

"But," interposed the Saracen, always grave and cool, "you have not the evil one at hand, my lord."

"Exactly, since thy man and my woman are two souls, bearing the highest crests in the kingdom, let us league together."

"I am very willing."

"I will help thee with thy man, and thou shalt give me a shoulder with my woman."

"Agreed."

"Where art thou to be found?"

"At the portals of Notre Dame, where I cut stones after the manner of the Saracen."

"Good; thou shalt hear from me. *Au revoir*."

The knight was about to use his spurs, when the Saracen, without ceremony, retained him by seizing the bridle of his horse.

"Thou hast forgotten to tell me thy name, my lord," said he.

The knight appeared to hesitate a moment but he recovered himself, and replied,

"I am Amaury Montruel, Lord of Anet, and the friend of the king."

"Friend of the king?" repeated the Saracen; "and one may find thee—?"

"At the tower of the Louvre."

Mahmoud released the bridle and bowed; Montruel left at a gallop.

"Friend of the king!" repeated Mahmoud again.

Then Eric and his sister saw him bear over the neck of his horse, who neighed slightly, bounded off and disappeared with incredible swiftness.

"Mahmoud el Reis—Amaury Montruel! Forget not these two names, Eve," said Eric.

## CHAPTER II.

Nor far from the shores of the Gulf of Bothnia, and beyond the city of Upsal, there was an immense forest, consecrated to the worship of the god Thor. In the forest lived the prophetess Mila, who commanded the winds and the tempests. Nobody had been able to find out the place of Mila's abode; but whoever required her services, had to betake themselves to the edge of the forest precisely at mid-day, and there sound a horn seven times. Seven days after, at midnight, if the same person went to the same spot, Mila would be there to meet him. Old men said that in their youth, Mila was more than one hundred years old.

When a voice from on high had ordered Eric and Eve to leave France, they went to interrogate Mila. Eric and Eve were children of the peasant Atho, a vassal, holding directly from Canute, King of the Danes; and though Christians, they were still under the influence of the superstitions of the north.

One day at noon Eric sounded the horn seven times on the borders of the dreaded forest, and seven days after, at the hour of midnight, Eve and himself stood trembling on the same spot.

Mila was at the rendezvous. She was a woman taller than any man of war, her floating

grey locks fell over her lank shoulders, her eyes shone in the darkness from the depth of their cavernous orbits.

"If you wish to leave," said she, "depart!" before they had put a question to her; "the road will remain open to you for one year; you will suffer hunger and cold; but you will arrive at the end of your journey."

"And shall we be saved?" demanded Eve.

"Thinkest thou to be stronger than fate?" muttered the prophetess. Then she added,

"Listen to me. When you approach the walls of the great city, the first person that you meet on horseback, and talking of death, will be the enemy of her that is dear to you, her enemy, and her misfortune. The second person that you shall meet will be Destiny. Withdraw."

Eric and Eve wished to ask more; but an invincible and resistless force bore them away from the forest.

The journey lasted a year. The first person that they met on horseback, under the walls of Paris, spoke of death.

The journey lasted a year, because the peasant Atho was poor; though he was the king's vassal, and his wife had nourished at her own breast the daughter of the queen. The children of Atho did not carry much money. In order to subsist, Eric had been obliged to work, with his trowel and hammer, through all the towns where they had passed. The prophecy had been proved true on two points out of the three. There remained to be solved the third. Before entering Paris the children of the peasant were going to encounter "Destiny."

When Mahmoud el Reis disappeared in the darkness, Eric and Eve resumed their way.

"It was of her that they spoke," said Eve, "my heart tells it me."

"Yes, yes," replied Eric. "I trembled to the marrow of my bones. It was of her that they spoke."

He hurried on. Eve no longer felt the pain of her poor little wounded feet; besides the object was so near! They heard already the voice of the sentinels, who kept watch in the turrets of the Porte aux Peintres. But Paris, like every paradise, (and according to our roguish old uncles, Paris is at least the paradise of woman,) has always been difficult of access. The sentries of those distant times were not less disagreeable than the green-coated gentry, fathers of families, who at the present day have the care of our barriers. It is even possible that they were still more disagreeable; indeed, if the modern green-coats imprudently put their dirty hands into the boxes of your carriage, when they are out of temper, still they allow you to pass on without beating you like a dog. The soldiers of that day, on the contrary, would beat you like a dog, and not allow you to enter afterwards.

The soldiers who guarded the Porte aux Peintres told our two travellers to go to the Porte de Nicholas Hadrin. On their arrival there they found it closed; the soldiers who kept it cried out to Eric,

"Friend, go to the Porte Montmartre!"

They retraced their steps, and gained the Porte Montmartre—it was closed.

"Holla," cried some one from the high ram-