Roland:

Talking with J.S.P. about Madam Roland and the old scheme for a play - he feels quite sure that I ought to go at it. He suggests that Katherine Cornell might be a possible figure. I do not quite see it, but think that possibly Nazimova might do it.

I As I see it now there should be a first act in which Manon, eighteen, full of ideals and reforming zeal becomes acquainted with Roland with his vigorous formula for improving things. Particularly his revolt against the ways of the aristocracy - his shoe buckles, etc.

These things should be brought in contact with characters of the new regime - elegant lightness - indifference to everything but themselves and their pleasures and ways. Under this influence she becomes a severe little reformer

Possibly the contrast strengthening her Revolutionary notions there could be managed a scene in which she goes after the title for R. Here one gets a chance to picture R.'s weakness. Pedantry, etc., all of which had not been realized and in fact never were realized by Madam Roland.

The last scene perhaps in this Act should see them settled at ~~Seios~~ La Clue charming life there.

II The second Act - the beginning of the Revolution and the way they accept it, working hand in hand. There

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coming to Paris - her salon and the deliberate plotting that then went on to get the stick out of the wheel.

III Third Act - Madam R's. ~~tendency - her~~ work against the King and the Queen. Their supposed success - a new government. R. in it - a power. The clouds in the offing - not everybody satisfied. Here Buzot comes into the scene at the end of this Act.

IV Act IV The rise of the ~~D'Camerons~~ Commune - D's. effect to win Madam R.

In previous acts, their coming to Paris, Buzot must be seen about the salon - the growing sympathy must be manifest. The time that the government is installed she is plainly under his influence. The contrast to the intellectual severity and the vanity of ~~Madam~~ Mme Roland. ~~younger~~. Gradually she has come completely under his sway.

When Danton appears an essential factor in order to save the government and down the Commune which now you hear rising in the street as well as reported by visitors she is unable to unite with him. Here the physical contrast, the violence and power antagonize her. If there had been no Buzot in the picture Danton would have had Madam Roland. This somehow must be made clear.

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She does not throw her efforts with his - Buzot and their party are too weak. It is a Karinsky Revolution.

V

Now comes the Communes.

Act Fifth must be/the Communes in power. with

Madam Roland in prison. Beautiful scene when she writes her memoirs. Her last interview with Buzot - with her daughter. The command of herself, even gaity, her thoughtfulness for others. Her transfer to the Conciergie which is the last stop on the way to the guillotine/ Pathetic relations there with those who are going.

The final picture should be the ride passed the house of her childhood, across the Seine down the Rue Saint Honoré to the guillotine. There must be a pause there and his consent to let her go first to save the misery of seeing her die. There must be a final tableau. Do not know how the guillotine should be seen and yet not have a beheading- that must not happen. But there must be enough of it and I must get in as a last word how they her address as she looks at the Statue of Liberty. Some indication to show that it is over - probably the crowd on the outside shouting

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The theme is the making of a Revolutionist by ideals: the disillusionment when violence comes, the inevitable fate of the one who cannot go the final path. In her case a revolutionist is made through her girlish admiration for this severe man who has come her way - her love and service for him for years. Then the coming of a more suitable lover in Buzot which softens her revolutionary ardor, makes her incapable of joining forces with the only man, Danton, who could have saved the revolution, brought order to France, and saved her [illegible] It is not necessary, I think, to sacrifice what I believe to be a historical fact that Danton ~~[illegible]~~ - never tried to become her lover in order to influence her. He probably was too intelligent to attempt it seeing the sway that Buzot exercised over her.

That is, the play should have the revolutionary theme, (the woman being the Revolution) incarnate until love proves the stronger force.

~~As to the interior~~. The house should certainly be the scene, outside and inside, of the first act. Chardin's interiors, costumes, etc., should be consulted.

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