

PIERRE-FRANÇOIS GODARD DE BEAUCHAMPS: *FUNESTINE*

PART ONE

Funestine, Princess of Australia,¹ came into the world under the most malign constellation. The fays who presided over her birth were all old or malevolent; they only endowed her with hateful qualities. Earthquakes and phenomena in the sky all seconded their ill humor; an aurora borealis made distinctly legible in luminous letters so large that they were visible in the four continents of the world the terrible words: *All monsters are not in Africa*.

The king, her father, was so frightened by her ugliness and the consequences it might have that, not wanting to give the queen the chagrin of raising a creature so deformed, he had her exposed to the beasts in his menagerie. The panthers and tigers of our continent are lambs by comparison with Australian animals; if, by misfortune, a single one escaped from its cage it devastated twenty leagues of the country in a quarter of an hour. The king of Sweden has killed fewer Muscovites than the humans one such creature devours in a single meal. At the sight of the prey thrown to them, they recoiled in fear.

The following year, the queen, who was told that her first child had been stillborn, gave birth to a second. She was beautiful, compared to her sister, but she had neither grace nor gentility; she was one of those human creatures who vegetate, and of whom one speaks neither good nor ill, very similar to a quantity of others you find every day at spectacles or the Tuileries.

The genius Clair-obscur was traveling through the air. He was surprised to read the celestial inscription. By virtue of a curiosity fortunate for Funestine, he wanted to see what species the newborn monster was. The young princess, lying on the ground, uttered horrible screams that drew him to the menagerie. He has said since that at the sight of an object so hideous he was tempted to flee. An impulse of compassion stopped him.

That genius was a benevolent fellow accustomed to doing good, a habit that in more difficult to give up than that of doing harm, because one finds more pleasure in it, according to modern philosophers who claim to know the heart and dabble in giving it over-refined metaphysical definitions. He put Funestine in a flap of his robe and carried her to his palace twenty thousand leagues from Australia; he confided her to nurses and governesses, who were on the point of strangling her more than once, so disgusting and ill-tempered was she. After three months she had teeth and fingernails, of which she made use in order to bite and scratch.

A son had just been born to Clair-obscur as beautiful as Funestine was ugly; as he was formed by the blood of a mortal woman, and the wives of genii influence the nature and destiny of their children, the little prince was submissive to all the eventualities of the human species, subject to death, and condemned, in spite of his ambition, only to reign over two thirds of the earth: a miserable share, of which he complained subsequently with as much bitterness as the son of Philip of Macedon did in his time.

By virtue of a caprice for which he would have had difficulty giving a reason, he genius took it into his head that he would one day unite Funestine and Formosa—that was the name of his son. He refrained from communicating such a bizarre project to anyone—they would have mocked His Elementary Majesty—but in secret he took all the measures that might enable it to succeed, or render it less ridiculous. Such is the empire of reason over all creatures that the most eccentric and despotic in their

¹ This is not the large island nowadays known by that name, which was still largely unmapped in 1737, its partially-explored coasts being known as “New Holland.” This “Australia” is the imaginary Terra Australis [austral continent] hypothesized by several geographers trying to add additional symmetry to distribution of land on the world map as it was conceived prior to 1700.

determinations strive to give them an appearance of justice. The insensate prince who said: "Let them hate me as long they fear me," explained his thought poorly; he wanted to be feared and approved.

Formosa's mother took charge of his education; she had a brother, a great philosopher, who had initiated her since her childhood in the most profound mysteries of the Cabala; she had made use during her pregnancy of the enlightenment she had acquired to prevent the fays from witnessing the birth of her son; they were very offended by that, but they had missed the opportunity to do him harm, and could not do anything about it.

Both of them applied themselves entirely to equipping the young prince with a character worthy of the great destiny that awaited him, but, seeing that success only responded in a mediocre fashion to their cares, they had recourse to a remedy, which might have succeeded in spite of all the obstacles, if, by virtue of a fatality common to all things down here, the poorly-extended tenderness of that new Thetis had not destroyed it, or at last rendered all its efficacy futile: a fine subject of moralizing for some reflective mind.²

In the western part of Mount Caucasus there is a vast cavern where the children of the earth had assembled when they formed the project of scaling the heavens and expelling the gods therefrom. In the depths of that cavern a river had its source, the water of which, more transparent and stronger than that of Barbades,³ had the virtue of dissipating all human weakness. It was necessary to roll there for eight successive days over a sharp sand, which, insinuating itself into all the capacity of the body formed new blood and new flesh: a dolorous proof, but infallible.

In the course of an obscure night, the queen, holding Formosa on her knees, climbed with her brother, the prince, into a chariot drawn by aerial tortoises, as rapid as terrestrial ones are slow. Already, all the ceremonies, scrupulously observed, promised a fortunate result. Already, the brother and sister were flattering themselves, one with having a nephew and the other a son, who would be the ornament and delight of the universe. In fact, the prince had sustained the fatal bath for seven days, and had emerged more handsome, more vigorous and almost perfect. The gods, who laugh at the vain hopes of mortals, were waiting for the eighth.

Everything seemed to be complete when Formosa uttered piercing screams with which the grotto and the mountain resounded in the distance. His alarmed mother ran to him, her brother made vain efforts to retain her; drawn by a superior force, she leapt into the river; she found her son with closed eyes and motionless; she moaned, she tore her hair, she thought he was dead; in order to make sure of it she put her hand to his heart at the very moment when the last two vices that were concentrated there were about to emerge. Her action arrested their flight; nothing was capable subsequently of expelling them entirely.

Only too happy to carry her dear prince away in good health, she paid little attention to what was lacking in her work; she was even blind enough to think that those two vices, which were one day to disfigure the excellence of his other qualities, were apparent perfections, or, at least, that they were redeemed by so many virtues that they would escape the most clear-sighted eyes. How many mothers resemble her!

It will be divined without difficulty that I am talking about pride and the love of praise, monsters that seem opposed, but which are maintained and augmented by the contradiction that ought to destroy them. How can the scorn that one has for people be reconciled with the passionate desire to be praised by them? Anyone who does not understand that can serve as an example of it.

Formosa's beauty was proportionate to his age; it became more ravishing from day to day. His penetration and his vivacity left nothing for the masters who instructed him to do except instruct themselves by means of his questions or his replies. Was he doing his exercises? Skill, grace and strength flowed around him? So many marvels were not made either for his happiness or that of the human race;

² Thetis was the mother of Achilles, whose attempt to render him invulnerable by sipping him in a magical stream was flawed in the matter of his heel.

³ *Eau de Barbades* [i.e., Barbados] was an alternative name for water mixed with lemon juice, although it was also sometimes applied to an alcoholized concoction reputed for its medicinal qualities.

his pride increased with his talents; it was soon limitless; his most outrageous flatterers could not dissimulate its excess.

Not to ask anything of him was to lack respect for him; to have recourse to his protection was to render oneself importunate. Perhaps he was more tractable when one praised him? No. Although he loved praises immeasurably, by virtue of an inconceivable eccentricity, the finest and most delicate revolved him; they appeared to him to be vulgar, insipid and unworthy of him. Disconcerted poets, believing that, if he was insensitive to their incense, he would be flattered by their satires, composed specimens of every kind, against everyone. Few were fortunate enough not to follow the torrent. The prince, even more just than superb, had the most extravagant beaten with rods, and he sent the rest to work in the mines with one eye fewer.

More accessible toward foreigners, he constrained himself in order to gain them, without compensating them when he became their master. With regard to his subjects, he regarded them as slaves born to obey, to whom he was granting mercy by not taking away their lives, even unjustly. That scorn was not limited to men. The female sex was also its object. The most charming, the most virtuous and the most respectable women were, he said, public pestilences against whom one could not be too much on one's guard; his heart did not speak in their favor; his wit, aided by his memory, furnished the most piquant and bitter darts against them.

The good Clair-obscur, astonished by the character of his son, learned with chagrin that the queen was the innocent cause of it; he punished her as if she were culpable, and repudiated her. He made Formosa a few remonstrations, which were poorly received. Not wanting to embitter him, he let him live in accordance with his whim. Perhaps he flattered himself that time would soften such an arrogant humor; perhaps he even regarded it as the kind of noble pride that, in the opinion of princes, is a sublime sentiment and the most glorious prerogative of their birth and rank.

Formosa was only sixteen years old when he was seen to dispose himself for the conquest the world, with all the more ardor because he wanted to punish people for having penetrated his faults and having dared to talk about them. It is true that, after his conquests, when age had made room for reflection, he had frequent changes of mind, which humiliated him, and then tried to make people forget, by means of his benefits, his clemency and his justice, the harshness of his original mores; he experienced more than once, dolorously, that it is easier to alienate the human heart than to regain it, but I am anticipating the order of events too much. I shall return to Funestine.

She was increasing in ugliness and indocility. People wondered what would become of such a monster. Only the genius, to the great astonishment of his entire court, loved her, and continually redoubled his cares and his tenderness for her. He could read the future, albeit in a confused manner, and seeing, or believing, what would happen one day, he became firmer in his designs.

In order to accustom Formosa to the sight of Funestine, he sometimes made them come to one another's apartments. Fruitless attempts: the young prince uttered loud cries and fled, weeping. For her part, the princess only strove to approach him in order to pinch him or tear out his hair. Such a marked antipathy put Clair-obscur in despair, but he did his best to dissimulate it.

A further incident gave him even more pain; he perceived that the queen, his wife, whom he then loved passionately, suffered his attentions for Funestine impatiently, and that, imagining that she was the fruit of some secret intrigue, she sought to avenge herself for an unknown rival on the object that reminded her incessantly of her husband's infidelity. From secret murmurs she progressed to overt complaints, and threats soon succeeded the complaints.

He discovered and dissipated several conspiracies, the last of which was the most dangerous. The princess, who was only flattered by bizarre things, only regarded as pleasures things that were not pleasant for anyone else. A great lake bathed the walls of the palace, which was often agitated. Ordinarily, she chose to go out on it when the waves were elevated with the greatest violence. The slaves who crewed the boat were bribed. By whom? No one knows; the queen's brother was accused of it, but he was too clever to take his measures so poorly. The little vessel was pierced in several places, and was soon ready to sink.

Funestine saw with transports of rage that even her women, intimidated by the danger, preferred a certain death, by throwing themselves into the waves, to the shipwreck that might not happen. The boat, almost submerged, wandered freely between step rocks; the roar of irritated winds and the sound of the thunder that covered her with sulfur and flames; the horror of the darkness, rendered more frightful by pale flashes of lightning; even the death of which she was about to be the prey, augmented her fury but did not frighten her, although she had scarcely entered her tenth year.

In Clair-obscur's cabinet there was a marvelous mirror, to which its maker, prevented by death, had not been able to put the final touches. That mirror, although imperfect, presented to the eyes an image of everything that was happening on earth; in truth, one could not distinguish either the places nor the persons, but the genius substituted for that by means of a great familiarity with the world rather by the strength of his intellect. He saw someone on the point of shipwreck who was confronting the danger with an intrepid eye.

Always occupied with Funestine, he flew to her apartment; he searched for her, asking in vain for information from her women, who hid, weeping, and kept silent. He no longer doubted that it was the dear object of his complaisance that was about to lose her life. He sent to her aid the lightest of zephyrs, who, redoubling his agility in order to please him, found the princess unconscious, lying on a plank, the boat having broken against a reef. He snatched her from the death that was already seizing her, and carried her on his wings into the Palace of Eventualities.

That palace was the work of Clair-obscur; he had built it for Funestine as soon as he had perceived that she was putting his entire court into combustion. At the extremity of his estates there was a desert island about seven hundred and thirty-five leagues in circumference. In order to render it inaccessible he raised all around it an immense volume of water, which, condensed and hardened, appeared to the sight to be a mountain bristling with blocks of ice. He had only left a single passage defended by two fortresses, which served as entrance and exit to a harbor, the broad and comfortable basin of which could contain two thousand ships of a hundred cannons.

Having done that, he ordered the subaltern genii who recognized him as their sovereign to transport there from all parts of the world what was needed to render it agreeable and fertile. They obeyed, and that is why the different cantons of the world lack today things of which they were despoiled then.

Astonished nature saw forests and meadows grow in the most arid places and the most frightful precipices change into delightful countryside terminated by valleys that flatter the sight, cut by streams that are the ornament and wealth of the places they irrigate. Majestic rivers that never overflow are covered with vessels that bring abundance everywhere; neither hail nor frost ever destroy inopportunistly the imminent hope of the avid laborer; the seasons are only felt there in their charms, with no devouring chill or excessive heat. The atmosphere, always serene and always temperate, is not subject there to those sudden and annoying variations that cause storms and desolation. Overwhelming languors and sharp maladies are banished therefrom, and death is a term unknown there; no one there would ever cease to live if they did not get it into their heads after a few centuries that there is a more voluptuous life than the one they are abandoning. The priests of the land have no recourse to pious artifices to add savor to their dogmas; the truth guides them, rendering them persuasive; they are disinterested and love one another.

The center of the island was chosen to construct the admirable edifice of which I shall strive to give an idea. The description I shall give, after an irreproachable voyager, might perhaps appear to be above plausibility, but I beg the reader not to think that there is nothing beyond what he can comprehend or imagine. Accustomed only to see little things enclosed within the narrow confines of an education proportionate to the feebleness of our enlightenment, we treat as imposture and chimera everything that does not fall under our senses, much as, an Arab author says, a mite that had never seen an elephant might judge by its own smallness that there can be no mass of flesh in the universe so heavy and so intelligent.

A long and specious avenue, a fine and perpetually green lawn planted with four rows of cedars, led to a vast esplanade paved with Oriental jasper, around which was a balustrade of onyx agate; beneath, two broad canals lined with porphyry offered to the eyes birds of every species and fish of every size; facing it, nine courtyards rose up one after another, forming a perspective of which the vestibule of the palace was the viewpoint.

The first was entered via a bronze grille gilded with molded gold, posed on an alabaster bas-relief. It was flanked at the four corners by large pavilions in white marble, the roofs of which were laminated lead gilded at the back. In the wings, of the same marble and the same architecture, there were two large guard-rooms on the ground floor, with rooms for the soldiers and the serving officers above; the foremost received pay of a one-ounce diamond and two marcs of gold per day, the others in proportion. All were nourished and maintained in arms, garments and underclothes. That guard, comprised of four thousand men, was renewed every year; those who were ruined by gambling or other expenses were expelled ignominiously; the thrifty were placed in the exchequer or the fortresses; they had the choice.

The second, higher than the first but of almost identical form, was in lapis lazuli; it served as guardrooms to six thousand men, who were not subsidized. It was thought that it would be insulting to gentlemen such as they were, or said they were, to give them wages; they were recompensed—which is to say that after two years, those who wished to retire could do so freely; they were given the most advantageous certificates, twenty thousand gold pieces, a bushel of diamonds and a well beaten plot of land; the chiefs had governments, principalities and as many wives as they wanted, chosen from the most illustrious families on the island, to whom a dowry of a million sultanins was given.

In the third, clad in turquoises and topazes, artfully embedded, were the palace stables, in which twelve thousand horses were nourished that only served for squires and pages. The princess only ever went out in a chariot harnessed to white unicorns or lynxes; she was seen to go hunting once mounted on a sable marten, and was so discontented with its speed that she had it killed in front of her.

Inside was a marvelous stucco, the secret of which has been lost, the whiteness of which nothing could tarnish. The ceiling, painted in fresco by the best masters, represented hunts, tourneys or cavalry battles. The parquets, pillars, paneling and racks and mangers were in sandalwood; the bridles, saddles and harness were enriched with precious stones, the hooves were gold, the shovels, forks and curry-combs silver, and the halters braided from gold and silk. Outside there were granite drinking-troughs and superb apartments for the squires and pages; the horses, Turkish, Arab, Danish, Neapolitan or Persian, had been the stock of races celebrated in history, of which some people still conserve the offspring.

The fourth, of coral charged with leaves of fine gold, served for subaltern officers, all clad in scarlet coats embroidered in silver, and so well-disciplined that they were only permitted to communicate with one another by means of signs.

The fifth, of Corinthian bronze, of a workmanship superior to the material, although it was the most precious in the world, was distributed in several chambers where justice was rendered in the most pompous apparel. Affectionate merchants did not overload it by half with pointless baubles; publishers avid for profit did not stun passers-by with the gaudy title of a conceited novelette to which a hungry author had just given birth. The barristers, incredibly, kept silent in the middle of the day. As the trials only lasted a minute and the inhabitants of the island were enemies of all quibbling, the judges only assembled every five years. Do not imagine however, that those judges were less busy; they ornamented themselves, they invented fashions and they cut out paper shapes.

In the sixth, the simplest of all, although it was green campan marble, were the aviaries, whose trellises were emeralds and sapphires.

The seventh, of mother-of-pearl encrusted with rubies, was for the princess's maids of honor and chambermaids; there were five hundred of the former, each of whom had a staff composed of four hundred domestics, and thirteen thousand of the latter, each of whom was served by three mutes and three black eunuchs.

It was in the eighth, of aventurine, that the various oratories of the palace were. In the principal chapel, represented in the figure of a rhinoceros sixteen feet tall, carved from a single lodestone, was Xisquinima, the tutelary god of the island; in the others there were twelve hundred one-cubit pagodas, each made of a single diamond.

The ninth, separated from the other eight by a solid gold balustrade, each baluster of which was a genius clad like a Swiss royal guard, was the courtyard of the palace proper; the pavement was a mosaic of all sorts of precious stones in which Clair-obscur had traced the history of all times in hieroglyphs. The most curious was a singular figure; considered from a certain direction it represented a goat with the feet

of a mule, the head of a screech-owl and the maw of a famished mastiff that even bit the hands that fed it; seen from another point of view it was a Japanese bonze holding a cock in one hand and a brazier on the other, from which thick smoke was emerging.

Twelve amethyst pillars sustained a vast hall of rock crystal, the doors and windows of which were carbuncles. That hall opened over two long enfilades of the same crystal, furnished with even more taste than luxury. To the right was Funestine's apartment, composed of twenty rooms on the same floor, all fitted with mirrors of a single piece and similarly separated by diamond borders. To the left were her bathrooms; as she liked odors, the tubs and the furniture were ambergris.

I ought not to forget the library, richer by the quality than the number of books that composed it, although there were nearly three hundred thousand. There were found the originals of the works that were to be made by Aulnoy, Murat, Durand and so many others,⁴ who were given subsequently to the ridicule of imitating them; one saw the portraits of all the authors, those I have named being crowned by rays of light, and those whose names I have kept silent by bats' wings.

The historiographer Alupipargarnos, from whose journal I have faithfully extracted what I have just reported, continues thus:

“With regard to the gardens, they appeared to me to be so marvelous, so surprising and so far above the palace that, intoxicated with admiration, I did not even imagine that they could be described. I shall not say a word about the fountain of liquid pearls of the most beautiful water in the world, which rounded out in falling into a basin of old Japanese porcelain. I saw three hundred vessels laden with it without the source weakening or diminishing.

“Those gardens still subsisted in the times of Cyrus, who walked there several times with Araspes. I am not astonished that the author of his voyages made no mention of them; he was too much an enemy of the marvelous to talk about them, but I am surprised that they escaped the sublime Sethos.”⁵

When she awoke, Funestine darted distracted and scornful glances in all directions; scarcely touched by the marvels that surrounded her, she contented herself with asking coldly whether the palace in which she found herself was hers, and whether all the people she saw were there to obey her. Her principal maid of honor, clad in a long cape of hummingbird plumes, dropped to her knees and responded, stammering, that she was the absolute mistress of their lives, that she could dispose of them at her whim like toys and dolls; that Clair-obscur had not only given her the palace and all the treasures it contained, but also...

She was about to make a long speech, when the princess, who did not like them, made her shut up.

“Dress me; I want to go for a walk.”

The person responsible for putting on her slippers could not find them, and no one dared trespass on the rights of her charge. The impatient Funestine leapt out of bed barefoot and made an immodest glissade; other ceremonial followed, equally impertinent, to put a little lavender eau-de-vie on a slight scratch she had made on her elbow. Then she was begged humbly to choose between twenty combing-ropes that were displayed to her sight one after another.

“Give me the first that comes to hand,” she said, angrily, “and get on with it.”

Then she was brought a dressing-table, the same one that the Graces had made for Venus. She tipped it over, adding with a peevish expression that she did not want her hair done and that they were very bold

⁴ The reference to Catherine Durand Bédacier (1670-1736) in association with Aulnoy and Murat is a trifle surprising, as she was best known as the author of works in the genre of salacious fake memoirs. She did however, interpolate one *conte de fées*, “La Fée Lubantine,” in *Le Comtesse de Mortane* (1700) and two more in *Les Petits soupers de l'été de l'année 1699, ou Galantes aventures, avec L'Origine des fées* (1702, allegedly in Amsterdam): “Le Prodige d'amour” and “L'Origine des fées,” which not only includes an account of the origin of the fays, as the offspring of Jupiter and a nymph, but also “explains” their apparent disappearance from the world. Beauchamps had probably read a 1733 reprint of the latter volume, and seems to have taken some inspiration from it.

⁵ Sethos, an Egyptian pharaoh mentioned by Herodotus, is the eponymous protagonist of a 1731 pseudohistorical romance with Masonic influences by Jean Terrasson, sometimes cited as a source for Mozart's *Magic Flute*. He is mentioned in passing in Bougéant's account of Romancia.

not to wait for her orders. She went into a gallery in which several seamstresses were embroidering some upholstery; she thought it in detestable taste, expelled them and had the fabric thrown on the fire.

When she had descended into the gardens, and odor of lemon trees and bergamot, delectable for anyone else, threw her into a fury. She summoned the gardener.

“Wretch!” she said to him, “do you want to make me expire?” Have those trees, which I detest, uprooted immediately and put pots of tuberose in their place.”

The simple fellow, not very skillful in his art, not knowing anything of the character of Funestine, represented to her modestly that the odor of tuberose was even stronger than that of lemon trees, and that it would go to Her Highness’s head with even more violence. It would have been better for him to obey than to reply. “I believe,” she said, “that you’re resisting me. Imprison this old dotard, whose physiognomy displeases me.”

She made other changes so bizarre, and gave orders so strange, that if the hour for the midday meal had not ended the promenade, she would have turned everything upside-down. Her retinue, although forewarned about her humor by Clair-obscur, were nevertheless frightened by it.

She passed abruptly through a crowd of courtiers at whom she did not deign to glance, went into the dining room and threw herself precipitately into an armchair placed at a table laden with golden vessels, the work of the Germain of his time.⁶ Her napkin barely unfolded, she uncovered the first dish that came to hand, lifted the lid of a second, of a third, and successively of all those she could reach, but, only finding millet, she cried: “What! Am I being mocked, or do you take me for a canary?”

The maître-d’hôtel of the quarter, taking off his head a large hat of almond-bark covered with little bells, an attribute of his responsibility, prostrated himself and said: “Very indulgent, very tranquil and very virtuous sovereign, your humble servants are attentive to their duties, and the sentiments of respectful admiration that Your Highness’s divine qualities inspire in them are too intimately engraved in the depths of their hearts to dare even to imagine the criminal idea of displeasing you. The genius Clair-obscur, wanting this palace to be a fecund source of delights for you, has taken care to remove therefrom anything that might wound your delicacy, and, fearing that the odor or sight of a kitchen might give you some pain, he has banished that disagreeable apparatus; but, his tenderness for you rendering him ingenious, he has communicated to these seeds, humble in appearance, the virtue of becoming the most delicate dishes and the most appropriate to flatter your taste. May the great, the terrible Xisquinima punish me before your eyes if I impose anything whatsoever upon Your Highness. Millet, change into meringues, tartlets and blancmange.”

Funestine liked those things very much, but, annoyed by the noise made by the little bells and piqued to the quick because she had not divined the mystery that had just been explained to her, she threw her napkin in the face of the speaker and ran to hide in the most remote corner of her apartment.

The rest of the day was employed in calming her down. Hunger, more persuasive than the most eloquent discourse, made her listen to reason. She supped without sulking and without getting carried away. For the first time in her life she seemed to have some pleasure. She found the metamorphosis of the millet so amusing that she could not weary of renewing it. Never before had so many tartlets and meringues been seen together, nor have they since, and never had she eaten so many of them. Her physician came to trouble her joy with the grave but unwelcome observation that the excess of the best things is harmful. She was extreme in her passions, but she loved herself, and the fear of an indigestion was capable of containing her. She distributed to her pages personally four hundred bowls of blancmange and left the table.

After supper she played quinzé. She lost with an ill grace, paid up with an even worse grace, and went to bed in a very bad mood.

Surrounded by the most beautiful young women, she was not at all jealous of them because, having no idea of ugliness or beauty, when she looked at herself in a mirror, finding herself unique of her species, the good opinion she had of herself made her believe that all those who did not resemble her were monsters, and that for her alone, lavished with charms, nature had exhausted her treasures. How many

⁶ The reference is to the Rococo silversmith Thomas Germain (1673-1748)

Funestines does one see every day who, content with themselves, display with complaisance a grotesque face, where Callot would have found models more bizarre than those that remain to us of him?

The time was approaching when her illusion was to be dissipated. If only it were permitted to me to reveal the future, which is revealed to me at present!—but the god that enlightens me forbids me to communicate his favors. Let us obey his movements, and only inform curious mortals by degrees of the profundity and economy of his designs.