

and grim, and the little house, clothed with flowering creepers, the velvet lawn, watered twice a day, and green as emerald, and the violet plums peeping among the olive-colored leaves, were quietly enchanting. "Oh," thought I, "what a bower for a hard notary!"

The hard notary met me with open arms, embraced me, held me out, gazed at me, said, in a broken voice, "You are very like your darling mother," and embraced me again. I was installed in a pretty bedroom with a bay-window, curtained outside by a magnolia in full bloom; pigeons cooed outside every morning an hour before breakfast, leaves glistened with dew, and flowers diffused sweet smells.

Next day my uncle took me into the town to his office, and introduced me to his managing clerk as his partner and successor. He left me under charge of this worthy while he pursued his real vocation, *bric-a-brac*. He was so unfortunate as to pick up a great bargain, a vile old jug; he itched to be home with it; so I had no time to master my new business that day.

The good *curé* dined with us, and my uncle presented us both to him, jug and nephew—especially jug; but the *curé* was impartial, and took a gentle interest, real or fictitious, in us both. He was a man of learning and piety, and had seen strange and terrible things in France; had known great people and great vicissitudes, though now settled in a peaceful village—"post tot naufragia tutus." He was a gentle, amiable soul, a severe judge of nothing but cruelty and deliberate vice, and a most interesting companion if you chose: by which I mean that he had neither the animal spirits nor the vanity which make a man habitually fluent; but if you could suspend your own volubility and question him, a well of knowledge.

My uncle had two servants—Catherine, a tall, gaunt woman; tanned, hollow-eyed, and wrinkled; and Suzon, a pretty, rosy, bright-eyed maid. Her my uncle ignored; Catherine was his favorite, a model of industry, fidelity, and skill; besides, she resembled antique mugs, etc., whereas little Suzon was more