

# **The Scarlet Pimpernel Study Guide**

**The Scarlet Pimpernel by Baroness Emma Orczy**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



# Contents

<a href="#">The Scarlet Pimpernel Study Guide.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 1, Paris: September 1792, Chapter 2, Dover: 'The Fisherman's Rest', and Chapter 3, The Refugees.....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 4, The League of the Scarlet Pimpernel, Chapter 5, Marguerite, and Chapter 6, An Exquisite of '92.....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 7, The Secret Orchard, Chapter 8, The Accredited Agent, and Chapter 9, The Outrage</a>	<a href="#">9</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 10, In the Opera Box, Chapter 11, Lord Grenville's Ball, Chapter 12, The Scrap of Paper, and Chapter 13, Either—Or?.....</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 14, One O'clock Precisely!, Chapter 15, Doubt, Chapter 16, Richmond, and Chapter 17, Farewell.....</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 18, The Mysterious Device, Chapter 19, The Scarlet Pimpernel, Chapter 20, The Friend, Chapter 21, Suspense, and Chapter 22, Calais.....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 23, Hope, Chapter 24, The Death-Trap, Chapter 25, The Eagle and the Fox, and Chapter 26, The Jew.....</a>	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 27, On the Track, Chapter 28, The Pere Blanchard's Hut, Chapter 29, Trapped, Chapter 30, The Schooner, and Chapter 31, The Escape.....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Characters.....</a>	<a href="#">22</a>
<a href="#">Objects/Places.....</a>	<a href="#">26</a>
<a href="#">Themes.....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">Style.....</a>	<a href="#">30</a>
<a href="#">Quotes.....</a>	<a href="#">32</a>
<a href="#">Topics for Discussion.....</a>	<a href="#">34</a>



# Plot Summary

The *Scarlet Pimpernel* by Baroness Orczy is a classic novel of romance and intrigue. The Scarlet Pimpernel is an unknown English gentleman who risks his life to help targeted French aristocrats escape the persecution of the revolutionary government in 1792 France. Lady Blakeney is a French woman who is married to an English gentleman. Lady Blakeney is approached by a French agent who needs her help in learning the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel. At first Lady Blakeney refuses, but when she learns that her brother has been discovered collaborating with the Scarlet Pimpernel, Lady Blakeney agrees to help in exchange for her brother's safe return to England. However, when Lady Blakeney learns the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel, she finds herself forced to choose between her brother and the man she loves. The *Scarlet Pimpernel* is an exciting, romantic novel that will keep readers on the edge of their seats to the final sentence.

The *Scarlet Pimpernel* has made a game out of embarrassing the French government, constantly coming into their country and rescuing aristocrats who are targeted as victims of the guillotine. The French government knows the Scarlet Pimpernel is an English gentleman, they just do not know his true identity. However, they intend to find out. The French government sends an agent into England to identify the Scarlet Pimpernel so he can be followed and caught red-handed aiding and abetting fugitives from French justice. This agent, Chauvelin, approaches Lady Blakeney, a French woman who is married to an English gentleman with powerful friend, to help him learn the identity of this man. Lady Blakeney refuses.

Later that same night, Chauvelin and one of his assistants overtake two men who work with the Scarlet Pimpernel and take from them some papers related to their secret missions on French soil. One of these is a letter from Lady Blakeney's brother, Armand St. Just, implying his assistance in the Scarlet Pimpernel's latest escapade. The other is a note stating where the Scarlet Pimpernel will be in a few days. Chauvelin again approaches Lady Blakeney, telling her that if she will help him learn the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel, he will allow her brother to return safely to England. Lady Blakeney agrees.

That night, Lady Blakeney attends a ball with her husband, Lord Percy Blakeney. Lady Blakeney witnesses a covert note exchange between a friend of her husband's and one of the men caught with her brother's letter. Lady Blakeney feigns illness and manages to sneak a look at the note. Later, Lady Blakeney tells Chauvelin that the Scarlet Pimpernel will be in the supper room at exactly one. Chauvelin goes into the supper room at the appointed time, but the only person he sees is Lord Blakeney asleep on a couch. Lady Blakeney is frightened that Chauvelin will not free her brother as a result of this apparent failure to identify the Scarlet Pimpernel. In desperation, Lady Blakeney turns to her husband, from whom she had been estranged since almost the moment of their wedding, and asks for his help. Lord Blakeney soon leaves for the north, promising to help Armand St. Just.



After her husband has left, Lady Blakeney wanders into her husband's study where she finds evidence of the Scarlet Pimpernel. Lady Blakeney realizes with growing horror that the Scarlet Pimpernel and her husband are one in the same. Lady Blakeney rushes to a friend of Lord Blakeney's whom she knows to be in league with the Scarlet Pimpernel to ask him to help her warn Lord Blakeney. The two rush to France, but appear too late to warn Lord Blakeney. Chauvelin arrives an hour after them. Lady Blakeney overhears Chauvelin describe how he has guards on every road in and out of town watching for Lord Blakeney. Then, when Chauvelin learns that Lord Blakeney has rented a horse and cart to travel to a cabin outside of town, he rents a horse and cart of his own to follow. Lady Blakeney follows them, intent on dying with her husband if she cannot save him.

When Chauvelin and his soldiers arrive at the cabin, Chauvelin gives strict orders that no one is to move as they surround the cabin until Lord Blakeney arrives, even though they know there are four fugitives in the cabin. Lady Blakeney follows the soldiers up to the cabin and tries to warn its occupants, but is caught by Chauvelin. Lady Blakeney waits in terror with the soldiers, torn between warning her brother and risking his death and staying silent and allowing her husband to walk into a trap. When Lady Blakeney hears her husband approaching the cabin, she can no longer remain silent and she screams to her brother to fight.

Chauvelin orders his soldiers to move on the cabin, but they find it empty. The fugitives have escaped. However, Chauvelin finds a note signed by the Scarlet Pimpernel that tells where he is going. Chauvelin leaves Lady Blakeney and the Jewish man who drove him to the cabin alone while he and his men rush after the Scarlet Pimpernel. However, the Scarlet Pimpernel has outsmarted the French once again. The Scarlet Pimpernel is the Jewish man in disguise. Lord Blakeney and Lady Blakeney escape to their schooner and return happily home.



# **Chapter 1, Paris: September 1792, Chapter 2, Dover: 'The Fisherman's Rest', and Chapter 3, The Refugees**

## **Chapter 1, Paris: September 1792, Chapter 2, Dover: 'The Fisherman's Rest', and Chapter 3, The Refugees Summary**

A Revolution has broken out in France where the Republic has taken the government away from the aristocrats. The new government has imprisoned their king and queen and is systematically executing many aristocrats whom they see as their enemies. The English government is unable to do anything to stop these executions, so a single English gentleman has taken it upon himself to rescue these doomed aristocrats. This gentleman calls himself the Scarlet Pimpernel.

The French people gather around the gates that block entrance and exit to the city to watch the guards looking for aristocrats attempting to escape their fate. Many people have heard of the Scarlet Pimpernel, an English gentleman who seems to delight in rescuing these fugitives right under the nose of the head of the Committee of Public Safety, Citoyen Fouquier-Tinville. Each time a fugitive escapes, Citoyen Fouquier-Tinville receives a note that is signed with a small, red flower known in England as the Scarlet Pimpernel. There is one guard who is a favorite of the people, a man who claims to be able to find even the most well hidden fugitive and who brags that if the Scarlet Pimpernel ever came to his gate he would be caught. Unfortunately, it is this guard who allows the Scarlet Pimpernel, dressed as an old woman, through the gate after she claims to have in her cart a grandson with the plague. Instead of the plague, however, the Scarlet Pimpernel is hiding a woman and her two children, aristocrats who were about to be arrested for crimes against the Republic.

It is a typical night at the small Dover pub, The Fisherman's Rest. Sally, the owner's daughter, is busy making dinner while serving beer to the regular customers. In the coffee room, the owner, Mr. Jellyband, is listening to a regular customer complain about the fugitives coming from France. This man believes the English government should step in to stop the executions, but understands why this is a political problem in the political atmosphere of the time. The conversation is lively, but it is clear that the people of England feel sorry for the French, but do not want to be overrun with French fugitives. Jellyband becomes uncomfortable with this conversation when he notices two strangers at one of the tables. These strangers, however, claim to be English and swear they support the other customer's ideas. Jellyband welcomes Lord Antony Dewhurst and Sir Andrew Ffoulkes, young English gentlemen with royal connections. Lord Antony and Sir Andrew bring with them Comtesse de Tournay and her two grown children, clearly fugitives only recently arrived from France. It appears that Lord Antony and Sir Andrew



are in league with the infamous Scarlet Pimpernel, making them something of folk heroes in the small pub. It is also clear by the blush on her daughter's cheeks that the Comtesse's daughter, Suzanna, is in love with one of their rescuers, Sir Andrew.

## **Chapter 1, Paris: September 1792, Chapter 2, Dover: 'The Fisherman's Rest', and Chapter 3, The Refugees Analysis**

The Scarlet Pimpernel is introduced in these chapters. The Scarlet Pimpernel is a courageous English man who has taken it upon himself to rescue victims of the new government in France. The Republic in France is attempting to eradicate all the aristocrats they believe led to the troubles their country has suffered in recent years. However, many of these aristocrats are sent to the guillotine for offenses that are either unproven or too minor to fit the punishment. It seems someone needs to step in to stop these atrocities, but the nearest country, England, has its own political problems and feels that it is not in a good position to interfere with France. Therefore, the Scarlet Pimpernel does all he can to save these people from the guillotine. The Scarlet Pimpernel is clearly a clever, imaginative, and honorable person of great intelligence. The Scarlet Pimpernel is also a man of wealth to be able to afford the expense of these rescues, and of high birth in order to move in circles that would allow him to act as he does. However, the identity of this man is a well protected secret, leaving many English and French citizens wondering who he might be.

The Comtesse de Tournay has just arrived in Dover in the company of Lord Antony and Sir Andrew, two people who are in league with the Scarlet Pimpernel and have been assigned to protect these fugitives. These people are welcomed in the Fisherman's Rest, a frequent stop for Lord Antony and Sir Andrew and a place where many feel the Scarlet Pimpernel is a hero. There are two strangers in the room that cause the owner of the pub, Jellyband, to urge caution among his guests. These two strangers claim to be English and to support the Scarlet Pimpernel, but Jellyband continues to be cautious, suggesting he does not quite believe them. The reaction of this pub owner should warn the reader that spies could possibly be anywhere. What the Scarlet Pimpernel does is deeply disturbing to the French government and his discovery would most likely be a priority to them, leaving the reader aware that there is danger everywhere for the Scarlet Pimpernel.



## **Chapter 4, The League of the Scarlet Pimpernel, Chapter 5, Marguerite, and Chapter 6, An Exquisite of '92**

### **Chapter 4, The League of the Scarlet Pimpernel, Chapter 5, Marguerite, and Chapter 6, An Exquisite of '92 Summary**

The Comtesse de Tournay thanks Sir Andrew for his role in rescuing herself and her children, but laments the Scarlet Pimpernel's inability to get her husband out of France at this time. Sir Andrew and Lord Antony both assure the Comtesse that her husband will be rescued as soon as the Scarlet Pimpernel can arrange it. In fact, they have reason to believe he will be out of France by the end of the week. Conversation turns to the revolution in France and the political atmosphere. The Vicomte, the Comtesse's son, comments that the women seem more bitter against the aristocrats than the men, causing his mother to lament the actions of Marguerite St. Just. Marguerite spoke out against the Marquis de St. Cyr, a relative of the Comtesse, causing him to be executed. This fact alarms Lord Antony because he knows that Marguerite St. Just, who is now Lady Blakeney, is on her way to the Fisherman's Rest.

Lord and Lady Blakeney arrive at the Fisherman's Rest, causing the Comtesse to leave the room, insisting her daughter follow. Suzanne is reluctant to leave, however, because she and Lady Blakeney were schoolmates and she would very much like to spend some time with her. Before leaving the room, Suzanne gives Lady Blakeney a quick hug. Lord Blakeney, a handsome charmer, makes a joke as he enters the room, causing Lady Blakeney to make a contemptuous comment to him. It appears that Lady Blakeney, who was once the queen of charm and intelligence in England, has married a man with more beauty than brains. A certain disdain exists between the couple, leaving those around them to assume the marriage is loveless. Lord Blakeney makes a comment about the Comtesse who has apparently upset his wife. The Vicomte challenges Lord Blakeney to a duel to protect his mother's honor, but Lord Blakeney clearly misunderstands his challenge and jokes it away, causing the Vicomte to be humiliated until Lord Antony and Sir Andrew intervene.

### **Chapter 4, The League of the Scarlet Pimpernel, Chapter 5, Marguerite, and Chapter 6, An Exquisite of '92 Analysis**

The Comtesse talks to Lord Antony and Sir Andrew about her husband who was left behind in France. The Comtesse did not want to leave her husband for fear he would be



arrested before the Scarlet Pimpernel could rescue him, but these gentlemen assure her that her husband has been moved to a safe location until the Scarlet Pimpernel can get him out of France later in the week. This alerts the reader to another mission the Scarlet Pimpernel intends to undertake in the near future, a possibly dangerous mission that could cause the Scarlet Pimpernel to be caught. At the same time, two new characters are introduced.

Marguerite St. Just Blakeney is a charming, intelligent woman who was born and raised in France. Marguerite has married an English gentleman who is friends with the Prince of Wales, among other important figures. Marguerite is accused of having testified against an aristocrat in France, directly leading to this man's execution. Marguerite's actions suggest that she is on the side of the Republic and would not look favorably on the actions of the Scarlet Pimpernel. Lord Blakeney, Marguerite's husband, is a large, handsome man who comes off as something of a lovable idiot. Where Marguerite exudes intelligence and class, Lord Blakeney appears to be slow witted and only interested in making jokes. Lord Blakeney is never serious and seems incapable of strong, political opinions. In fact, when the Vicomte challenges him to a duel, Lord Blakeney appears to misunderstand his complaint, further humiliating the poor young man. The marriage between Lord and Lady Blakeney appears to be troubled, one in which a young, intelligent woman married a young, wealthy man in order to have the benefit of his money and his position without the restraints a more intelligent man might place on her. This troubled marriage will prove important later in the novel as it places a wedge between Lady Blakeney and the one man she should be able to turn to in times of trouble.





# Chapter 7, The Secret Orchard, Chapter 8, The Accredited Agent, and Chapter 9, The Outrage

## Chapter 7, The Secret Orchard, Chapter 8, The Accredited Agent, and Chapter 9, The Outrage Summary

Marguerite goes outside to say goodbye to her brother before he travels in Lord Blakeney's yacht, the *Day Dream*, back to France. Marguerite is concerned for her brother because of the political turmoil in France. Armand St. Just raised Marguerite from childhood after their parents died. Marguerite feels closer to Armand than anyone, even her husband. It is revealed that it was for Armand that Marguerite turned on the Marquis de St. Cyr. The Marquis had Armand beaten for daring to love his daughter; therefore, when Marguerite came into some damning information about him, she told some friends she believed she could trust. It turned out, however, that these friends were not to be trusted and word of her accusations reached the wrong ears. Marguerite fought to save the Marquis and his family, but her actions were ignored. Later, Marguerite told her husband about her testimony and his love for her was cooled by it. After saying goodbye to her brother, Marguerite walks alone for a few minutes. As she heads back to the Fisherman's Rest, Marguerite runs into Chauvelin, a French agent she has met in the past. Chauvelin asks Marguerite if she would be willing to help the French government again as she did with the Marquis de St. Cyr. Chauvelin wants Marguerite to use her position as Lady Blakeney to learn the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel. Marguerite refuses because she believes in what the Scarlet Pimpernel is doing.

Lord and Lady Blakeney leave Dover while the Comtesse and her children retire to their rooms. Lord Antony and Sir Andrew are left alone in the coffee room to discuss their next mission with the Scarlet Pimpernel. It seems the Scarlet Pimpernel plans to go to France in the next few days to rescue the Vicomte de Tournay. As the two men are looking through the letters they were given by the Scarlet Pimpernel, Sir Andrew discovers a small note he had not noticed before. As they are reading this note, the two men are overtaken by Chauvelin and one of his agents, the two strangers whom Jellyband had been wary of before. Chauvelin has Lord Antony and Sir Andrew tied up as he reads the letter. Chauvelin is happy with what he sees, assuring his agent that Lady Blakeney will now be willing to help.



## Chapter 7, The Secret Orchard, Chapter 8, The Accredited Agent, and Chapter 9, The Outrage Analysis

Marguerite goes outside to say goodbye to her brother before he returns to France in Lord Blakeney's yacht. Marguerite is clearly close to her brother, as she reveals to the reader when she mentions that Armand raised her after their parents died. This relationship is closer than typical brother-sister relationships, leaving the reader wondering what would happen if Marguerite were ever to learn her brother were in danger. The possibility seems real since Armand is returning to a country that is in turmoil and whose citizens are being murdered by the government every day. At the same time, the reader learns that Marguerite's apparent testimony against an aristocrat who was executed on her testimony was only a childish attempt to injure a man who hurt her brother. Marguerite never intended for the Marquis and his family to be executed. However, few people understand Marguerite's regret in this matter, including her husband, who apparently stopped loving her the moment he learned about her actions. This explains why Marguerite and her husband appear to be in a loveless marriage, but proves that Marguerite did not marry Lord Blakeney only for his money. This allows the reader to see that Marguerite is simply a misunderstood woman who entered her marriage with the best of intentions.

Marguerite is approached by an agent of the French government, Chauvelin, when she returns to the pub. Chauvelin also knows of Marguerite's betrayal of the Marquis and hopes that with her position in English society she would be willing to help unmask the Scarlet Pimpernel. Marguerite refuses, making it clear to the reader that while her politics do not sympathize with the monarchy that caused so much turmoil for France, she does not agree with the actions of the new government and supports the Scarlet Pimpernel. Marguerite's opinions on this matter are important because it will soon fall to Marguerite to unmask this hero despite her protestation to the contrary. The reader learns this when Chauvelin takes from Lord Antony and Sir Andrew a letter that will force Marguerite into helping him.



# Chapter 10, In the Opera Box, Chapter 11, Lord Grenville's Ball, Chapter 12, The Scrap of Paper, and Chapter 13, Either—Or?

## Chapter 10, In the Opera Box, Chapter 11, Lord Grenville's Ball, Chapter 12, The Scrap of Paper, and Chapter 13, Either—Or? Summary

Lord and Lady Blakeney are at the opera. When Marguerite is left alone in her husband's box, Chauvelin comes to speak to her. Marguerite is unfriendly, making it clear to Chauvelin that she does not want to help him. However, when Chauvelin tells Marguerite that he overtook two of the Scarlet Pimpernel's men and confiscated their papers and that among them was a letter from her brother, Marguerite begins to listen. Chauvelin tells Marguerite that the letter implicates her brother in the Scarlet Pimpernel's schemes and that he will be arrested and executed if this letter comes to the attention of the French government. Chauvelin then tells Marguerite that he also confiscated a note from the Scarlet Pimpernel claiming he will be at Lord Grenville's ball that very night. Chauvelin says that if Marguerite will help him identify the Scarlet Pimpernel, he will return her brother's letter to her and allow him safe passage to England when he has the Scarlet Pimpernel in custody. Marguerite agrees.

Marguerite is confused and frightened about what she should do, but feels she has no one to turn to for help. Marguerite would love to speak to her husband about it, but he is cold and quiet whenever they are alone. Instead, Marguerite puts on a big show of being her normal, charming self while keeping an eye out for either Lord Antony or Sir Andrew. When Marguerite sees Sir Andrew receive a note covertly from a friend of her husband's, she follows him into a boudoir. Marguerite feigns illness and manages to trick Sir Andrew into giving her the note. Marguerite quickly reads the note before teasing Sir Andrew about burning a love note from a woman other than Suzanne. Marguerite dances with Sir Andrew before going downstairs for dinner, filled with doubt about her next step. Marguerite considers keeping the information on the note to herself, but knows if she does her brother will be executed.



## **Chapter 10, In the Opera Box, Chapter 11, Lord Grenville's Ball, Chapter 12, The Scrap of Paper, and Chapter 13, Either—Or? Analysis**

Chauvelin blackmails Marguerite into helping him unmask the Scarlet Pimpernel. Marguerite is not happy about this position because she is already responsible for the death of one man, she does not want to be responsible for another's death. If Marguerite helps Chauvelin, the Scarlet Pimpernel will be arrested and executed in France. This would be a tragedy to all the aristocrats who are depending on the Scarlet Pimpernel to rescue them, including Suzanne's father, Vicomte de Tournay. However, if Marguerite refuses to help, it is almost a fact that her dear brother, Armand, will be executed for aiding the Scarlet Pimpernel. Marguerite is in a difficult position, unable to decide between condemning a stranger or her own brother. It is at this point that it would be a valuable asset for Marguerite to turn to her husband, a powerful man with powerful friends. Unfortunately, due to her past actions, Lord Blakeney will not even speak to his wife when they are alone. This treatment is harsh, leaving the reader wondering why Lord Blakeney, a simple-minded man, would care so much about a French aristocrat he has never met.



# **Chapter 14, One O'clock Precisely!, Chapter 15, Doubt, Chapter 16, Richmond, and Chapter 17, Farewell**

## **Chapter 14, One O'clock Precisely!, Chapter 15, Doubt, Chapter 16, Richmond, and Chapter 17, Farewell Summary**

Marguerite returns to the boudoir with a Cabinet Minister who is fascinated by her charms. Marguerite is nervous, but has finally made her decision. Marguerite sends the Cabinet Minister to find her husband and inform her that she is ready to leave. As soon as he is gone, Chauvelin joins Marguerite. Marguerite tells him that the note handed to Sir Andrew says that the Scarlet Pimpernel will be going to France tomorrow and that he will be in the supper room at precisely one o'clock should Sir Andrew have any more questions. Marguerite forces Chauvelin tell her again what he plans to do with Armand. Chauvelin promises that when he identifies the Scarlet Pimpernel he will return Armand's letter to her and when he has arrested the Scarlet Pimpernel, he will allow Armand to return to England safely. Chauvelin then rushes to the supper room. The room is empty except for Lord Blakeney, who appears to have fallen asleep on one of the couches.

Marguerite becomes sick with doubt about what she has done, concerned for the death of a man she does not even know. Marguerite waits impatiently for Chauvelin to come tell her what he saw in the supper room. Before he does, Marguerite learns that Lord Blakeney was asleep in the supper room, but has been roused and is retrieving their carriage. When the carriage is ready, Marguerite makes her way out the front door, saying goodbye to all her friends. Chauvelin joins her before she climbs into the carriage, telling her that he saw no one but Lord Blakeney, giving her little reassurance about her brother's future.

Marguerite and Lord Blakeney go home to their country estate in Richmond. Once there, Marguerite goes for a walk in the garden. As she returns to the house, Marguerite catches sight of Lord Blakeney. Marguerite calls for him to wait for her. Marguerite begins asking Lord Blakeney what happened to his love for her and if what she did to the Marquis de St. Cyr was really bad enough to cause him to stop loving her. Lord Blakeney tells Marguerite that she should have trusted him with the truth rather than testing his love. Lord Blakeney also says that when Marguerite left him in the early days of their marriage it caused a hurt that will never mend. However, Marguerite can see love in her husband's eyes, so she tells him that Armand is in trouble. Lord Blakeney agrees to do what he can to save Armand. Marguerite finds a note after she has retired to bed in which Lord Blakeney tells her he must go north for a short time. Marguerite



rushes to find her husband. Lord Blakeney tells Marguerite that he is off to save Armand from his troubles and that she should not expect him to return until the end of the week.

## **Chapter 14, One O'clock Precisely!, Chapter 15, Doubt, Chapter 16, Richmond, and Chapter 17, Farewell Analysis**

Marguerite tells Chauvelin what she read in the note Sir Andrew was handed, giving him the information he needs to learn the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel. However, the only person Chauvelin finds is Lord Blakeney. When Marguerite learns this, she assumes Chauvelin will not hold up his end of the bargain since he clearly did not identify the Scarlet Pimpernel. It never occurs the Marguerite that Lord Blakeney could be the Scarlet Pimpernel because to her he is an idiot who could not be capable of such ingenuity. Marguerite is desperate now, believing that her only avenue to help her brother has been closed off. Marguerite turns to her husband.

Lord Blakeney, it turns out, is not only angry with Marguerite because of her role in the execution of the Marquis de St. Cyr, but because she did not trust him with the whole story and then left him just a few days after their wedding. Marguerite regrets these actions, but she cannot force her husband to see through his pride to realize she is in love with him and wants his help. Lord Blakeney does understand Marguerite's fear for her brother, however, and leaves before dawn in order to try to help him. It does not occur to Marguerite that the Scarlet Pimpernel is supposed to leave that same day for France, therefore she continues to miss the connection between her husband's actions and the Scarlet Pimpernel.



## **Chapter 18, The Mysterious Device, Chapter 19, The Scarlet Pimpernel, Chapter 20, The Friend, Chapter 21, Suspense, and Chapter 22, Calais**

### **Chapter 18, The Mysterious Device, Chapter 19, The Scarlet Pimpernel, Chapter 20, The Friend, Chapter 21, Suspense, and Chapter 22, Calais Summary**

Marguerite discovers that the door to her husband's study, a room that is always locked, is standing open. Marguerite goes inside, curious about her husband's private rooms. Inside Marguerite finds that instead of the private retreat of a slow-witted man, the study is clearly that of a man with a good head for business with the bills organized and the desk well used. On the floor, Marguerite accidentally kicks a small heavy object. Marguerite picks up this object and discovers a signet ring with the image of a scarlet pimpernel on it.

Marguerite goes downstairs with the ring in her hand, in a daze of sorts. Suzanne, who has come to spend the afternoon with Marguerite, is waiting in the hall. Marguerite and Suzanne go out to the garden to talk. As Suzanne gossips about her relationship with Sir Andrew, Marguerite thinks over the events of the last twelve hours. Marguerite suddenly realizes that her husband is the Scarlet Pimpernel and that she has unwittingly revealed his identity to Chauvelin. When a runner brings Marguerite her brother's letter, Marguerite knows that Chauvelin is on Lord Blakeney's trail. Marguerite sends Suzanne home and orders her carriage readied.

Marguerite rushes to Sir Andrew's home where she explains to him that Chauvelin knows that Lord Blakeney is the Scarlet Pimpernel and that they need to warn Lord Blakeney before he walks into Chauvelin's trap. Sir Andrew agrees to travel to Calais with Marguerite in order to find Lord Blakeney. They arrange to meet in Dover at the Fisherman's Rest that evening. Marguerite arrives at the Fisherman's Rest and arranges to have supper while she waits for Sir Andrew to join her. Marguerite becomes aware that Jellyband and his daughter think she is running away with Sir Andrew, but she can do nothing to change this opinion. When Sir Andrew arrives dressed as Marguerite's lackey, the curiosity of the pub owner is palpable, but he does not question the couple. Sir Andrew informs Marguerite that the weather is too dangerous to sail and that no one will be leaving Dover that night, meaning that Chauvelin will not be able to travel either.

Marguerite rises early, hoping the storm has passed. Unfortunately, the storm does not end until nearly dusk. Finally Marguerite and Sir Andrew are able to sail, nearly a full



day after they had intended. When they land in Calais, Sir Andrew leads Marguerite to a small inn called Chat Gris. The inn is dirty and unpleasant, but Marguerite is able to ignore this when she learns that Lord Blakeney is expected within the hour.

## **Chapter 18, The Mysterious Device, Chapter 19, The Scarlet Pimpernel, Chapter 20, The Friend, Chapter 21, Suspense, and Chapter 22, Calais Analysis**

Finally Marguerite has seen past the mask her husband wears around every person he has ever met, and knows that he is the Scarlet Pimpernel. Marguerite all at once is filled with pride and hope at this realization until she realizes that she has placed her own husband in danger by revealing the contents of his note to Sir Andrew to Chauvelin. When Marguerite receives the letter her brother wrote that connects him to the Scarlet Pimpernel, she has evidence in hand that Chauvelin saw through Lord Blakeney's ruse the night before in which he was pretending to be asleep in the supper room at the same time the Scarlet Pimpernel promised to be in that very room. Now Marguerite knows that her betrayal has allowed Chauvelin to identify the Scarlet Pimpernel and that her husband is in danger. Now Marguerite must do all she can to rescue her unsuspecting husband.

Marguerite turns to one of the only two men she knows are loyal to the Scarlet Pimpernel, touching on a theme of the novel, and asks him to take her to her husband. Sir Andrew quickly agrees, aware that the danger to Lord Blakeney is more important than his hesitancy to trust Marguerite. Sir Andrew believes Marguerite is being completely honest with him and this helps him to make his decision. Marguerite and Sir Andrew rush to Dover where they know Chauvelin is planning to cross the channel in his chase after the Scarlet Pimpernel. Marguerite hopes to beat Chauvelin to Lord Blakeney, but the weather keeps them from traveling for a full day, injecting the plot with a great deal of tension as Marguerite waits impatiently to rescue her husband or die at his side. Marguerite and Sir Andrew arrive at the inn where the Scarlet Pimpernel told his people he would be and are relieved to see they have gotten there ahead of Chauvelin and Lord Blakeney is due to arrive within the hour for his supper.





# **Chapter 23, Hope, Chapter 24, The Death-Trap, Chapter 25, The Eagle and the Fox, and Chapter 26, The Jew**

## **Chapter 23, Hope, Chapter 24, The Death-Trap, Chapter 25, The Eagle and the Fox, and Chapter 26, The Jew Summary**

Sir Andrew tells Marguerite that he saw Chauvelin on the docks shortly before they left and that he believes Chauvelin is barely an hour behind them. Marguerite and Sir Andrew decide they cannot wait for Lord Blakeney to come to them, so they decide that Marguerite should remain at the inn while Sir Andrew goes in search of Lord Blakeney. Marguerite arranges with the inn keeper to wait in the loft, hidden behind a dirty sheet. Chauvelin arrives at the inn. Marguerite hears Chauvelin talking with his secretary, discussing the guards he has stationed on all the roads in and out of Calais watching for Lord Blakeney. These men are to follow Lord Blakeney should they see him in order to allow Chauvelin to catch Lord Blakeney with the fugitives, a crime that will allow the French government execute him without causing tension between their government and the English government. Then Chauvelin sends his secretary to retrieve more guards. Marguerite is frightened, sure that Lord Blakeney could not possibly escape Chauvelin's clutches now.

Lord Blakeney himself arrives at the inn. Lord Blakeney recognizes Chauvelin immediately and sits with him as he helps himself to some of Chauvelin's soup. Lord Blakeney makes small talk, aware of Chauvelin's discomfort and fear. Marguerite watches the scene, anxious to warn her husband but afraid that if she shows her face in front of Chauvelin she will only make her husband's situation worse. Lord Blakeney then offers Chauvelin some snuff that he has replaced with black pepper. As Chauvelin suffers a terrible sneezing attack, Lord Blakeney escapes the inn. Chauvelin's secretary returns. Chauvelin demands to know if the man saw Lord Blakeney, but he denies it. The secretary then tells Chauvelin about a Jewish man he interviewed who saw Lord Blakeney make arrangements with another Jewish man to rent his horse and cart. Chauvelin has the Jewish man brought to him where he listens to his story and then hires the man to drive him to the same destination Lord Blakeney had arranged to have the other man drive him to. In exchange, Chauvelin gives the man five gold pieces and promises another ten. However, if they do not find Lord Blakeney at their destination, Chauvelin promises the old Jewish man a sound beating.



## **Chapter 23, Hope, Chapter 24, The Death-Trap, Chapter 25, The Eagle and the Fox, and Chapter 26, The Jew Analysis**

Marguerite overhears Chauvelin's plans to trap Lord Blakeney and is worried about her chances of survival. Once again Marguerite underestimates her husband, convinced that Chauvelin's plan is so ironclad that there is no way Lord Blakeney can escape. However, the reader will recall the Scarlet Pimpernel's great escape at the beginning of the novel and has faith that the Scarlet Pimpernel will again manage to trick the people who are so overconfident in their own abilities that he will be able to outwit them. In fact, Lord Blakeney does seem to outwit Chauvelin in a small way when he tricks the man into sniffing snuff that has been replaced with black pepper. Lord Blakeney has escaped for the moment, but Marguerite suffers a lack of faith as she continues to fret that her husband will die that night.

Chauvelin confronts his secretary and threatens to have the man executed for not seeing Lord Blakeney as he made his escape not five minutes before. However, the man redeems himself when he reveals that Lord Blakeney has ordered a horse and cart to help him travel a few leagues into the country. Chauvelin becomes excited and formulates a plan to trap Lord Blakeney. This plan is simple, Chauvelin only wants to catch Lord Blakeney in the company of the fugitives he has come to rescue in order to have him executed under French law. This plan seems foolproof, even to Marguerite's ears, adding to the poor woman's anxiety. At this point, Marguerite has accepted that Lord Blakeney will die this night and only hopes that she will be able to profess her love and die at his side, illustrating the theme of love.



# **Chapter 27, On the Track, Chapter 28, The Pere Blanchard's Hut, Chapter 29, Trapped, Chapter 30, The Schooner, and Chapter 31, The Escape**

## **Chapter 27, On the Track, Chapter 28, The Pere Blanchard's Hut, Chapter 29, Trapped, Chapter 30, The Schooner, and Chapter 31, The Escape Summary**

Marguerite slips out of the inn as soon as she can hear Chauvelin driving away in the cart, and follows on foot. They have not traveled far when Chauvelin is approached by two soldiers on horseback. These soldiers tell him that they found a cabin on a cliff where two men fitting the descriptions of Armand St. Just and Viscount de Tournay. Chauvelin becomes excited and orders his secretary and a dozen soldiers to follow them to the cabin. Marguerite follows. Chauvelin stops the soldiers at the foot of a path that leads to cabin in order to issue his commands. Chauvelin warns the soldiers that if Lord Blakeney is not in the cabin when they arrive, they are to hide and remain silent until Lord Blakeney arrives. Chauvelin tells the soldier he will have them executed if they so much as move before Lord Blakeney arrives. Before going up the path, Chauvelin speaks to the Jewish man. This man refuses to remain with his cart out of fear of the fugitives. Chauvelin decides to take him with them, gagged, so that he may drive them and any injured fugitive back to Calais after the arrests are made. Marguerite follows and in her fear for her husband, manages to reach the top of the path before Chauvelin and his soldiers. Marguerite attempts to approach the cabin to warn its occupants, but Chauvelin grabs her and pulls her under cover.

Marguerite hears Chauvelin speaking to a soldier who tells him that there are now four people in the cabin, but none of them is Lord Blakeney. The soldier also reports on a schooner that has been spotted just off the coast. Finally, the soldier reports that the Jewish man has been gagged and tied so that he cannot get in their way. Chauvelin then turns to Marguerite and removes the gag he had placed in her mouth. Chauvelin tells her that if she screams, he will kill her brother. This leaves Marguerite stuck between the idea of warning her husband and causing the death of her brother, or keeping silent and allowing her husband to walk into a trap.

Marguerite and the others hear her husband's voice as he sings while walking up the path. Marguerite cannot allow Lord Blakeney to run blindly into a trap, so she runs to the cabin and begins screaming. Chauvelin orders the soldier to rush the cabin. However, the cabin is empty. One of the soldiers reports that he heard the fugitives leaving the cabin several minutes before, but did not stop them because they had been ordered not to move until Lord Blakeney had arrived. Chauvelin searches the cabin and finds a note



signed with a small scarlet pimpernel. The note tells exactly where the Scarlet Pimpernel wants his boat to meet him.

Chauvelin sends a group of soldiers to take a short cut to the rendezvous he believes the Scarlet Pimpernel has arranged. Chauvelin then has the Jewish man beaten for not intercepting Lord Blakeney on the way to the hut. Then Chauvelin leaves with the rest of his men, leaving Marguerite alone with the bruised and battered Jewish man. Marguerite awakes from the faint her fear caused her. Marguerite looks around, wondering what she should do now. Marguerite is still convinced her husband is doomed, and now she will not be allowed to die with him. Marguerite is lost in her grief, unaware of the discomfort of her companion until he calls out to her. Marguerite is shocked by the sound of the man's voice because it is a familiar English voice. Marguerite rushes to the Jewish man only to discover her beloved Lord Blakeney. Lord Blakeney disguised himself as a Jewish man in order to come to the cabin under Chauvelin's nose. Lord Blakeney then slipped Armand St. Just a note with instructions on how to escape and a decoy note to leave for Chauvelin. Lord Blakeney assures his wife that he knows about her role in his near capture and that he has forgiven her her earlier missteps in view of her amazing bravery. Lord Blakeney, his wife, and Sir Andrew make their way to a rendezvous point and board the Day Dream, escaping to England and the wedding of Sir Andrew and Suzanne de Tournay.

## **Chapter 27, On the Track, Chapter 28, The Pere Blanchard's Hut, Chapter 29, Trapped, Chapter 30, The Schooner, and Chapter 31, The Escape Analysis**

Marguerite follows Chauvelin and his soldiers, intent on dying at her husband's side if he will have her after her betrayal. Marguerite is so filled with regret and guilt that the reader cannot help but feel for her, hoping that something will help rescue her husband. It seems bleak, however, when Chauvelin learns the location of the cabin where Lord Blakeney was to meet the fugitives and help them escape France. Chauvelin surrounds the cabin, giving orders that no one is to move until Lord Blakeney arrives. Chauvelin is exerting his power, threatening to execute everyone who crosses him, becoming something of a metaphor of the government he represents. This power trip proves to be Chauvelin's undoing, however, when his men allow the fugitives to escape in fear of disobeying orders.

Marguerite is forced to choose between her husband and her brother. Marguerite refuses to make the choice, warning both men of the danger they are in as Lord Blakeney appears to be coming up the path toward them. However, Armand is already gone and Lord Blakeney is not really on the road. In fact, it turns out that Lord Blakeney has been with Chauvelin all night dressed as an old Jewish man who has driven Chauvelin to the cabin. Chauvelin leaves Marguerite and the Jewish man alone when he believes he has a chance of intercepting Lord Blakeney before he rendezvous with his boat, but instead leaves Lord Blakeney with his loving wife. Chauvelin has been outwitted by the Scarlet

Pimpernel the same way the guard at the beginning of the novel was, succumbing to their own confidence in their own power, a theme of the novel.



# Characters

## Marguerite St. Just Blakeney

Marguerite St. Just is a young, intelligent woman who surrounds herself with equally intellectual people. Marguerite is beautiful and charming, a woman who had many beaux before finally choosing to marry an English gentleman, Lord Percy Blakeney. Marguerite believed Lord Blakeney to be madly in love with her and was willing to accept this love and hope that her own love for him would grow. However, within days of their wedding, Lord Blakeney begins to hear rumors that Marguerite's testimony led to the death of the Marquis de St. Cyr and his family. Marguerite goes to Lord Blakeney and tells her that it was indeed her testimony that caused Marquis de St. Cyr to be executed. However, she does not tell him that she only told a rumor to some trusted friends and it was they who gave the information to the government officials who would arrest and try Marquis de St. Cyr for treason.

Marguerite believes Lord Blakeney's love for her died when he learned of her betrayal, so she left him for a time to live with her beloved brother. However, Marguerite returns to Lord Blakeney to take her place as Lady Blakeney, his wife and a beloved society dame. In public, Marguerite and Lord Blakeney seem to barely tolerate each other with her often making comments that leave little doubt that she believes her husband to be a fool. In private, they do not speak to each other at all. However, when Marguerite learns that her brother has been caught aiding the Scarlet Pimpernel and that his life is in peril, she turns to Lord Blakeney to ask for his help. Marguerite asks what happened to his love and quickly discovers that it still exists, it is simply hidden beneath his wounded pride.

Marguerite helps Chauvelin, an agent of the Revolutionary government of France, learn the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel in exchange for her brother's life. However, Marguerite soon learns that the Scarlet Pimpernel and her husband are one in the same. Marguerite is horrified at the implications of her betrayal and convinces a loyal friend of her husband's to help her warn her husband of impending doom. Marguerite travels to France only to discover that the web surrounding her husband has already been spun and there is no escape. Marguerite decides she will go to her husband and confess her love to him and stand at his side when he dies. Fortunately for her, Lord Blakeney is cleverer than Chauvelin and manages to escape certain death once again.

## Lord Percy Blakeney

Lord Percy Blakeney is a simple-minded English gentleman who is friends with such highly placed people as the Prince of Wales. Lord Blakeney is married to Marguerite St. Just, a charming, intelligent French woman who appears to be contemptuous of her husband's simple mind. In truth, however, Lord Blakeney is a highly intelligent man who



has been able to outsmart the French government on many occasions as the Scarlet Pimpernel.

Lord Blakeney empathizes with the French aristocrats and feels it is his duty to do something to help them where his government cannot. Lord Blakeney enlists the help of his league of gentlemen, nineteen other gentlemen of high birth willing to risk their lives for the Scarlet Pimpernel. Lord Blakeney keeps this identity secret, not even telling his own wife. It is because of this secrecy that Marguerite is unaware that Chauvelin has encouraged her to betray her own husband until the deed is done. However, Lord Blakeney is aware that Chauvelin is on his trail and is able to outsmart him even without the warning his wife places herself in danger to offer him.

## **Armand St. Just**

Armand St. Just is Lady Blakeney's brother. When Marguerite was a small child, her parents died and she was left in the care of her only brother. Armand became more than a sibling to her—he was mother, father, and brother all in one. When Armand fell in love with a beautiful girl and was beaten by her aristocratic father, Marguerite spoke of a rumor to some trusted friends. This rumor reached the ears of some government officials who used it to arrest and execute the aristocrat along with his entire family. Later, after Marguerite has married and moved to England, it is discovered by an agent of the Revolutionary government of France that Armand is in league with the Scarlet Pimpernel. This information is used against Marguerite, forcing her to help the agent learn the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel.

Armand is a kind, gentle man who believes in the Republic, but does not agree with their methods. Armand becomes aware of the Scarlet Pimpernel and agrees to help him smuggle Viscount de Tournay out of France. However, after Armand has already left for France, a letter he wrote discussing this mission is discovered. Armand has no way of knowing that his life is at risk or that his sister is being blackmailed to help him. Armand manages to escape, however, thanks to the work of the Scarlet Pimpernel.

## **Sir Andrew Ffoulkes**

Sir Andrew Ffoulkes is a young man who belongs to the league of the Scarlet Pimpernel. Sir Andrew is one of the young men who escorts the Comtesse de Tournay and her children into England. During this journey, Sir Andrew falls in love with the Comtesse's daughter, Suzanne. Sir Andrew also receives correspondence from the Scarlet Pimpernel informing him and his partner, Lord Antony, about their part in the rescue of Viscount de Tournay. While they are reading these letters, Chauvelin and one of his agents overtakes them and takes their papers. Among these papers is a letter from Armand St. Just that reveals his participation in the rescue of de Tournay.

Sir Andrew is kept captive until the night of Lord Grenville's ball, when he is mysteriously set free in time to meet with the Scarlet Pimpernel at the ball. Sir Andrew receives a note from the Scarlet Pimpernel that Lady Blakeney is able to intercept and read in



order to help Chauvelin learn the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel. Later, when Lady Blakeney discovers that the Scarlet Pimpernel and her husband are one in the same, she goes to Sir Andrew to ask his help in going to France and warning Lord Blakeney before he walks into Chauvelin's trap.

## **Chauvelin**

Chauvelin is an agent of the Revolutionary government of France sent to England to uncover the secret identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel. Chauvelin turns to Marguerite Blakeney for help because she once gave testimony that sent an aristocrat to the guillotine, the same executions the Scarlet Pimpernel is attempting to stop. Chauvelin misunderstands Marguerite's opinion of the Scarlet Pimpernel, however, and finds her resistant to his request. When Chauvelin discovers proof that Marguerite's beloved brother is in league with the Scarlet Pimpernel, he uses this information to force her to help him. Marguerite is unhappy with this situation, but she values her brother's life above all else and agrees to help.

Chauvelin learns that Marguerite saw a note announcing the location of the Scarlet Pimpernel at a specific time. However, when Chauvelin goes to that location, he only finds Lord Blakeney asleep on a couch. At first it seems the Scarlet Pimpernel has changed his mind about appearing, but later Chauvelin realizes that the Scarlet Pimpernel is Lord Blakeney. Chauvelin follows Lord Blakeney to France and closes off all the roads in and out of the town where he is thought to have gone. Chauvelin does not arrest Lord Blakeney when he runs into him at a local inn, however, intent on catching him redhanded, helping the fugitives he has come to rescue. However, Lord Blakeney is able to outsmart Chauvelin, dressing as an old Jew and driving Chauvelin to his rendezvous point with the fugitives himself.

## **Sir Antony Dewhurst**

Lord Antony Dewhurst is another of the gentlemen who works with the Scarlet Pimpernel. Lord Antony is a well respected English gentlemen with many powerful friends, including Lord Blakeney, a personal friend of the Prince of Wales. Lord Antony is with the Comtesse de Tournay when she first arrives in England and is also with Sir Andrew when the two men are overtaken by Chauvelin and his agent. With Sir Andrew, Lord Antony is held captive for several days in hope that he will go straight to the Scarlet Pimpernel and reveal his true identity.

## **Comtesse de Tournay, Suzanne de Tournay, and Viscomte de Tou**

Comtesse de Tournay is the wife of Viscount de Tournay, a French aristocrat who is due to be arrested any day for crimes against his country. Comtesse is frightened and unhappy about having to leave her husband behind in France while she and her





children travel to England and safety. The Comtesse is very traditional and angry. When the Comtesse learns that Lady Blakeney, the same woman who gave testimony against her relatives and sent them to the guillotine, is coming to the same inn where she is with her children, she refuses to allow her daughter any contact with her. Suzanne, her daughter, is not as unhappy with Marguerite as her mother. Suzanne and Marguerite were schoolmates and still care deeply for one another. However, Suzanne must obey her mother, so she gives Marguerite a quick hug and rushes from the room when they meet at the inn. The Vicomte de Tournay, the Comtesse's son, attempts to protect his mother's virtue by suggesting a duel with Marguerite's husband, but is humiliated when Lord Blakeney pretends he does not understand the young man's intentions.

## **Marquis de St. Cyr**

The Marquis de St. Cyr is a French aristocrat who once had Armand St. Just beaten for showing interest in his young daughter. As a result, Marguerite hates the Marquis and wants to hurt him. Marguerite hears a rumor that the Marquis has been in communications with Austria. This rumor reaches the ears of some government officials who arrest and convict the Marquis of treason. The Marquis and his entire family are sent to the guillotine despite Marguerite's attempts to prevent it. Later, Lord Blakeney will learn of this deceit on his wife's part and it will cause a rift in his marriage that almost drives an insurmountable wedge between the young lovers.

## **Jellyband and Sally**

Jellyband is the owner of the Fisherman's Rest in Dover. Jellyband is a common man with strong feelings about politics, sharing his feelings with customers in his pub. Jellyband believes in the Scarlet Pimpernel and what he does, giving refuge to several agents of the Scarlet Pimpernel whenever they need it. Sally is Jellyband's young daughter, a beautiful young lady who slaves away serving her father's customers and cooking their food. Sally is under appreciated and overworked, but she loves her father and content with the life she has been given.

## **Viscount de Tournay**

The Viscount de Tournay is a French aristocrat who has received word that he will soon be arrested and most like sent to the guillotine if he remains in France. The Scarlet Pimpernel has already saved the Viscount's family and sent them to England. The Viscount is hidden away in a safe place where he meets with Armand St. Just and taken to a place where they will rendezvous with the Scarlet Pimpernel. It is during this trip to France that the Scarlet Pimpernel is chased by Chauvelin and nearly caught. However, the Scarlet Pimpernel is too clever to be caught by a man so caught up in his own power. The Viscount is able to escape without harm and arrives in England in time to help plan his daughter's wedding to Sir Andrew Ffoulkes.



# Objects/Places

## Scarlet Pimpernel

A scarlet pimpernel is a small, red flower that grows in England.

## Notes

Every time the Scarlet Pimpernel helps a French fugitive escape execution, a note is discovered by the head of the Committee for Public Safety who is in charge of the executions.

## Armand's Letter

Chauvelin confiscates a letter written by Armand St. Just that connects him to the Scarlet Pimpernel. Chauvelin uses this letter to blackmail Marguerite into helping him identify the Scarlet Pimpernel.

## Scrap of Paper

Marguerite sees Sir Andrew given a scrap of paper at Grenville's ball and manages to trick him into giving it to her in order to read the note the Scarlet Pimpernel has written on it.

## Ring

Marguerite finds a ring in her husband's study with a scarlet pimpernel on it. This ring helps Marguerite finally make the connection between the Scarlet Pimpernel and her husband.

## City Gates

All gates leading into and out of Paris are guarded in order to prevent the escape of fugitives.

## Horse and Cart

Chauvelin is told that Lord Blakeney has rented a horse and cart from a Jewish man so he uses the horse and cart of another Jewish man to follow.



## **Fisherman's Rest**

Fisherman's Rest is a pub in Dover where Lady Blakeney runs into Comtesse de Tournay as well as Chauvelin after saying farewell to her brother before his return to France.

## **Chat Gris**

Chat Gris is a dirty little inn where Marguerite and Sir Andrew go to find Lord Blakeney to warn him about Chauvelin. It is also here that Marguerite overhears Chauvelin's plan to arrest her husband.

## **Pere Blanchard's Hut**

Pere Blanchard's hut is a small cabin where the Scarlet Pimpernel is to meet Armand St. Just and Viscount de Tournay in order to help them escape France.

## **The Day Dream**

The Day Dream is Lord Blakeney's private yacht.

## **Paris, France**

Paris is the location of the executions of many of the French aristocrats.



# Themes

## Loyalty

Loyalty is a theme of this novel for several reasons. First, the safety of the Scarlet Pimpernel rests with the secrecy of his identity. Should anyone learn the identity of this heroic man, he could no longer enter France without being arrested. Once arrested on French soil, the Scarlet Pimpernel will be executed to keep the English government from interfering and insisting on returning their citizen to England. There are nineteen men who are willing to give their lives for the Scarlet Pimpernel and his courageous task. This loyalty has kept the Scarlet Pimpernel over many missions to rescue French aristocrats and leads one man, Sir Andrew, to help Lady Blakeney warn her husband of impending doom.

Loyalty also comes into the novel in the form of sibling love. Marguerite loves her brother more than life. When her brother is injured by the Marquis de St. Cyr, she seeks revenge by spreading gossip about him. Unfortunately, this gossip leads to the execution of St. Cyr and his family, but Marguerite had no way of knowing this would take place. Later, when Marguerite learns that her brother's life is in danger because of his relationship to the Scarlet Pimpernel, she does all she can to protect him. It is because of this relationship that Marguerite finds herself torn between her love for her brother, and her love for her husband, making loyalty a major theme of the novel.

## Love

Marguerite once loved the man she married, charmed by his attentions before their wedding and touched by the love he clearly felt for her. However, when Marguerite tells her husband that she testified against the Marquis de St. Cyr, but does not tell him the circumstances or the fact that she fought for his release, it ends their relationship. Convinced her husband no longer loves her, Marguerite leaves her new husband. Marguerite returns later, but by then her husband is hurt and no longer feels safe in revealing his feelings to her. Their marriage becomes one of convenience, two people living in the same home and pretending to be content in public, but living separate lives at home.

Marguerite finds herself longing for the husband she thought she had married. Marguerite is desperate to save her brother and just as desperate to have someone she can turn to to share her emotional turmoil. Marguerite turns to Lord Blakeney, but finds him cold and unresponsive, afraid of being hurt once again. However, Marguerite sees through the mask behind which Lord Blakeney hides his love and becomes convinced he still loves her. When Marguerite learns who Lord Blakeney really is, she rushes to warn him of danger, hoping to reveal her love to him and die at his side.



Lord Blakeney is not the only man in Marguerite's life. When Marguerite's parents died, her brother took over her care, raising her with all the love and kindness any parent might have offered. As a result, Marguerite and Armand's relationship is closer than other brothers and sisters. When Chauvelin threatens to arrest Armand for his aid to the Scarlet Pimpernel, Marguerite goes against her instincts and agrees to help identify the Scarlet Pimpernel. Later, when Marguerite realizes Lord Blakeney is the Scarlet Pimpernel, she finds herself torn between her brother and the man she loves more with each new thing she learns about him. It is this situation that makes love a theme of the novel.

## Heroism

The Scarlet Pimpernel hears stories about the atrocities in France and feels for the aristocrats suffering at the hands of the new government. When it is clear the English government can do nothing to stop these atrocities, the Scarlet Pimpernel is born. The Scarlet Pimpernel and his league of gentlemen go into France and help aristocrats who have been targeted for execution escape their country. The Scarlet Pimpernel often goes to France himself, disguising himself in clever costumes and escaping the cities under the watchful eyes of the guards assigned to find him.

Hero is a word that is often tossed around in modern times. A hero is no longer defined as it once was. However, this novel contains a real hero, a man who puts his own life at risk in order to save the lives of others. The Scarlet Pimpernel faces down his biggest enemy without flinching and without backing down despite a terrible beating and the danger his wife has placed herself in. The Scarlet Pimpernel is a clever, intelligent man who has morals far superior to the morals of some modern day heroes. It is this fearlessness that makes heroism a theme of the novel.



# Style

## Point of View

The point of view of the novel is third person omniscient. The novel is written through the eyes of several characters, most often through the eyes of Marguerite Blakeney. However, the narrator is not a character in the novel, but the author. There are often little comments in the authorial voice that remind the reader that the narrator is someone outside the story who lives in a time later than that of the story. These authorial comments give some needed information, occasionally giving the reader better insight into a character than the third person point of view provides.

The point of view of this novel works because it allows the reader to see the story through several view points. The majority of the novel is seen through the eyes of Marguerite Blakeney, a woman who is forced to spy for the French government in order to save her brother from arrest and execution. However, there are several chapters in the beginning of the novel that are seen through the eyes of other characters and others that are told with an authorial voice. The first chapter of the novel is told as a sort of folk story, expressing the talents of the Scarlet Pimpernel without ever revealing the thoughts or emotions of any one character. This point of view allows the reader to see the story from many points of view, giving a rounded view of a story that could have been too one sided.

## Setting

The novel's primary setting is England in 1792. In this year, France's monarchy has been taken over by the Republic and the king and queen have been executed. The aristocrats who supported the monarchy are systemically being arrested and executed. The English government is caught up in their own trouble and unable to do anything to intercede on behalf of these aristocrats. It is this atmosphere that gives birth to the Scarlet Pimpernel, an English gentleman who often travels to France to rescue the doomed aristocrats.

The setting of this novel is both exciting and appropriate to the novel's plot. The revolution that took place in France caused an incredible upheaval that led to many deaths. This revolution is the perfect backdrop to the heroic actions of the Scarlet Pimpernel, an English gentleman who cannot sit back and watch innocent people murdered for the sins of a few. The setting is also fascinating in that it is clearly an earlier period compared to the time in which the author lives. There are many comments throughout the novel in which the writer compares the setting of her story to the version of these settings that exist when she wrote the novel and when she expects her readers to read it. In this way, the setting is made even more real to the readers who can appreciate the changes that have taken place and the things that have remained the same.



## Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is a more formal English than modern English. There is very little slang in the novel and most of the dialogue is somewhat stiff and formal. There are many French characters in this novel, including Lady Blakeney, so there are many French words used in the novel as well. Many of these French words are self-explanatory, therefore the reader has little trouble understand what is being said or what reference is being made by these words.

The language of the novel is formal because this is the way in which people of this time spoke. The language is appropriate to the characters in the novel, expressing their lives and lifestyle in a highly appropriate manner. The use of French words is expected because of the French characters that populate the novel. If the author had not used some French words the setting and characters would not feel as authentic as they do. The language of this novel is highly appropriate for its setting and characters.

## Structure

The novel contains thirty-one chapters. Each chapter is titled with a name, word, or phrase that is important to the events that take place in the chapter. The novel is told in both exposition and dialogue, with an occasional authorial voiced comment to help the reader orient themselves with a setting or with the time period in which the story is told.

There is only one plot in this novel. The plot of the novel revolves around the French agent, Chauvelin's, search for the Scarlet Pimpernel. Chauvelin uses evidence against the brother of Lady Blakeney, a French woman married to an English gentleman, to help him find the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel. Lady Blakeney helps Chauvelin only to discover that the Scarlet Pimpernel is actually her own husband. Lady Blakeney spends the remainder of the novel attempting to rescue her husband from Chauvelin only to discover that it is she who must be rescued by the Scarlet Pimpernel.



## Quotes

"And daily, hourly, the hideous instrument of torture claimed its many victims—old men, young women, tiny children, even until the day it would demand the head of a King and a beautiful young Queen." Chap. 1, p. 7

"Feeling in every part of England certainly ran very high at this time against the French and their doings. Smugglers and legitimate traders between the French and English coasts brought snatches of news from over the water, which made every honest Englishman's blood boil, and made him long to have 'a good go' at those murderers, who had imprisoned their king and all his family, subjected the queen and the royal children to every species of indignity, and were even now loudly demanding the blood of the whole Bourbon family and of every one of its adherents." Chap. 3, p. 22

"'The Scarlet Pimpernel, Mademoiselle,' he said at last, 'is the name of a humble English wayside flower; but it is also the name chosen to hide the identity of the best and bravest man in all the world, so that he may better succeed in accomplishing the noble task he has set himself to do.'" Chap. 4, p. 31

"Sir Percy Blakeney, as the chronicles of the time inform us, was in this year of grace 1792 still a year or two on the right side of thirty. Tall, above the average, even for an Englishman, broad-shouldered and massively built, he would have been called unusually good-looking, but for a certain lazy expression in his deep-set blue eyes, and that perpetual inane laugh which seemed to disfigure his strong, clearly-cut mouth." Chap. 6, p. 40

"The Day Dream it was, Sir Percy Blakeney's yacht, which was ready to take Armand St. Just back to France into the very midst of that seething, bloody Revolution which was overthrowing a monarchy, attacking a religion, destroying a society, in order to try and rebuild upon the ashes of tradition a new Utopia, of which a few men dreamed, but which none had the power to establish." Chap. 7, p. 48

"He stood somewhat isolated: the envoy of the Revolutionary Government of France was not likely to be very popular in England, at a time when the news of the awful September massacres, and of the Reign of Terror and Anarchy, had just begun to filtrate across the Channel." Chap. 11, p. 81

"No wonder that in France the sobriquet of the mysterious Englishman roused in the people a superstitious shudder. Chauvelin himself as he gazed round the deserted room, where presently the weird hero would appear, felt a strange feeling of awe creeping all down his spine." Chap. 14, p. 101





"Had she but turned back then, and looked out once more on to the rose-lit garden, she would have seen that which would have made her own sufferings seem but light and easy to bear—a strong man, overwhelmed with his own passion and his own despair. Pride had given way at last, obstinacy was gone: the will was powerless. He was but a man madly, blindly, passionately in love, and as soon as her light footstep had died away within the house, he knelt down upon the terrace steps, and in the very madness of his love he kissed one by one the places where her small foot had trodden, and the stone balustrade there, where her tiny hand had rested last." Chap. 16, p. 118

"God would be merciful. He would not allow so appalling a crime to be committed as the death of a brave man through the hand of a woman who loved him, and worshipped him, and who would gladly have died for his sake." Chap. 20, p. 141

"The terrible danger in which Percy stood, now that he was actually on French soil, became suddenly and horribly clear to her. Chauvelin was close upon his heels; here in Calais, the astute diplomatist was all-powerful; a word from him and Percy could be tracked and arrested and..." Chap. 23, p. 158

"Marguerite indulged in the luxury, dear to every tender woman's heart, of looking at the man she loved." Chap. 25, p. 173

"The rest is silence!—silence and joy for those who had endured so much suffering, yet found at last a great and lasting happiness." Chap. 31, p. 223



## Topics for Discussion

What is a scarlet pimpernel? Why has it become the symbol for the man who rescues doomed aristocrats from execution? How does this symbol reveal to French officials that their enemy is English? Why is this man considered a villain in France but a hero in England?

Why are French aristocrats being executed? Why does the English government not help these people? What does the English government think of the Scarlet Pimpernel? Would the English government be able to assist the Scarlet Pimpernel if he were ever caught by the French agent? Why or why not?

Who is Lord Percy Blakeney? Why does his wife believe him to be an idiot? Is he an idiot? What significance does his mother's mental illness play his wife's opinion of him? How does his wife's opinion of her husband's intelligence affect their marriage? Is their marriage a loveless one? Why? Was their relationship always this way?

Who is Marguerite Blakeney? To who is she married? Why does Marguerite believe her husband does not love her? What has Marguerite done to cause her husband to stop loving her? Did Marguerite do this with malice? Does Marguerite believe in the Republic that has taken over the government of her beloved country? Does Marguerite believe in the work of the Scarlet Pimpernel? Why does Marguerite decide to help Chauvelin find the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel?

Who is Chauvelin? Why does he want to find the Scarlet Pimpernel? What does he plan to do once he has captured this man? Why? Why does Chauvelin enlist Marguerite Blakeney's help? Why does Chauvelin need her help? What happens when Chauvelin chases after the Scarlet Pimpernel? Does he get his man? Why or why not?

Who is Armand St. Just? What role does he play in the rescue of Viscount de Tournay? What role does he play in Marguerite's testimony against the Marquis de St. Cyr? What role does he play in Marguerite's betrayal of the Scarlet Pimpernel? Why? What is unique about Armand's relationship with Marguerite? How does this relationship motivate Marguerite's actions throughout the novel?

Who is the Scarlet Pimpernel? How is his identity revealed to Chauvelin? How is his identity revealed to Marguerite Blakeney? What is surprising about his identity? How was his identity kept secret for so long? How does the revelation of his identity change Marguerite's feelings for her husband?