

one to her bosom, she went white as a ghost and tottered against the anvil. I sprang to support her, but withheld my arm ere it touched her waist, for even on the instant she had recovered herself. With wordless mother-cries she kissed Philip's lips and hair, and buried her face in his neck, he the while clinging to her as if never again for a moment could he let her go.

Presently, while I waited in great hunger for a word, she turned to Big Etienne and Grûl.

"My friends!" she cried, in a shaken voice which faithfully uttered her heart, "my true and loyal friends!" Whereupon she wrung their hands, and wrung them, and would have spoken further but that her voice failed her.

Then, after a moment or two, she turned to me, — yet not wholly.

The paleness had by this well vanished, and her eyes, those great sea-coloured eyes, which she would not lift to mine, were running over with tears. Philip took one sturdy little arm from her neck,