

"Certainly I did," calmly answered Catherine.

"Look, father Grandvoni, at Catherine, see how pale she is," said Jacques.

Grandvoni looked at his daughter, and said in a tone he intended should be very severe:

"Catherine, what does this mystery mean? what has happened? was it you who opened the door so late last night? I thought it was Francis, and I was trying to think where he could have been."

"Yes, my father, it was me."

At these words Grandvoni put his glass upon the table, Francis stopped his wheel, Bontemps twisted his whiskers, the farmer spun round his hat, and all four gazed upon Catherine with open mouths, and the poor child, looking at the farmer, said:

"Now, father Vermeud, you will make your son happy, Juliette is rich, and you came doubtless to have the papers drawn up, and to proceed with the necessary formalities."

"No, Miss," answered the farmer; "I shall not budge one step in the business till I know where Juliette procured the money."

"Then, my child, you must tell us whom it came from," said her father.

Catherine thus called upon, blushing deeply, related the apparition of the fairy, who came when the handsome young man struck the enchanted stone with his lamp; she told all she knew of the chemist's son, and her naïve eulogies excited all Bontemps' jealousy.

"I see it, I see it," said he, quickly; "this beautiful young man knows how to pay well for what he gets. By the smoke of my pipe! father Vermeud! you had better take care, or you will not be the grandfather of your son's child, for this magic hides some force. I tell you it is only a pretence that Miss Catherine has been telling you—a lamp which spits out genii, who have crowns to lavish upon others—bah!"

"I have told the truth," said Catherine, with an accent full of innocence; "that which I related I saw myself, and as for Juliette,—I don't understand what Mr. Bontemps means."

"I know very well before the revolution," said the mayor, "that this cottage had a chimney like that of a blacksmith's forge, and when I went there by the curate's order, I saw devils; and perhaps this is money they have coined."

"Grandvoni's side was sieged upon with avidity, and Francis was immediately sent to find Juliette. She came, Antoine accompanied her; he held her hand; the most lively happiness spoke out in every movement; they could not look away from each other, they seemed to fear that time might ruthlessly snatch them from each other. Antoine,

large, strong, handsome: Juliette, a pretty, gentle, delicate thing. They stood before the mayor a model for an eternal image of a happy union.

"Let me see," said the Mayor, "one of the golden pieces of your dowry."

Juliette threw first one then another carelessly upon the table; each one examined it, dropped it upon the stone hearth, or the chimney piece, and it always threw back the ringing sound of true metal.

"It is very strange," said the Mayor, convinced it was without alloy.

"Then," said the farmer, hastily, fearing to lose the 20,000 francs; "as Miss Catherine is witness to the fact of Juliette having honestly received it, Antoine shall marry her; and what a blessing will this lamp be to the village if it gives us all we desire."

There was no longer any doubt as to the existence of the wonderful lamp; all the villagers turned their eager eyes to the cottage on the hill; some spoke doubtfully of other adventures, those who saw Juliette's dowry, wished the same to come to them, and all united in the wish to see the beautiful inhabitant of that cottage of the devil. A general joy prevailed at the prospect of the happy union of Juliette and Antoine; every morning the young girls brought garlands to hang upon the beams which were fastened to the door of the Mayor's house.

Catherine could not but feel sad when she saw these wreaths; they made her compare her fate with that of Juliette. Some days after the scene described by Juliette, she sought her and said:

"Thou art happy, oh! my dear friend, and I have inherited thy wretchedness; I love thy benefactor; aid me, I pray thee, do not tell any one the path to the cottage; all the people talk of going there, not so much to see him as his lamp. They will importune him, he will see other females; is it not enough I have a fairy to rival me? Let us then tell every one, he will have no communication except with us two; and if any one desires any thing, let them come to thee or me."

As Catherine spoke with such an accent of sadness, Juliette wept freely; she readily gave the promise required, only begging her to return to implore the beautiful unknown to come to her marriage, and witness the happiness he had created.

When this singular wish of the chemist's son, that he might only be consulted through Catherine and Juliette became known through the village, Jacques Bontemps, reflecting on the changed conduct of Catherine, began to suspect some jest, as he termed it, and he promised himself to discover the secret of this mysterious adventure.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]