

saw that two figures—a man and a girl—paced the pathway at the edge of the plain. The girl was bare-headed and they walked slowly. Suddenly Marguérite saw that they stopped and the girl laid her hand on the man's shoulder.

"It is Eugénie," she said, "Eugénie and Hypolite."

"They are happy," he said gravely, and Marguérite saw that the fine lines about his eyes and mouth deepened, and that he threw back his head as if some noble remembrance touched his mind. "They believe in each other; why should we not believe in them?"

"Why not, why not?" Marguérite answered with tears in her voice.

There was a sound of feet in the garden and a man's voice shouting.

"*Mon Dieu!*" said Marguérite, clutching at his arm.

"That is Jacques' voice. What has happened?"

They went out into the garden hastily. Jacques came running down the path, and, as he ran, he leapt into the air. His face was red and his lips moved, but no speech came from them.

"Speak," cried Marguérite, "Marie?"

"She is well!" his voice came hoarsely—then with a triumphant shout:

"A boy—a boy. He is born—my son is born—ah, he is beautiful—my own little man child—and strong—strong as a little bull."

Without another word he turned with a rush and left them, and the two—watching—saw him run leaping and shouting down the garden out towards the slope. Marguérite, with a lump in her throat, saw that Eugénie and Hypolite stood hand in hand listening.

For a moment the three figures remained still—a little blot of sombre darkness against the verdant green of the plain, then, Jacques, turning, stumbled up the slope and went back towards La Maison Grise, while Hypolite, stooping, kissed Eugénie on the mouth.

Marguérite and Drouot turned and entered the studio.

But the two without set forth hand in hand towards de Musset's rock, and all around them triumphant spring radiated from brown, sweet-smelling earth, from springing grass and opening blossom, from the cry of birds and breathing of the wind.