

**FRANK AMOR: A
NOVEL. IN THREE
VOLUMES; VOL. III**

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Frank Amor: A Novel. In Three Volumes; Vol. III by Jajabee

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JAJABEE

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FRANK AMOR.

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I. Nobel.

BY
JAJABEE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

Love hath no wherefore."

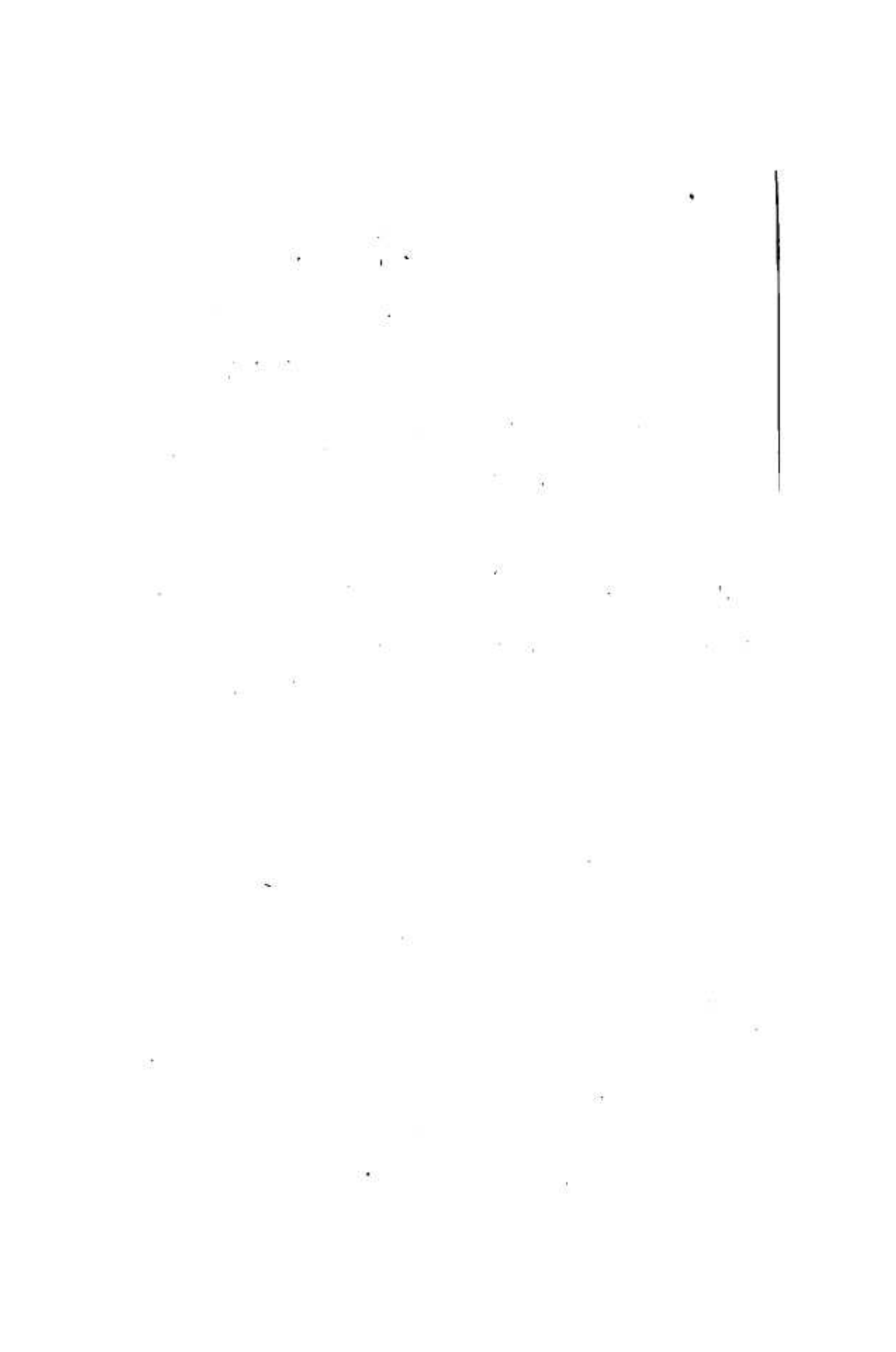


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1876.

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FRANK AMOR.

CHAPTER I.

It was in some degree amusing to me to watch the play of Spinner's expression while he was being informed of the service expected of him. I could see he was able gradually to comprehend why he had been selected as a chief agent in the Captain's deliverance, though he did not state what he knew of that matter. He nodded his head several times, with his eyes half closed, in the course of the young actress's address, and a cynical smile lurked at the corners of his mouth when she told him that the Captain himself had prompted the choice of him as advocate.

"And now about your marriage," said he, abruptly, when the maiden had finished the recital of the business she desired to be done by him, "is it still sur le tapis?"

"It is certain," she replied, with returning

hanteur, "quite certain—if I choose to will it so. But," added she, resentfully, "that is a matter with which you have no concern, and I shall certainly decline to discuss it with you."

"Oho!" uttered the observant little French-woman to herself, "he is Johnny ze bull."

He gazed, with calm eyes, at the blushing, indignant beauty, and presently, with polite air, answered,—

"I am not one in the least likely to forget the respect due to you."

"C'est mieux!" uttered the mamma, well pleased at the honour given to the girl.

The maiden smiled to herself when Spinner testified his homage to her, and, with arbitrary air, bade him tell his reasons for introducing the subject of her forthcoming marriage.

"To save you for a worthier man," he returned, quietly.

"How dare you speak so to my face!" furiously exclaimed the fair one, stamping her foot upon the floor in the vehemence of her sudden anger.

She advanced up to her offender, and repeated her shrewish words so close to his face that he must have felt her breath hot upon his cheek.

Spinner looked admiringly on the infuriated

girl, and tried to obtain her ear for his polite explanation; but his conciliatory attempts had only the effect of increasing her excitement to an hysterical pitch, when she broke down into a fit of passionate sobbing.

The mother, uttering a malediction upon the head of the wicked man who had wrung the heart of her dear girl, hastened to offer such potent comfort to the distressed fair one as only one woman can give to another; and then the sorrowing maiden, growing for the moment more deeply afflicted, impulsively threw herself down upon a chair. She remained for some few minutes with her face buried in her hands, and then, as though a new and startling comprehension had unexpectedly entered her mind, she rose, and, directing her gaze suspiciously at Spinner, and then at me, cried out that she could now understand why Spinner had dared to speak to her as he had done.

"You have planned it together beforehand," cried the fair discoverer of a mare's nest. "A pretty plot it is too, to be sure!"

"Zey plan zat togeser!" exclaimed the little Frenchwoman, clenching her fists and gesticulating violently in her indignation, "zen zey not stay here for longer time."

I stood up and denied the existence of any plot of the kind; yet, at the same time, I could not but think that it was a pity that the imputed conspiracy was a thing only of suspicion. The angry fair one had charged Spinner and me with the intention of carrying out a little plot against her, framed after the fashion of that which she had herself planned against us, and so I was vexed to think that the plot as imagined was baseless to an utter degree.

"I am certainly innocent of the charge you now prefer against me," said Spinner, with a twinkle of amusement in his eyes; "and, to confess the truth, I have not *nous* enough to conceive for myself such a master-plot as the one you have imagined for me. Machiavelli himself, I verily believe, never conceived a prettier piece of cunning."

I observed that, on concluding his remark, he glanced aside at me, and I instantly understood the action to be an intentional one of unfriendly character. Seeing him thus demonstrative in his ill-will, I determined to bring about some definite understanding between us at this opportunity.

My feelings were presently enamoured to behold the young actress as she stood gazing