

The next day which was Sunday, Annette waited her father's appearance with a mixture of terror and impatience ; but the hour of mass arrived, without either the patron or Lubert having returned. Annette repaired to the church, her heart palpitating with anguish. The people in their Sunday attire were arriving from all the neighbouring hamlets, and the only topic of conversation was the adventure of the Castelli. She could escape the general curiosity only by taking refuge near the altar. There her first look met that of the *traineur de greves*. Annette was ignorant of the result of his interview with M. Le Fort, and dared not look at him.

Kneeling before the choir, she fixed her eyes upon her book, and tried in vain to confine her attention to the prayer. It was only in the midst of the service, when M. Le Fort mounted the pulpit, that she dared to raise her head. The preacher had taken for his text these words of Scripture: 'Blessed are those that mourn;' and, though his sermon was as short and simple as usual, the young girl could not hear it without being moved to the bottom of her heart. She felt as if the exhortations of the old priest were particularly adapted to her and Louis; but, when just before quitting the pulpit, he stopped an instant, and recommended to their prayers one of their number who was soon about to leave them, Annette felt all her blood rush to her heart. She turned quickly towards Marzou; he was in his seat, but so sad, so pale, that she closed her eyes, and leaned her head upon the book she held in order to hide her tears. Mass was finished before she was able to overcome her emotion. She remained in the same place plunged in her grief, while the church was gradually vacated, and the groups of talkers gathered in the cemetery and on the pier.

A number of boats had just entered the harbour to take shelter from the furious storm which was rapidly rising. After having examined the horizon and made their remarks upon the approaching tempest, the fishermen and peasants assembled at the entrance of the jetty; and began again to speak of the events of the evening before, upon which neither malicious nor different versions were wanting.

Lubert, who had just landed, heard them at first with indifference; but when Pierre, who arrived unexpectedly, explained how he had saved Nette and her lover, he ran to Goron who was busy securing the two barks, and related to him what he had just heard. The mariner divined rather than comprehended him; he left his work, quickly joined the group and satisfied himself of the facts which had been related. A few words sufficed to make him understand the whole. His first cry was for Marzou.

'Ah!' repeated Pierre, ironically, 'are you already afraid of your daughter being a widow?'

'Is he in the village?' demanded Goron.

'I saw him a little while ago.'

The patron placed his tarpaulin hat firmly on his head, and buttoned up his