia and were living in a villa in the grounds of the Hotel Mirabeau, where they would receive visitors for tea served in the Russian style from a samovar. The two upper-class Russians were a world away from the bourgeois ladies of Edinburgh and had none of their inhibitions. Their manners were aristocratic, yet they could be as forthright as the commonest whore in Rose Street or the matter-of-

fact Frauleins of Frankfurt's Rosengasse. For Louis, this was perplexing. Sex so far had been a furtive commercial transaction that had cost him dear. It was not something a respectable woman would ever mention. To encounter in polite society two women who were clearly not prostitutes but were completely open and at ease with their own sexuality left the bashful David Balfour within Louis deeply embarrassed.

Yet he always felt more at ease with married women, whose children were proof of their sexual experience. Always a child at heart, Louis formed an instant rapport with other children and through them he came to know their mothers. That was how he had first shared confidences with Fanny Sitwell, and children were now his entree to the hearts of Mesdames Zassetsky and Garschine. From the outset Louis was entranced by Nelitchka Zassetsky, 'a little polyglot button'²⁷ who could speak French, German, Russian, Italian, Polish or English as the mood took her, while yet three months short of her third birthday: 'I was watching her being fed with great amusement, her face being as broad as it is long and her mouth capable of unlimited extension; when suddenly, her eye catching mine, the fashion of her countenance was changed, and regarding me with a really admirable appearance of offended dignity, she said something in Italian which made everybody laugh much.'²⁸

The word was 'Berechino!' – 'Naughty man!' – and henceforth Louis became Monsieur Berechino. He was fascinated by the little girl as she danced solemnly to the strains of a street organ or sang along, after falling and hurting herself, to the strains of a particular French song that would always stop her crying. Nelitchka was generally happy as the day was long, or as Louis put it: 'She is a hell of a jolly kid.'²⁹ He was fascinated, too, by the occasional glimpse of womanly grace and allure, which the Princess Zassetky possessed in spades, emerging already in her little daughter.

Louis found it harder to like the other child. Pelagie Garschine, or Pella as she was called, was eight and thoroughly spoiled, although pleasant enough when the centre of attention, dancing the tarantella while the Princess Zassetsky played the piano. Madame Garschine, worn down by illness, could not control her daughter and indulged her hopelessly. Louis soon learned from the forthright Princess that Pella

was in fact her child and not Sophie Garschine's. Since Madame Garschine was unable to have children, her sister with Russian pragmatism had simply handed over a daughter at birth. Pella was in fact Nelitchka's sister and 'the curse of the poor adoptive mother's existence. She loves her devotedly and has spoiled her without limit, and Pella repays her with disobedience and drives her into hysterics every day or two...'³⁰

According to the discreet and euphemistic Colvin, Sophie Garschine was 'much of an invalid, consistently gentle and sympathetic, and withal an exquisite musician. For Stevenson this sister conceived a great quasi-maternal tenderness'.³¹ But Colvin was not aware of all that took place, having departed soon after their return to Mentone to see Mrs Sitwell in Paris. Left to his own devices, Louis began to suspect Mme Garschine's tenderness was far from maternal and she was trying to lure him into her bed. She might be around 15 years his senior, and there were limits to the physical appeal of an emaciated young man prone to dizzy spells, but beggars could not be choosers. Fate had cast them away like two wrecks on a Rivieran shore, and who could tell how long either had left for love and happiness?

Had Nadia Zassetsky made a play for Louis, he might have found it harder to resist. Instead, she acted none-too-subtly as her sister's accomplice. Louis, still in the throes of his romance with Fanny Sitwell, decided he had better tell 'Consuelo' what was going on: 'I don't know what Mme G.'s little game is with regard to me. Certainly she has either made up her mind to make a fool of me in a somewhat coarse manner, or else she is in train to make a fool of herself... It is too coarse for a joke. I wish you were here to tell me which it is... Now tonight Mme Z. asked to examine my hand. It was evidently a put up thing, because I had asked her before and she did not do it. Well, she had hardly looked at it before she gave a little start and a cry (she is a finished actress); then followed some hasty rather excited talk between her and her sister in Russian, and then Mme Z. said: 'Il y a quelque chose ici que ma soeur me defend de de vous dire.' And then after a pause 'Et cependant je crois bien que vous comprenez.' A chair next Mme G. became vacant, she motioned to me to take it and talked to me for a long time quite seriously and nicely about anything you like. I took the first occasion of leaving the chair and going away;

when up gets Mme with a sort of fling and changes her seat also saying something to her sister quite angrily in Russian.

'You must understand that since my illness I have grown unspeakably timid, bashful and blushful - I don't know why - and I suppose that that is where the humour of the thing lies... it now must be one of two things - a deliberate plant or an affair, which may bother me. It makes it all the more difficult for me to know how to act, that I really do like Mme G. and am sorry for her; feelings that will not be lessened at all by this plant, if only she would be done with it.'³² There may have been more to this than Louis was prepared to tell his Consuelo, as he hinted in a letter to Baxter: 'I shall be better able to tell you of all this when I see you as there are certain things that I do not care to write about. Don't open your eyes - the length they would occupy stands for the better part of my discretion.'³³

Whatever the case, in a few days Sophie Garschine had abandoned any thoughts of an affair and settled for friendship. She and her sister were soon captivated by Louis's charm and he was able to reassure Mrs Sitwell: 'Both of the ladies are very kind and jolly to me today; and this is the second without foolishness up to now. They are both of them the frankest of mortals; and have explained to me, in one way or other, that I am to them as some undiscovered animal. They do not seem to cultivate RLS's in Muscovy.'³⁴

There was another reason for discretion - the pious Isabella Romanes, mother of the boy with whom Louis fought a pistol duel. She was staying in Mentone with her family and was in correspondence with Maggie Stevenson - any whiff of scandal would go straight back to Heriot Row. Meanwhile at home all Edinburgh was convulsed by a fit of righteous repentance, whipped up by the American evangelists Moody and Sankey. Louis read of this in the Scottish newspapers and passed on the news to Bob: 'One can go to these prayer meetings every day, if one pleases; and all the world is repenting of sin and bathing in the blood of the lamb without money and without price, world without end, amen, glory, glory hallelujah.'³⁵

Had Louis been at home, he would have found it impossible to refrain from facetious remarks, provoking further conflict with this father. As it was, from the safety of Mentone, he raged about the 'Edinburgh revival' in a letter to Baxter: 'They

sent me magazines about it; the obscenest rubbish I was ever acquainted with. Simpson tells me MacGil [a lawyer friend of the Simp's] has stopped liquoring; he will take to buggery likely. I bless God I am an infidel when I read of such nervous fiddle-de-dee, and these people are down upon the spiritualists! Why I saw that bald-headed bummer J. Balfour [head of the Balfour side of Louis's family and a supporter of the Magdalene Asylum] had been describing a meeting he was at. He said, "They then enjoyed very precious and manifest tokens of the Lord's Presence." If I had been there and had sworn upon all the obscene and blasphemous phrases in my large repertory, that God had not been there, they would have told me it was because my heart was hard... O Saprستي! if I had hold of James B. by the testicles I would knock his bald cranium against the wall until I was sick.'³⁶

Excessive piety in others provoked Louis to apeliike fury, although usually within the confines of his own head. The thought of returning to the claustrophobic restraints of Edinburgh was not a happy one. Fortunately Louis remained unwell enough to convince his parents of the need for an extended stay, although the doctor could find no evidence of lung disease and simply changed his tonic. Dr Bennet was able, however, to treat a troublesome facial sore with 'a villainous acid that deforms my human face divine past recognition'.³⁷ The sore would hardly make Louis an appetising target for seduction by Madame Garschine, particularly if she considered its most likely cause. Louis, however, was at pains to point out in a letter to Colvin: 'The growth was a wart after all, and it has been cauterised; I did not know a wart could be so sore; the last two or three days, it has really troubled me.'³⁸

As for Madame Garschine, she was perhaps most useful to Louis as a means to excite jealousy in the breast of Mrs Sitwell. Since the Vicar's wife was then with her lover Colvin in Paris, her jealousy was probably a figment of Louis's imagination but he hastened to reassure her: 'I am only happy in the thought of you, my dear - this other woman is interesting to me as a hill might be, or a book, or a picture - but you have all my heart...'³⁹

Long months of platonic letter-writing were taking their toll on the recovering invalid, who in livelier moments would reflect that 'the devil is not yet dead'.⁴⁰ At the height of his passion for Mrs Sitwell he remained chaste but found sublimation

increasingly difficult. He was attempting an essay on John Knox and his relations with women, delighted with the idea that Edinburgh's great pillar of Calvinist respectability might have had feet of clay and loins of something less inert. The essay in its final form, duly expurgated by Colvin, would be disappointingly limp but Louis enjoyed the research, particularly the mildly pornographic *Vies Des Dames Illustres - Lives of Illustrious Women* - by the salacious 17th-century Abbe de Brantome. Louis asked Colvin to send him a copy from Paris - 'It is indecent, you know. I know you will be a dear creature and charge yourself with my desires'⁴¹ - and three days later urged him again: 'I have a real litch after Brantome, I must read him, and I think he would be the balmiest fellow to possess.'⁴²

Colvin duly complied. While in Paris he also purchased, at Louis's behest, a splendid cloak worthy of a young man who yearned to cast off the tightly-buttoned topcoat of Presbyterian respectability. Colvin returned to Mentone to find Louis making his first attempt at growing the piratical moustache that would soon become inseparable from his public image. With the cloak and a brigandish hat he cut a figure much admired by the Russian ladies, who found it a vast improvement on the appalling dress sense of the average Englishman, although it would only confirm the opinion of respectable Edinburgh that young Stevenson was a poseur to be shunned.

Louis's friendship with Nadia Zassetsky continued to grow. With his encouragement, the Princess played Scots airs on the piano, many of which had been favourites of Jessie Warden's, and also displayed Jessie's talent for mimicry, walking up and down the room imitating different people while Louis stood in the corner and laughed till he was sore, scarcely able to believe 'that Jessie was here no more to make me laugh'.⁴³ It is not clear if Louis appreciated how far Nadia Zassetsky's talent for impersonation extended into real life. Certainly when Prince Lev Galitzine arrived in mid-March to stay with the ladies in their villa, Louis accepted her explanation that the prince was their cousin - when in fact he was Nadia's long-term lover and father of her children.

A Nadia or Maria Zakharovna Kherkhuedlidze was the eldest daughter of Prince Zakharia Kherkhuedlidze, who was mayor of Kerch in the Crimea and owned the Novy Svet estate near the town of Sudak. Nadia's 'cloudy count' was a landowner

called Zassedsky or Zacedsky, to whom she was unhappily married but by whom she may have had as many as six children. During long periods away from Zassedsky she lived with Lev Galitzine in hotels and lodgings around Europe, bearing the Prince four daughters including little 'Nelitchka' - whose proper title, once her formal adoption was approved by the Tsar in 1890, would be Princess Sophie Galitzine. Another daughter, Nadia, born in Warsaw two years after Louis's sojourn in Mentone, would also be formally adopted as a Princess - but not the problematic Pella.

With such an unorthodox sexual history, Nadia Zassetsky was every bit as fascinating as Louis's fictitious Countess von Rosen, while her real-life Prince outranked his counterpart Baron Gondremark in Prince Otto. Lev Galitzine came from an ancient family so noble that it could claim to outrank the Romanovs who became Tsars of Russia. While his mistress was in Mentone, he had been studying Roman Law at Gottingen with a view to becoming Professor of Law at Moscow University. But his plans for a legal career would be as short-lived as Louis's, and his relationship with Nadia would come to an end in 1877. In 1883 he married the Countess Maria Mikhailovna Orlov-Denissov and went to live with her and his two younger daughters at the Novy Svet estate which he had purchased from Nadia and her brother Nicholas. There the Prince secured his place in history as father of the Russian wine industry and created a champagne to rival that of France.

Meanwhile Nadia and her ailing sister slipped quietly out of the story. On March 30, Louis's last night in Mentone, he wrote to Mrs Sitwell: 'I cannot tell how strange and sad I feel. I leave behind me a dear friend whom I have but little hope of seeing again between the eyes... God help us all, this is a rough world: address Hotel St Romain, rue St Roch, Paris. I draw the line: a chapter finished. Ever your faithful friend Robert Louis Stevenson.

'The line

That bit of childishness has made me laugh, do you blame me?'⁴⁴

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- ¹ RLS, Prince Otto, Chap IX.
 - ² RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, November 12, 1873. Yale 167, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ³ RLS to his Mother, Mentone, November 13, 1873. Yale 168, MS Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
 - ⁴ RLS to Sidney Colvin, Mentone, November 14 or 15, 1873. Yale 170, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ⁵ RLS to Charles Baxter, Mentone, November 15, 1873. Yale 172, MS Yale.
 - ⁶ Ibid.
 - ⁷ RLS to Charles Baxter, Mentone, November 16, 1873. Yale 172, MS Yale.
 - ⁸ Bob Stevenson to RLS, Antwerp, early November, 1873.
 - ⁹ RLS to Bob Stevenson, Mentone, December 2, 1873. Yale 180, MS Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
 - ¹⁰ RLS to his Mother, Mentone, November 17, 1873. Yale 171, MS Yale.
 - ¹¹ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, November 18, 1873. Yale 174, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ¹² RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, November 21, 1873. Yale 174, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ¹³ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, November 26, 1873. Yale 176, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ¹⁴ Charles Baxter to RLS, Edinburgh, November 16, 1873.
 - ¹⁵ RLS to Charles Baxter, Mentone, December 4, 1873. Yale 184, MS Yale.
 - ¹⁶ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, November 22, 1873. Yale 176, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ¹⁷ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, November 25, 1873. Yale 176. MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ¹⁸ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, November 28, 1873. Yale 176. MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ¹⁹ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, December 7, 1873. Yale 187. MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ²⁰ RLS, Collected Poems, 75.
 - ²¹ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, December 8, 1873. Yale 187. MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ²² RLS to Charles Baxter, Monaco, December 22, 1873. Yale 194. MS Yale.
 - ²³ RLS, Prince Otto, Chap IV.
 - ²⁴ RLS, Prince Otto, Chap II.
 - ²⁵ RLS to WE Henley, Hyeres, early May 1883. Yale 1095. MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ²⁶ RLS to his Mother, Mentone, January 11, 1874. Yale 205, MS Yale and Bancroft Library.
 - ²⁷ RLS to his Mother, Mentone, January 7, 1874. Yale 202, MS Yale.
 - ²⁸ Ibid.
 - ²⁹ RLS to Bob Stevenson, Mentone, January 12, 1874. Yale 207, Text copy in British Library.
 - ³⁰ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, January 15, 1874. Yale 210, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ³¹ Sidney Colvin, Memories and Notes.
 - ³² RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, January 16, 1874. Yale 214, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ³³ RLS to Charles Baxter, Mentone, January 15, 1874. Yale 212, MS Yale.
 - ³⁴ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, January 18, 1874. Yale 214, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ³⁵ RLS to Bob Stevenson, Mentone, January 12, 1874. Yale 207, Text copy British Library.
 - ³⁶ RLS to Charles Baxter, Mentone, January 15, 1874. Yale 212, MS Yale.
 - ³⁷ RLS to Sidney Colvin, Mentone, January 13, 1874. Yale 209, MS Yale.
 - ³⁸ Ibid.
 - ³⁹ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Mentone, January 26, 1874. Yale 224, MS National Library of Scotland.
 - ⁴⁰ RLS to Bob Stevenson, Mentone, January 4, 1874. Yale 192, MS Yale.
 - ⁴¹ RLS to Sidney Colvin, Mentone, January 28, 1874. Yale 227, MS Yale.
 - ⁴² RLS to Sidney Colvin, Mentone, January 31, 1874. Yale 230, Text copy Yale.
 - ⁴³ RLS to his Mother, Mantone, February 5, 1874, Yale 236, MS Yale.
 - ⁴⁴ RLS to Mrs Sitwell, March 30, 1874. Yale 256, Text from Letters, ed. Sidney Colvin.