

The boy making no hasty movement of acceptance, she urged it, looking up into his face with earnest eyes.

"Do take it," she said. "It is English money, but they will change it into French for you at the little shop upon the quay yonder. Please *do*."

Then slipping it into the boy's reluctant hand she hurried after her father, turning, as they reached the gate, to call, in her soft childish voice, "Good-night."

Dieudonné stood listening to the retreating footsteps. Long after these had died away he seemed to hear the tender pitiful tones of the pretty little visitor.

It was nearly dark before he bethought himself of his evening duties, and turned towards the kennels.

He went to the dark cavern, and cut the lumps of meat for the supper of his pensioners. The rats scudded away before him. Upon the night air rose the strong foul smell of the carrion.

"She had never seen anything like it," he was thinking.

After he had fed the dogs, and given fresh litter to the puppies, he sat by the gate. The night was dark, he could not see beyond the quay-side. Ocean and sky seemed all one.

"It is too hot to go to bed," he said to himself; and somehow he did not want to go to sleep and forget.

"She was just like the picture in the big window of the church," he was thinking.

With her soft pure face, her spotless white dress and flower-wreathed hat, the little figure of the English child was indeed something quite new to poor Dieudonné. The gentlemen who strolled in at times to look at their own or their friends' dogs had made him familiar with such as they, but this small visitor was quite another thing.

"And how sweet she spoke," said Dondon, lingering over the pleasant memory.

"Hullo! Dondon! petit Fichu!"

Not a sweet voice, that!

"It is Jean Pitou, and he is angry," said the boy, as he rose to his feet and moved in the direction of the voice, for as yet he saw no one.

"Show a light here little Fichu! if you are not asleep!"

"Such a night as it is!" said Pitou, as he lighted his pipe at the lantern little Dondon brought forward. "Pouf! It is suffocating! A storm is brewing; and to refuse a man shelter! Scoundrel!"

"Who has refused you?" asked the boy, timidly, for he saw that his friend was far from being in a genial mood.

"That little Snippet Simon, at the Sword and Buckler yonder; because I owe him a bit of a score, and I have had such bad luck too for these ten days past? Who has not? Why this heat! 'tis enough to scorch up all the fish in the sea! We shall all starve if it goes on so!"

Jean leaned upon the rail of the enclosure, and moodily puffed at his pipe.

Dieudonné had fetched his rusty knife from the cave, and was digging up the earth in one corner.

Presently he replaced the dirt hastily, and came towards his friend.

"Here, Pitou."

He took hold of one hand of the fisherman, and poured into it a small store of copper and silver coins.

The big fellow stared at the money, then at the donor. "Why, how long have you turned highwayman?" he said, with a hoarse laugh.

"They give what they like, you know. It is all mine," said the boy.

"And this is all you've got?"

"All but this," Dondon said, as he took out the piece the little girl had just given him.

"I want to keep this Pitou, if I can. She was just like the picture on the window in the church," he added, hurriedly.

"Ay, 'tis the little daughter of the English milord you mean; his yacht was putting out to sea awhile since. The fools! Have they been here?"

"Yes. She spoke kindly, and she gave me this."

Jean Pitou opened his fingers and let the money drop to the ground.

"See here! I won't take your money—not I!"

"Oh, but yes! I have no need of it," urged Dieudonné; "they give me my food; and see, my blouse is quite new still. Take it, Jean."

He gathered up every coin, and replaced them in the hand of his friend.

"Ha! Well, since you will have it so," said Jean. "I will repay it to you when fortune changes."

He went off, and Dieudonné was again alone.

It grew darker; even the stars were hid. A sultry gloom was spreading from the sea over the land.

"There will be a storm before long," said the boy to himself, as he went to his lonely, unattractive bed. Even his canine neighbours felt it in the air; they whined and were restless in their dog-sleep.

From a confused dream of painted windows, flying angels, and silver coin, mingling with Jean Pitou in odd array, Dieudonné was awakened by a tremendous peal of thunder, which echoed from cliff to cliff above his head. He started to his feet, and before he had hurried on his scanty clothing a vivid flash of lightning was followed by another crash.

As he opened the door of his shed a gust of wind dashed in his face fierce hail, mingled with salt spray. He hurried to the harbour. The wind was blowing with terrific fury, right inland, hurling huge masses of water, in quick succession, with mighty force over the quay.

The rain and hail descended in floods, the forked lightning flashed, and the thunder pealed almost without a pause. Utter darkness prevailed. Which was sea or land, black waters or sombre clouds, it was impossible to tell. Yet when the vivid flashes came, seeming to cleave asunder the darkness overhead, they lighted up momentarily the heaving mass of waters, the grey stone faces of the timeworn houses, and far across the other side the quay.

One moment all was revealed by the pale weird glare, then the thunder crashed, and all was darkness. The winds howled, the rain fell, and each moment the storm seemed to gather force.

Dieudonné, crouching low, holding on to the old iron windlass, felt as though he were alone in the world, which was going to wreck around him. But what was that?

Suddenly, straight and swift flew a clear blue light, then another and another.

Well enough the boy knew what this betokened. A vessel in distress!

He darted along the quay towards the houses, shouting as he went. But his voice was caught up and whirled away; the wind beat him back, and, howling, made as though it would hurl him away just as fast.

A flash of lightning showed him a dark moving object ahead, and he ran straight into a knot of people cagerly gesticulating.

"Ah, another!" they cried, as a rocket again clove the darkness.

"What is it?" "Where is it?"

"Who can make out! The terrible darkness!"

Then a sorrowful sound went through the entire group, for help seemed impossible.

"And the wind even now increases!"

"It is right on shore!"