

## #8 CÉCILE & Merteuil

**CÉCILE.** Last night ...

**MERTEUIL.** Yes.

**CÉCILE.** So that we could exchange letters to and from Danceny without arousing suspicion, I gave Monsieur de Valmont the key to my bedroom...

**MERTEUIL.** Yes.

**CÉCILE.** And last night he used it. I thought he'd just come to bring me a letter. But he hadn't. And by the time I realized what he had come for, it was, well, it was too late to stop him...

*(CÉCILE bursts into tears. MERTEUIL considers her coolly for a moment before speaking.)*

**MERTEUIL.** You mean to tell me you're upset because Monsieur de Valmont has taught you something you've undoubtedly been dying to learn?

*(CÉCILE's tears are cut off and she looks up in shock.)*

**CÉCILE.** What?

**MERTEUIL.** And am I to understand that what generally brings a girl to her senses has deprived you of yours?

**CÉCILE.** I thought you'd be horrified.

**MERTEUIL.** Tell me: you resisted him, did you?

**CÉCILE.** Of course I did, as much as I could.

**MERTEUIL.** But he forced you?

**CÉCILE.** It wasn't that exactly, but I found it almost impossible to defend myself.

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**MERTEUIL.** Why was that? Did he tie you up?

**CÉCILE.** No, no, but he has a way of putting things, you just can't think of an answer.

**MERTEUIL.** Not even no?

**CÉCILE.** I kept saying no, all the time: but somehow that wasn't what I was doing. And in the end...

**MERTEUIL.** Yes?

**CÉCILE.** I told him he could come back tonight. *(Silence. CÉCILE seems, once again, trembling on the edge of tears.)* I'm so ashamed.

**MERTEUIL.** You'll find the shame is like the pain: you only feel it once.

**CÉCILE.** And this morning was terrible. As soon as I saw Maman, I couldn't help it, I burst into tears.

**MERTEUIL.** I'm surprised you missed the opportunity to bring the whole thing to a rousing climax by confessing all. You wouldn't be worrying about tonight if you'd done that; you'd be packing your bags for the convent.

**CÉCILE.** What am I going to do?

**MERTEUIL.** You really want my advice?

**CÉCILE.** Please.

*(MERTEUIL considers for a moment.)*

**MERTEUIL.** Allow Monsieur de Valmont to continue your instruction. Convince your mother you have forgotten Danceny. And raise no objection to the marriage. *(CÉCILE gapes at MERTEUIL, bewildered.)*