

'Devil!' said Lubert; 'you know well that no Christian would embark with the gale sounding in his ears.'

'Ah! if I had but a sloop,' cried Marzou, who from the first had studied the sky and sea with an anxious impatience.

Lubert turned towards him. 'A sloop,' repeated he ironically, 'and what would you do with it, coward?'

'What you dare not do,' replied Louis, with flashing eyes. 'I would go and carry help to him who asks for it.'

'You,' cried Lubert, bursting into a coarse laugh: 'Ah! that is capital; do you hear, the bastard has already forgotten the affair that took place just now.'

'I told you, then,' replied Marzou, 'that you were stronger than I; now prove that you have as much courage; take your boat, and let us set out together for the Island.'

Lubert appeared embarrassed; looked at those around him, and seeing that all eyes were fixed upon him, he shrugged his shoulders.

'How do you like this, Captain?' he said at last, addressing Goron; 'the *traineur de greves* thinks himself more valiant than we!'

'If I am mistaken, embark with me,' interrupted Louis.

'Thank you,' answered Lubert; 'I have no desire to be food for fishes.'

'Then you will leave a fellow creature to perish without assistance,' cried Louis with warmth, and casting a look on those that surrounded him: 'Ah, God will avenge me. Just now you looked upon me as a coward, because I yielded to one stronger than myself; but strength is an accident, whilst courage is the offspring of our will. Let those who laughed to see my blood flow, show now that they have a right to laugh. Let us see. I defy them in my turn. Let them give me a bark, and let them take one themselves. We will have a duel on the sea, and I shall either conquer or die. Come, is there no one here who is my superior in courage?'

'Yes, there is at least one,' replied the father of Niette, who had listened until then with his eyes fixed upon the *traineur de greves*; 'though the sea were hell itself, it shall never be said that Goron was afraid to venture on it. Take Lubert's bark—I will go in my own with him.'

'With me!' cried Lubert, aghast.

'Are you afraid then,' interrupted the mariner bluntly; 'remain and I will go alone.'

'It is not that captain,' stammered the giant, who evidently hesitated between the fear of peril and that of contempt; 'but the thing is impossible, seeing that the *traineur de greves* cannot manage my boat alone.'

'Well, are there not two of us, great coward?' cried Jaumic. 'Are you going to draw back now, because the sea is stronger than you? Come, Louis, let us leave him to his shame, if he dare not do as we do.'

The child had taken his brother's hand; both descended toward the boat, and began immediately to set up the mast, and prepare the sail.