

brother Iaumic was going, as she had just seen him pass.

Marzou replied that he had sent him to Lerat to see if there were any fishermen going the next day to the Isle of Mets. 'I am quite uneasy about Marillas,' added he; 'we left him very sick the other day, and I fear something may have happened to him.'

'Do not encourage such thoughts, Louis,' said the young girl; 'if the Bearnais felt himself in danger, would he not hoist a signal of distress?'

'I do not know,' replied Marzou: 'when we came away, his heart was almost rent on account of his bird, and Master Luz is no ordinary man; death would be less painful to him than asking a favor of one who had offended him. If he has taken a dislike to the people on the main land, he would die down there without saying a word, like a wolf wounded in the thicket. And for my part, if anything should happen to him, I should never be able to console myself; no man ever before manifested such friendship for me. I look upon him almost in the light of a brother, Niette, and the other day he gave me a very strong proof of his affection.'

'How?' demanded the young girl.

'By offering Iaumic and myself a home in his cabin, and a share of his profits.'

'And you have refused?'

'Would *that* astonish you, Niette?' said the Straggler of the Beach, looking at her earnestly.

She blushed deeply and cast down her eyes. 'You must act according to your prudence and your own wishes,' she replied, affecting to spin more quickly.

'*My wishes!*' repeated Marzou, 'do you think that they would lead me to quit the village, while you remain in it? In the name of God, Niette, do not talk in this manner: you know very well that if my *interest* called me away, my *heart* would still be here.' And as he saw that she was going to interrupt him, he added precipitately, 'do not be afraid that I am going to speak to you again of *my love*. I told you the other day, all that I concealed so long, and which almost stifled me. You answered me; *now* I can be silent and wait for better times; but if you wish me to keep up a good heart, never speak as if our interests could be divided—*never*, Niette.'

'Well, that's settled,' said the young girl, who began to laugh to conceal her emotion; 'besides, you do not yet *read* well enough, for me to discontinue my instructions.'

'Tis not at least for want of trying,' replied Marzou, drawing from his waist coat pocket a prayer-book, whose frayed binding and soiled leaves showed that it had been handled a good deal. 'Though this is a holy book, and one which my mother used, (God rest her soul,) I did not think much of it till