

"Married! At the studio!" Old Bidelot gazed wildly around him. "My hat!" he ejaculated excitedly. "Where is my hat? I will go at once! At once! Jean — at the studio! It is not possible — but I will go!"

"Yes," Father Anton nodded, "we will go to the studio, for that is what Jean wanted you to do. But Jean himself is no longer there."

Old Bidelot, already halfway to the door, stopped abruptly and whirled around.

"Not there! Then — then what? He is not dead! He is married! He is at the studio! He is not at the studio! I do not understand! I understand nothing!"

"I will explain it all to you," Father Anton told him soothingly. "But let us go. It will take time to tell it, for it is a long story, and we can talk on the way."

"Yes — well, then! Well, then! But make haste!" Bidelot dragged at the skirt of Father Anton's *soutane*, and led the way from the apartment, exclaiming as he went. Then, as they reached the street, he caught Father Anton's arm and shook it almost as he would a refractory child's. "Now, then! Now, then — tell me!"

"But be calm, Monsieur Bidelot; I pray you to be calm!" expostulated Father Anton gently. "See" — stepping out — "I will tell you as we walk along. Well, then — listen! One night, a little over four months ago, Hector came to my rooms in such excitement that I thought he was ill. He told me that Jean had come back. Like you, I could not believe it. I hurried there — I ran. It was true! It was Jean — not like the Jean that went away; but like the Jean when you first saw him, the Jean of Bernay-sur-Mer. And with him was — ah, but what amazement! — was