

course, he had nothing to reply: that he could n't understand a word of what she and Flammard talked and laughed about did n't seem to make him any the happier.

"Well, this sort of thing went on for perhaps a fortnight, and then one morning over our déjeuné, when she and I had the Café entirely to ourselves, I took the opportunity of talking to Mam'sel Marie like a father.

"She heard me out without a murmur, which showed her sense; for liking the girl sincerely, I did n't mince matters with her, but spoke plainly for her good. The result was, she told me her story much as I have told it to you.

"'It's a funny tale,' says I when she'd finished, 'though maybe you yourself don't see the humour of it.'