

properly come her bloody powder

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which Louis had always previously manifested for Josephine. He blamed her, in the depths of his noble and upright heart, for having been so egotistic as to sacrifice the happiness of her daughter to her own personal welfare; he blamed her, too, for having forced him into a marriage which love had not concluded, and, although he never sided with her enemies, Josephine had, at least, lost a friend in him.

The wedded life of this young couple was something unusually strange. They had openly confessed the repulsion they felt for each other, and reciprocally made no secret of the fact that they had been driven into this union against their own wishes. In this singular interchange of confidence, they went so far as to commiserate each other, and to condole with one another as friends, over the wretchedness they endured in their married bondage.

They said frankly to each other that they could never love; that they detested one another: but they so keenly felt a mutual compassion, that out of that very compassion—that very hatred itself—love might possibly spring into being.

Louis could already sit for hours together beside his wife, busied with the effort to divert her with amusing remarks, and to drive away the clouds that obscured her brow; already, too, Hortense had come to regard it as her holiest and sweetest duty to endeavor to compensate her husband, by her kindly deportment toward him, and the delicate and attentive respect that distinguished her bearing, for the unhappiness he felt beside her; already had both, in fine, begun to console each other with the reflection that the child which Hortense now bore beneath her heart would, one day, be to them a compensation for their ill-starred marriage and their lost freedom.

"When I present you with a son," said Hortense, smiling, "and wh