

**JANE OF FRANCE, AN
HISTORICAL NOBEL, IN
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. II**

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Jane of France, an Historical Nobel, in Two Volumes, Vol. II by Madame de Genlis

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MADAME DE GENLIS

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TWO VOLUMES, VOL. II**

JANE OF FRANCE,

AN

Historical Novel,

BY MADAME DE GENLIS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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1816.

JANE OF FRANCE.

AN

HISTORICAL NOVEL.

THE flight of Louis was kept so completely secret, and managed with so much prudence, that it was entirely unknown when a courier announced to Jane his arrival beyond the frontiers of France. She immediately repaired to the King, whom she found with no one but the Regent, and after a short preamble, informed his Majesty that the Duke of Orleans was gone. The Regent displayed the utmost indignation at the intelligence, but Jane resumed the word and said: "The King will one day judge less rigorously of him, when he shall learn by what persecutions his patience has been exhausted. In the mean time, madam, he

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may in some degree discover it by the animosity, which has for a long time made you forget that I am your sister. All I have to add is that it was I who advised and managed his escape."

"Was it you, then," demanded the Regent in a tone of the bitterest irony, "who induced him to fix on Brittany for his asylum?"

"Brittany was the country," replied Jane, "nearest to the frontiers. This motive alone would suggest the idea, at the first moment."

"He will not remain at that court then?" said Madame.

"When he departed, it was not his intention to remain there," answered Jane.

"I am better informed than you," retorted her sister. "I knew, but I hesitated as to believing it, that the envoy of Brittany had been sounding him, and had given him to understand that, if he would annul his marriage, he might aspire to

the hand of the most beautiful and accomplished Princess in Europe, Anne of Brittany.

This *trait* of the blackest malice produced all the effect which Madame desired—it pierced the very soul of Jane.

“ I shall always be ready,” said she, “ to sacrifice myself for him, and never will he sacrifice me. Henceforth, madam, you can neither astonish nor disturb me by a calumny.” Having said these words she rose, took leave of the King, and departed.

Genuine sensibility regulates itself much better than is usually imagined. Undoubtedly it is in the constant habit of exaggerating chagrins which might be borne, but it throws a thick veil over lacerating and irremediable pangs. It is then that it summons hope, and naturally surrounds itself with illusions. Jane had never suffered her thoughts to dwell on the mournful reflection that no marriage could be more easily annulled than her

own, but when the idea had, in a confused form, occurred to her, she had repelled it with horror. She had now, however, heard the terrible words uttered by her sister—they were engraved on her imagination and not to be effaced—they were like an irrevocable decree against her. Shuddering she looked into futurity and distinctly saw part of what would happen. Annihilated by this prescience, she dared not even conceive the project of struggling against events, and fixed her destiny by yielding to sorrow.

While this unfortunate Princess abandoned herself entirely to the most desponding reflections, Louis had finished his journey, and reached the court of Brittany. Sovereigns always receive fugitive Princes, whom they have invited to their courts, with gracious generosity; for the vicissitudes of fortune do not appear to them striking and impressive, except when they overthrow great destinies. Hence this friendly reception and these first demonstrations are almost

always sincere. On the day after the arrival of Louis, there was a very brilliant *fête* at court, but his attention was fixed upon only one object—he saw Anne of Brittany for the first time—he was dazzled and struck with admiration—he thought this Princess a thousand times superior to the report of her. In fact, she combined the charm of a celestial countenance with the regularity of perfect beauty, and the grace and elegance of the most majestic form. Her manner was somewhat distant; but this noble reserve, which was the offspring of modesty, was tempered by the gentleness of her look, and had nothing haughty or imperious in it. She repressed without repelling. Louis riveted his eyes upon her, and the uneasiness, which he experienced, was so visible that every one observed it.

He afterwards saw Anne frequently and passed the evenings with her. He admired her talents, her accomplishments and sentiments. He heard a thousand

affecting proofs of her amiable disposition, and he became the most ardent of her admirers. This new passion, which was in fact the only real one he had ever felt, overturned all his ideas and all his projects. That he might resign himself to it without constraint and remorse, he repeatedly said to himself that Jane had no affection for him, that by her own wish he had never availed himself of a husband's rights, that the chain which united them was only an apparent one, and that a simple statement of the truth, transmitted to the court of Rome, would restore them both to perfect liberty. Under the pretext of gratitude Louis took care, during his private interviews with the Duke of Brittany, to acquaint him with this part of his history. Francis listened with a degree of interest which by no means escaped the observation of Louis, and from which he augured most favorably. Nevertheless, in spite of all his efforts to emancipate his imagination