

Josephine, thee, thee ! Oh, Mon Dieu, mon Dieu ! After so many years !"

He broke down utterly, and leaning forward, buried his face in his hands. Josephine bent towards him, her hand rested upon his shoulder: in proportion as his strength went, hers seemed to return. She spoke now calmly, though not without effort.

"Louis, thy mother is so ill, why dost thou not send her to the Hospital ? It would be much easier."

He glanced up a moment, as if to read her meaning.

"I cannot, Josephine, I have promised her she shall remain at home always. It would kill her."

"And thou would'st have me refuse that which will make my father die happy, when he has suffered so much ? No, Louis, thou art a just man."

"But, Marcel —"

"Hush !"

"He does not know what he asks. Remember thy father is a sick man, Josephine. It cannot be right — he is dying."