

VALMONT & TOURVEL SIDE 1

Valmont: I trust you're feeling a little better, Madame.

Tourvel: If I had felt ill, Monsieur, it would not be difficult to guess who was responsible.

Valmont: You can't mean me. Do you?

Tourvel: You promised to leave here.

Valmont: And I did.

Tourvel: Then how can you be insensitive enough to return uninvited and without warning?

Valmont: I find myself obliged to attend some urgent business in the area: in which, moreover, my aunt is crucially involved.

Tourvel: I only hope it can be dealt with promptly.

Valmont: Why are you so angry with me?

Tourvel: I'm not angry. Although, since you gave me a solemn undertaking not to offend me when you wrote and then, in your very first letter, spoke of nothing but the disorders of love. I am certainly entitled to be.

Valmont: I was away almost three weeks and wrote to you only three times. Since I was quite unable to think about anything but you, some might say I showed heroic restraint.

Tourvel: Not in so far as you persisted in writing about your love, despite my pleas for you not to do so.

Valmont: It's true. I couldn't find the strength to obey you.

Tourvel: You claim to think there's some connection between what you call love and happiness. I can't believe that there is.

Valmont: In these circumstances, I agree. When the love is unrequited ...

Tourvel: As it must be. You know it's impossible for me to reciprocate your feelings, and even if I did, it could only cause me suffering.

Valmont: But what else could I have written to you other than my love? What else is there? I believe I've done everything you've asked of me.

Tourvel: You've done nothing of the sort.

Valmont: I left here when you wanted me to.

Tourvel: And you came back. *(beat)* I offered you my friendship, Monsieur. It's the only thing I can give you: why can't you accept it?

Valmont: I could pretend to, but that would be dishonest.

Tourvel: You're not answering my question.

Valmont: The man I used to be would have been content with friendship and set about trying to turn it to his advantage. But I've changed now, and I can't conceal from you that I love you tenderly, passionately, and, above all, respectfully. So how am I to demote myself to the tepid position of friend? I don't see why recognition of the truth should lose me your friendship. Openness and honesty scarcely deserve to be punished; don't you agree?

Tourvel: You are adept, Monsieur at framing questions which preclude the answer no. Your honesty or otherwise is not at issue. The point is, surely, that I was weak enough to be persuaded to grant you a favor you should have never obtained, and furthermore, I did this under certain conditions, not a single one of which you have observed.

Valmont: Your happiness is far more important to me than my own. I shall leave you.

Tourvel: Thank you.

Valmont: I only wish you knew me well enough to recognize how much you've changed me. My friends in Paris remarked on it at once. It's all due to your influence. I have you to thank for it. And now, good evening.

(he goes to leave)

Tourvel: Monsieur ... ?

Valmont: What?

Tourvel: ... Nothing.