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Prophecies and Seers

The Secret of La Salette

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Mélanie Calvat (Sister Mary of the Cross)

Translation (edition 1.1)

Credits

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About:

On 19 September 1846 two young cowherds, Mélanie Calvat, aged 14, and Maximin Giraud, aged 11, said they had seen a shining Lady, who was weeping, on a slope of the French Alps above the village of La Salette.

She is said to have spoken of Sunday rest, of blasphemy and of the failing harvests, and to have given each of them a secret.

In 1851 the bishop of Grenoble recognised the apparition as worthy of belief, and the children wrote down their secrets for Pope Pius IX.

This is the account that Mélanie, by then a nun under the name of Sister Mary of the Cross, wrote at Castellammare in 1878 and published at Lecce, in Italy, in 1879, with the diocese's imprimatur: the eve of the apparition, the Lady's discourse, the whole secret as she presented it, the Lady's departure, the first days afterwards and a long description of the Virgin.

The secret, full of announcements of chastisements, harsh criticism of the clergy and prophecies about the antichrist, caused great controversy: many bishops and theologians

rejected it, others defended it, and in 1923 the Holy Office condemned a reprint of the text.

The 1879 text is much longer than the secrets of 1851, which were found again in the Vatican archives in 1999.

The French text comes from the Louvain reprint (1881), which reproduces the Lecce edition; only the account and the signatures are given here, without the preface and the letters added by the editor.

The Rule of the new religious Order, which Mélanie says she received, is not written out in the account. It is presented as a historical document, without taking sides in the controversy.

Source: https://archive.org/details/LeSecretCompletDeLaSaletteMelanieDeLaSalette

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CHAPTER I

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1 On 18 September, the eve of the holy Apparition of the Blessed Virgin, I was alone as usual, minding my Masters' 4 cows. Toward 11 o'clock in the morning I saw a little boy coming towards me. At the sight of him I took fright, because it seemed to me that everyone ought to know that I fled all kinds of company.

1.2 The child came up to me and said: "Little one, I'm coming with you, I'm from Corps too." At these words my bad nature soon showed itself, and, stepping back a few paces, I said to him: "I don't want anybody, I want to stay alone."

1.3 Then I went away, but the child followed me, saying: "Come on, let me stay with you, my Master told me to come and mind my cows with yours; I'm from Corps." I moved away from him, making signs that I wanted nobody, and, having gone off, I sat down on the grass. There I held my conversation with the little flowers of the Good God.

1.4 A moment later I look behind me and find Maximin sitting quite close to me. He said to me at once: "Keep me with you, I'll be very good." But my bad nature would not listen to reason. I get up in haste and run off a little farther without saying anything to him, and I went back to playing with the flowers of the Good God.

1.5 A moment later Maximin was there again, telling me he would be very good, that he would not talk, that he would be bored all alone, and that his Master was sending him to me, etc.... This time I took pity on him,

made him a sign to sit down, and went on with the little flowers of the Good God.

2 Maximin was not long in breaking the silence; he began to laugh (I think he was making fun of me); I look at him, and he says to me: “Let’s have some fun, let’s play a game.” I made him no answer, for I was so ignorant that I understood nothing about playing with another person, having always been alone.

2.2 I amused myself alone with the flowers, and Maximin, coming right up to me, did nothing but laugh, telling me that the flowers had no ears to hear me and that we ought to play together. But I had no inclination for the game he told me to play.

2.3 Still, I started to talk to him, and he told me that the ten days he was to spend with his Master would soon be over, and that afterwards he would go home to his Father at Corps, etc.... While he was talking to me, the bell of La Salette rang out: it was the Angelus; I made a sign to Maximin to raise his soul to God. He took off his cap and kept silent for a moment.

2.4 Then I said to him: “Do you want your dinner? — Yes, he said. — Come on.” We sat down; I took out of my bag the provisions my Masters had given me, and, as was my habit, before cutting into my little round loaf, I made a cross on it with the point of my knife and, in the middle, a tiny hole, saying: “If the devil is in there, let him come out; and if the Good God is in there, let him stay”; and quick, quick, I covered up the little hole.

2.5 Maximin burst out laughing and kicked my bread, which slipped out of my hands, rolled down to the foot of the mountain and was lost. I had another piece of bread, and we ate it together; then we played a game; and then, understanding that Maximin must need something to eat, I showed him a place on the mountain covered with little berries.

2.6 I urged him to go and eat some, which he did at once; he ate some and brought back his hat full. In the evening we came down the Mountain together and promised each other to come back and mind our cows together.

3 The next day, 19 September, I meet Maximin on the way again; we climb the mountain together. I found that Maximin was very good, very simple, and that he gladly talked about whatever I wanted to talk about; he was also very easy-going, not holding to his own opinion; he was only a little curious, for when I went away from him, as soon as he saw me stop, he ran up quickly to see what I was doing and to hear what I was saying to the flowers of the Good God; and if he did not arrive in time, he asked me what I had said.

3.2 Maximin asked me to teach him a game. The morning was already well on; I told him to gather flowers to make the Paradise. We both set to work; we soon had a quantity of flowers of various colours. The village Angelus rang out, for the sky was fine and there were no clouds.

3.3 After saying to the Good God what we knew, I told Maximin that we should take our cows to a little plateau near the little ravine, where there would be stones to build the Paradise.

3.4 We took our cows to the chosen spot and then ate our little meal; then we set about carrying stones and building our little house, which consisted of a ground floor, which was supposed to be our dwelling, and a storey above which was, as we had it, the Paradise. This storey was all trimmed with flowers of different colours, with garlands hung from flower stems.

3.5 The Paradise was covered by a single broad stone, which we had covered with flowers; we had also hung garlands all around. When the Paradise was finished we looked at it; sleep came over us; we moved about two paces away and fell asleep on the grass.

4 The Beautiful Lady sits down on our Paradise without making it collapse.

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CHAPTER II

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1 When I woke up and did not see our cows, I called Maximin and climbed the little mound. From there, having seen that our cows were lying down quietly, I was coming down and Maximin was going up, when all at once I saw a beautiful light, brighter than the sun, and I was scarcely able to say these words: "Maximin, do you see, over there? Oh! My God!"

1.2 At the same moment I drop the stick I had in my hand. I do not know what delightful thing was happening in me at that moment, but I felt myself drawn, I felt a great respect full of love, and my heart would have liked to run faster than I.

2 I gazed hard at that light, which was motionless, and, as if it had opened, I saw another light, much brighter, which was moving, and in that light a very beautiful Lady sitting on our Paradise, with her head in her hands.

2.2 This beautiful Lady stood up, folded her arms slightly while looking at us, and said to us: "Come near, my children, do not be afraid; I am here to tell you great news." These sweet and gentle words made me fly to her, and my heart would have liked to cling to her for ever.

2.3 When I was very close to the beautiful Lady, in front of her, on her right, she begins the discourse, and tears also begin to flow from her beautiful eyes.

3 "If my people will not submit, I am forced to let go the hand of my Son. It is so strong and so heavy that I can no longer hold it back.

4 “How long I have suffered for you! If I want my Son not to abandon you, I am charged with praying to him without ceasing. And you take no notice of it. However much you pray, however much you do, you will never be able to repay the pains I have taken for you.

5 “I gave you six days to work, I kept the seventh for myself, and they will not grant it to me. That is what makes the arm of my Son so heavy.

6 “Those who drive the carts cannot speak without putting the Name of my Son in the middle. These are the two things that make the arm of my Son so heavy.

7 “If the harvest is spoiled, it is only because of you.

8 “I showed it to you last year with the potatoes; you took no notice; on the contrary, when you found them spoiled, you swore and put the Name of my Son into it. They will go on spoiling; by Christmas there will be none left.”

9 Here I was trying to make out the word pommes de terre (potatoes); I thought I understood it to mean apples. The beautiful and good Lady, guessing my thought, went on thus:

10 “You do not understand, my children? I will say it another way.”

11 The translation into French is this:

12 “If the harvest is spoiled, it is only for you; I showed it to you last year with the potatoes, and you took no notice; on the contrary, when you found them spoiled, you swore and put in the Name of my Son. They will go on spoiling, and by Christmas there will be none left.

13 “If you have wheat, you must not sow it.

14 “Whatever you sow, the beasts will eat; and what comes up will all fall to dust when you thresh it. A great famine will come. Before the famine comes, the little children under seven years old will be seized with a trembling and will die in the arms of those who hold them; the others will do penance through hunger. The walnuts will go bad; the grapes will rot.”

15 Here the beautiful Lady, who enraptured me, was for a moment not heard; I could see, nevertheless, that she went on gracefully moving her lovely lips, as if she were speaking. Maximin was then receiving his secret. Then, turning to me, the Most Holy Virgin spoke to me and gave me a secret in French. Here is that secret, entire, just as she gave it to me:

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CHAPTER III

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1 "Mélanie, what I am going to tell you now will not always be secret. You may publish it in 1858.

2 "The priests, ministers of my Son, the priests, by their bad lives, by their irreverence and their impiety in celebrating the holy mysteries, by love of money, love of honour and pleasures, the priests have become cesspools of impurity. Yes, the priests cry out for vengeance, and vengeance hangs over their heads. Woe to the priests and to persons consecrated to God who, by their unfaithfulness and their bad lives, crucify my Son anew! The sins of persons consecrated to God cry out to heaven and call down vengeance, and behold, vengeance is at their doors, for there is no longer anyone to implore mercy and pardon for the peoples.

2.2 There are no more generous souls, there is no longer anyone worthy to offer the spotless Victim to the Eternal on behalf of the world.

3 "God is going to strike in an unexampled way.

4 "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth! God is going to exhaust his anger, and no one will be able to escape so many evils at once.

5 "The leaders, the guides of the people of God, have neglected prayer and penance, and the devil has darkened their understanding. They have become those wandering stars which the old devil will drag along with his tail to make them perish.

6 “God will allow the old serpent to sow divisions among rulers, in every society and in every family. Physical and moral pains will be suffered; God will abandon men to themselves and will send chastisements which will follow one another for more than 35 years.

7 “Society is on the eve of the most terrible scourges and the greatest events; one must expect to be ruled with a rod of iron and to drink the chalice of the wrath of God.”

8 “Let the Vicar of my Son, the sovereign Pontiff Pius IX, no longer leave Rome after the year 1859. But let him be firm and generous. Let him fight with the weapons of faith and love. I will be with him.

9 “Let him beware of Napoleon. His heart is double. And when he wishes to be at once pope and emperor, God will soon withdraw from him. He is that eagle which, always wanting to rise, will fall on the sword with which he meant to force the peoples to raise him up.

10 “Italy will be punished for her ambition in wishing to shake off the yoke of the Lord of Lords. So she will be given over to war. Blood will flow on every side. The churches will be closed and profaned. The priests and the religious will be driven out; they will be put to death, and to a cruel death.

11 “Many will abandon the faith, and the number of priests and religious who will separate themselves from the true religion will be great. Among these persons there will even be bishops.”

12 “Let the Pope be on his guard against workers of miracles, for the time has come when the most astonishing wonders will take place on the earth and in the air.

13 "In the year 1864 Lucifer, together with a great number of demons, will be unloosed from hell. They will abolish the faith little by little, even in persons consecrated to God. They will blind them in such a way that, unless by a special grace, these persons will take on the spirit of those evil angels. Many religious houses will lose the faith completely and will lose many souls.

14 "Bad books will abound on the earth, and the spirits of darkness will spread everywhere a universal slackness in all that concerns the service of God. They will have very great power over nature; there will be churches to serve these spirits; people will be carried from one place to another by these evil spirits, even priests, because they will not have been guided by the good Spirit of the Gospel, which is a spirit of humility, charity and zeal for the glory of God.

14.2 The dead and the just will be made to rise again, that is to say, these dead will take on the likeness of the righteous souls who had lived on earth, the better to lead men astray. These so-called risen dead, who will be nothing else than the devil in those likenesses, will preach another gospel, contrary to that of the true Christ Jesus, denying the existence of Heaven, or else the souls of the damned. All these souls will appear as if united to their bodies. There will be extraordinary wonders everywhere, because the true faith has died out and a false light lights the world.

14.3 Woe to the princes of the Church who will be busy only with heaping riches upon riches, with safeguarding their authority and with ruling in pride!

15 “The Vicar of my Son will have much to suffer, because for a time the Church will be given over to great persecutions. It will be the time of darkness; the Church will go through a dreadful crisis.

16 “The holy faith of God being forgotten, each individual will want to guide himself and to be above his fellows. Civil and ecclesiastical authority will be abolished; all order and all justice will be trampled underfoot; nothing will be seen but murders, hatred, jealousy, lies and discord, without love of country or of family.

17 “The Holy Father will suffer much; I will be with him to the end to receive his sacrifice.

18 “The wicked will make several attempts on his life without being able to shorten his days; but neither he nor his successor... will see the triumph of the Church of God.

19 “The civil rulers will all have one and the same plan, which will be to abolish and do away with every religious principle, to make way for materialism, atheism, spiritism and every kind of vice.

20 “In the year 1865 the abomination will be seen in the holy places. In the convents the flowers of the Church will rot, and the devil will make himself as it were the king of hearts. Let those who are at the head of religious communities be on their guard about the persons they are to receive, because the devil will use all his malice to bring into the religious orders persons given to sin; for disorder and the love of carnal pleasures will be spread over all the earth.

21 "France, Italy, Spain and England will be at war. Blood will flow in the streets. Frenchman will fight with Frenchman, Italian with Italian; then there will be a general war which will be appalling. For a time God will no longer remember France or Italy, because the Gospel of Jesus Christ is no longer known. The wicked will display all their malice. People will kill and massacre one another even in their houses.

22 "At the first stroke of his thundering sword the mountains and all nature will tremble with terror, because the disorders and crimes of men pierce the vault of the Heavens. Paris will be burned and Marseilles swallowed up. Several great cities will be shaken and swallowed up by earthquakes. People will think that all is lost; nothing will be seen but murders, nothing heard but the clash of arms and blasphemies. The righteous will suffer much. Their prayers, their penances and their tears will rise up to Heaven, and all the people of God will ask for pardon and mercy and will ask for my help and my intercession.

22.2 Then Jesus Christ, by an act of his justice and of his great mercy toward the righteous, will command his angels that all his enemies be put to death. All at once the persecutors of the Church of Jesus Christ and all men given to sin will perish, and the earth will become like a desert. Then peace will be made, the reconciliation of God with men. Jesus Christ will be served, adored and glorified; charity will flourish everywhere. The new kings will be the right arm of Holy Church, which will be strong, humble, pious, poor, zealous and an imitator of the virtues of Jesus Christ.

22.3 The Gospel will be preached everywhere, and men will make great progress in the faith, because there will be unity among the workers of Jesus Christ and men will live in the fear of God.

23 "This peace among men will not last long. Twenty-five years of abundant harvests will make them forget that the sins of men are the cause of all the troubles that come upon the earth.

24 "A forerunner of the antichrist, with his troops from many nations, will fight against the true Christ, the only saviour of the world. He will shed much blood and will try to wipe out the worship of God so as to be looked upon as a God.

25 "The earth will be struck with every kind of plague; besides pestilence and famine, which will be general, there will be wars until the last war, which will then be waged by the ten kings of the antichrist, kings who will all have one and the same plan and will be the only ones to rule the world. Before this happens there will be a kind of false peace in the world. People will think only of amusing themselves. The wicked will give themselves up to every kind of sin. But the children of holy Church, the children of the faith, my true imitators, will grow in the love of God and in the virtues dearest to me.

25.2 Happy the humble souls led by the Holy Spirit! I will fight with them until they reach the fullness of age.

26 "Nature cries out for vengeance on men and shudders with terror, awaiting what must befall the earth stained with crimes.

27 "Tremble, earth, and you who profess to serve Jesus Christ and who inwardly worship yourselves, tremble, for God is going to hand you over to his enemy, because the holy places are in corruption. Many convents are no longer houses of God but the pastures of Asmodeus and his own.

28 "It will be during this time that the antichrist will be born, of a Hebrew nun, of a false virgin who will have communication with the old serpent, the master of impurity. His father will be a bi..... At birth he will vomit blasphemies, he will have teeth. In a word, he will be the devil incarnate. He will utter terrifying cries, he will work wonders. He will feed only on impurities. He will have brothers who, though they are not devils incarnate like him, will be children of evil. At 12 years old they will draw attention by the valiant victories they will win. Soon they will each be at the head of armies, aided by legions of hell.

29 "The seasons will be changed; the earth will produce only bad fruit. The heavenly bodies will lose their regular motions; the moon will reflect only a faint reddish light. Water and fire will give the globe of the earth convulsive movements and horrible earthquakes, which will swallow up mountains, cities, etc.

30 "Rome will lose the faith and become the seat of the antichrist.

31 "The demons of the air, with the antichrist, will work great wonders on the earth and in the air, and men will become more and more perverted. God will take care of his faithful servants and of men of good will. The Gospel will be preached everywhere. All peoples, all nations will come to know the truth.

32 "I make an urgent appeal to the earth. I call the true disciples of the living God who reigns in the Heavens. I call the true imitators of Christ made man, the one true Saviour of men; I call my children, my true devotees, those who have given themselves to me so that I may lead them to my divine Son, those whom I carry, so to speak, in my arms, those who have

lived by my Spirit; finally I call the apostles of the last times, the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, who have lived in contempt of the world and of themselves, in poverty and humility, in contempt and silence, in prayer and mortification, in chastity and union with God, in suffering, and unknown to the world.

32.2 It is time for them to come out and give light to the earth. Go and show yourselves as my beloved children. I am with you and in you, provided that your faith is the light that guides you in these days of misfortune. May your zeal make you as if starving for the glory and honour of Jesus Christ. Fight, children of light, you, the little number who see, for here is the time of times, the end of ends.

33 "The Church will be eclipsed, the world will be in consternation. But here are Enoch and Elijah, filled with the spirit of God; they will preach with the power of God, and men of good will will believe in God, and many souls will be comforted; they will make great progress by the power of the Holy Spirit and will condemn the diabolical errors of the antichrist.

34 "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth! There will be bloody wars and famines; plagues and contagious diseases. There will be showers of a frightful hail of animals, thunderclaps that will shake cities, earthquakes that will swallow up countries. Voices will be heard in the air. Men will beat their heads against the walls. They will call for death, and on the other hand death will be their torment; blood will flow on every side. Who will be able to overcome, unless God shortens the time of trial? By the blood, the tears and the prayers of the righteous, God will let himself be moved. Enoch and Elijah will be put to death.

34.2 Pagan Rome will disappear, and fire from heaven will fall and consume three cities. The whole universe will be struck with terror, and many will let themselves be led astray because they did not worship the true Christ living among them. It is time; the sun is darkening; faith alone will live!

35 "Here is the time; the abyss opens. Here is the king of the kings of darkness. Here is the beast with his subjects, calling himself the saviour of the world. He will rise up proudly into the air to go up to Heaven. He will be stifled by the breath of Saint Michael the Archangel. He will fall, and the earth, which for three days will have been in continual upheaval, will open its bosom full of fire. He will be plunged for ever, with all his followers, into the eternal chasms of hell. Then water and fire will purify the earth and consume all the works of men's pride, and all will be renewed. God will be served and glorified."

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CHAPTER IV

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1 Then the Blessed Virgin also gave me, in French, the Rule of a new religious Order.

2 After giving me the Rule of this new religious Order, the Blessed Virgin went on with the rest of the Discourse thus:

3 “If they are converted, the stones and rocks will turn into wheat, and the potatoes will be found sown in the fields.

4 “Do you say your prayers well, my children?”

5 We both answered: “Oh! no, Madam, not much.”

6 “Ah! my children, you must say them well, evening and morning. When you cannot do better, say an Our Father and a Hail Mary; and when you have time and can do better, you will say more.

7 “Only a few rather elderly women go to Mass; the others work on Sundays all summer, and in winter, when they do not know what to do, they go to Mass only to mock religion. In Lent they go to the butcher’s like dogs.

8 “Have you not seen spoiled wheat, my children?”

9 We both answered: “Oh! no, Madam.”

10 The Blessed Virgin, turning to Maximin: “But you, my child, you must surely have seen some once, near the Coin, with your father. The owner of the field said to your father: Come and see how my wheat is spoiling. You

went there. Your father took two or three ears in his hand, rubbed them, and they fell to dust. Then, as you were going home, when you were only half an hour from Corps, your father gave you a piece of bread, saying: Here, my child, eat this year, for I do not know who will eat next year, if the wheat spoils like that."

11 Maximin answered: "That is quite true, Madam, I did not remember it."

12 The Most Holy Virgin ended her discourse in French: "Well, my children, you will make this known to all my people."

13 The most beautiful Lady crossed the stream, and two paces beyond the stream, without turning toward us who were following her (for she drew us to her by her radiance and still more by her goodness, which intoxicated me and seemed to make my heart melt), she said to us again:

14 "Well, my children, you will make this known to all my people."

15 Then she went on walking as far as the place where I had climbed up to see where our cows were. Her feet touched only the tips of the grass without bending it.

15.2 When she reached the little height, the beautiful Lady stopped, and I quickly placed myself in front of her, to look at her well, well, and to try to find out which way she was most inclined to go; for it was all over with me: I had forgotten both my cows and the masters in whose service I was; I had attached myself for ever and without condition to My Lady; yes, I wanted never, never to leave her again; I followed her without a second thought and ready to serve her as long as I lived.

15.3 With My Lady I believed I had forgotten paradise; I had no other thought than to serve her well in everything, and I believed I could have done whatever She told me to do, for it seemed to me that She had great power. She looked at me with a tender kindness that drew me to her; I would have liked to throw myself into her arms with my eyes closed.

15.4 She did not give me time to do so. She rose imperceptibly from the ground to a height of about a metre or more; and, remaining thus suspended in the air for the briefest moment, My beautiful Lady looked up at heaven, then at the earth to her right and to her left, then She looked at me with eyes so gentle, so loving and so kind that I thought She was drawing me into herself, and it seemed to me that my heart was opening to hers.

15.5 And while my heart was melting in a sweet expansion, the lovely form of My good Lady was disappearing little by little; it seemed to me that the moving light was multiplying or else gathering round the Most Holy Virgin to prevent me from seeing her any longer.

15.6 Thus the light took the place of the parts of her body that were disappearing from my eyes; or else it seemed that My Lady's body was changing into light as it melted away. And so the light, in the form of a globe, rose gently straight upwards.

16 I cannot say whether the volume of light grew smaller as it rose, or whether it was the distance that made me see the light grow smaller as it rose; what I know is that I stood with my head raised and my eyes fixed on the light, even after that light, which kept moving away and growing smaller, had finally disappeared.

17 My eyes come away from the sky; I look around me, I see Maximin, who was looking at me, and I say to him: “Mémin, that must be my father’s Good God, or the Blessed Virgin, or some great saint.” And Maximin, flinging his hand in the air, said: “Oh! if only I had known!”

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CHAPTER V

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1 On the evening of 19 September we went home a little earlier than usual. When I reached my masters' house, I busied myself tying up my cows and putting everything in order in the cowshed. I had not finished when my mistress came to me in tears and said: "Why, my child, don't you come and tell me what happened to you on the mountain?"

1.2 (Maximin, not having found his masters, who had not yet come back from their work, had come to mine and had told everything he had seen and heard.) I answered her: "I did want to tell you, but I wanted to finish my work first."

1.3 A moment later I went into the house, and my mistress said to me: "Tell what you saw; the shepherd from Bruite (that was the nickname of Pierre Selme, Maximin's master) has told me everything."

1.4 I begin, and about halfway through the story my masters came back from their fields; my mistress, who was weeping as she heard the complaints and threats of our tender Mother, said: "Ah! you wanted to go and gather in the wheat tomorrow; take good care not to; come and hear what happened today to this child and to Selme's shepherd."

1.5 And turning to me, she said: "Tell again everything you told me." I begin again; and when I had finished, my Master said: "It is the Blessed Virgin, or else a great Saint, who has come on behalf of the Good God; but it is as if the Good God had come himself: we must do everything that Saint said. How are you going to tell this to all her people?"

1.6 I answered him: “You will tell me how I must do it, and I will do it.” Then he added, looking at his mother, his wife and his brother: “We must think about it.” Then each went back to his own affairs.

2 It was after supper. Maximin and his Masters came to my masters’ house to tell what Maximin had told them and to find out what was to be done: “For,” they said, “it seems to us that it is the Blessed Virgin who has been sent by the Good God; the words she spoke make us believe it. And she told them to make it known to all her people; perhaps these children will have to travel the whole world to make it known that everyone must keep the commandments of the Good God, or else great misfortunes will come upon us.”

2.2 After a moment’s silence my Master said, turning to Maximin and to me: “Do you know what you must do, my children? Tomorrow get up early, go both of you to the Curé, and tell him everything you saw and heard; tell him exactly how it happened; he will tell you what you have to do.”

3 On 20 September, the day after the apparition, I set out early with Maximin. When we reached the presbytery, I knock at the door. The Curé’s housekeeper came to open it and asked what we wanted. I said to her in French (I who had never spoken it): “We would like to speak to the Curé.”

3.2 — “And what do you want to tell him?” she asked us. — “We want to tell him, Mademoiselle, that yesterday we went to mind our cows on the mountain of Les Baisses, and after we had eaten, etc. etc.” We told her a good part of the discourse of the Most Holy Virgin. Then the church bell rang; it was the last bell for Mass.

3.3 The Abbé Perrin, curé of La Salette, who had heard us, flung open his door: he was weeping; he was beating his breast; he said to us: “My children, we are lost, the Good God is going to punish us. Ah! my God, it is the Blessed Virgin who has appeared to you!” And he went off to say holy Mass.

3.4 Maximin, the housekeeper and I looked at one another; then Maximin said to me: “I’m going home to my father’s at Corps.” And we parted.

4 Not having received any order from my Masters to come back immediately after speaking to the Curé, I thought I would be doing no harm by attending Mass. So I went to the church.

4.2 Mass begins, and after the first Gospel the Curé turns to the people and tries to tell his parishioners about the apparition which had just taken place the day before on one of their Mountains, and urges them not to work on Sundays any more: his voice was broken by sobs, and all the people were moved. After holy Mass I went back to my Masters’ house.

4.3 Monsieur Peytard, who is still Mayor of La Salette today, came there to question me about the apparition; and after making sure of the truth of what I told him, he went away convinced.

5 I stayed on in my Masters’ service until the feast of All Saints. Then I was placed as a boarder with the Sisters of Providence in my own town, at Corps.

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CHAPTER VI

✦

1 The Most Holy Virgin was very tall and well proportioned; she seemed so light that a breath would have moved her, yet she was motionless and firmly set. Her countenance was majestic, commanding, but not as the lords of this world are. She inspired a respectful fear. At the same time as Her Majesty inspired respect mingled with love, she drew one to her.

1.2 Her gaze was gentle and penetrating; her eyes seemed to speak with mine, but the conversation came from a deep and lively feeling of love for that enchanting beauty which melted me.

1.3 The gentleness of her gaze, her air of incomprehensible goodness, made one understand and feel that she drew one to her and wished to give herself; it was an expression of love which cannot be expressed with the tongue of flesh nor with the letters of the alphabet.

2 The garment of the Most Holy Virgin was silvery white and all shining; it had nothing material about it: it was made of light and glory, changing and sparkling. On earth there is no expression or comparison to give.

3 The Blessed Virgin was all beautiful and all formed of love; as I looked at her, I longed to melt into her. In her attire, as in her person, everything breathed the majesty, the splendour, the magnificence of an incomparable Queen. She seemed beautiful, white, immaculate, crystalline, dazzling, heavenly, fresh, new as a Virgin; it seemed that the word Love was escaping from her silvery, all-pure lips. She seemed to me like a good Mother, full of goodness, kindness, love for us, compassion and mercy.

4 The crown of roses she had on her head was so beautiful, so bright, that one cannot form an idea of it; the roses, of various colours, were not of this earth: it was a cluster of flowers that encircled the head of the Most Holy Virgin in the form of a crown; but the roses kept changing or replacing one another; and from the heart of each rose came forth so beautiful a light that it enraptured and gave the roses a dazzling beauty. From the crown of roses rose as it were branches of gold and a quantity of other little flowers mingled with brilliants.

5 The whole formed a most beautiful diadem, which by itself shone more brightly than our earthly sun.

6 The Blessed Virgin had a very pretty Cross hanging from her neck. This Cross seemed to be gilded; I say gilded so as not to say a plate of gold, for I have sometimes seen objects gilded with various shades of gold, which to my eyes made a much more beautiful effect than a simple plate of gold.

6.2 On this beautiful Cross, all shining with light, was a Christ, was Our Lord, with his arms stretched out on the Cross. Nearly at the two ends of the Cross there was on one side a hammer, on the other a pair of pincers.

6.3 The Christ was the natural colour of flesh; but he shone with great brightness, and the light that came forth from his whole body seemed like very bright darts that pierced my heart with the desire to melt into him.

6.4 Sometimes the Christ seemed to be dead: his head was bowed, and his body was as if sinking down, as if about to fall, had it not been held by the nails that held it to the Cross.

7 I had a lively compassion for him, and I would have liked to tell the whole world of his unknown love and to instil into the souls of mortals the most heartfelt love and the liveliest gratitude toward a God who had no

need of us at all to be what he is, what he was and what he will always be; and yet, O love incomprehensible to man!, he became man and willed to die, yes, to die, the better to write in our souls and in our memory the mad love he has for us! Oh! how wretched I am to find myself so poor in words to tell of the love, yes, the love of our good Saviour for us! but on the other hand, how happy we are to be able to feel better what we cannot express!

8 At other times the Christ seemed alive: his head was upright, his eyes open, and he seemed to be on the Cross of his own will. Sometimes too he seemed to speak; he seemed to want to show that he was on the Cross for us, out of love for us, to draw us to his love; that he always has a new love for us; that his love of the beginning and of the year 33 is still the same today and always will be.

9 The Blessed Virgin wept nearly the whole time she was speaking to me. Her tears flowed one by one, slowly, down to about her knees; then, like sparks of light, they vanished. They were shining and full of love. I would have liked to comfort her and that she would weep no more. But it seemed to me that She needed to show her tears the better to show her love forgotten by men.

9.2 I would have liked to throw myself into her arms and say to her: “My good Mother, do not weep! I want to love you for all the people on earth.” But it seemed to me that She was saying to me: “There are so many who do not know me!”

10 I was between death and life, seeing on one side so much love, so much desire to be loved, and on the other so much coldness, so much indifference... Oh! my Mother, Mother all, all beautiful and all lovable, my love, heart of my heart!...

11 The tears of our tender Mother, far from lessening her air of Majesty, of Queen and Mistress, seemed on the contrary to make her more beautiful, more lovable, lovelier, more powerful, more full of love, more motherly, more enchanting; and I would have eaten her tears, which made my heart leap with compassion and love.

11.2 To see a Mother weep, and such a Mother, without taking every imaginable means to comfort her, to change her sorrows into joys, can that be understood? O Mother more than good!

11.3 You were formed with all the prerogatives of which God is capable; you have as it were exhausted the power of God; you are good, and good with the goodness of God himself; God made himself greater in forming you, his masterpiece of earth and heaven.

12 The Most Holy Virgin had a yellow apron. What am I saying, yellow? She had an apron brighter than several suns together. It was not a material fabric, it was made of glory, and that glory was sparkling and of an enchanting beauty. Everything in the Most Holy Virgin moved me strongly and made me, as it were, glide into adoring and loving my Jesus in every state of his mortal life.

13 The Most Holy Virgin had two chains, one a little wider than the other. From the narrower one hung the Cross I mentioned above. These chains (since one must call them chains) were like rays of glory of great brightness, changing and sparkling.

14 The shoes (since one must say shoes) were white, but a shining silvery white; there were roses around them. These roses were of a dazzling beauty, and from the heart of each rose came a flame of light very beauti-

ful and very pleasant to see. On the shoes there was a buckle of gold, not the gold of this earth but the gold of paradise.

15 The sight of the Most Holy Virgin was itself a complete Paradise; She had in her everything that could satisfy, for the earth was forgotten.

16 The Blessed Virgin was surrounded by two lights. The first light, nearer to the Most Holy Virgin, reached as far as us; it shone with a very beautiful, sparkling brightness. The second light spread a little farther around the Beautiful Lady, and we found ourselves within it; it was motionless (that is, it did not sparkle), but far brighter than our poor earthly sun. None of these lights hurt the eyes or tired the sight in the least.

17 Besides all these lights, all this splendour, there came forth groups or sheaves of light, or rays of light, from the Body of the Blessed Virgin, from her garments and from everywhere.

18 The voice of the Beautiful Lady was gentle; it enchanted, enraptured, did the heart good; it satisfied, smoothed away every obstacle, calmed, soothed. It seemed to me that I would always have liked to feed on her beautiful voice, and my heart seemed to dance or to want to go out to meet her and melt into her.

19 The eyes of the Most Holy Virgin, our tender Mother, cannot be described in human language. To speak of them one would need a seraph; one would need more: the language of God himself, of that God who formed the Immaculate Virgin, masterpiece of his almighty power.

20 The eyes of the august Mary seemed a thousand and a thousand times more beautiful than brilliants, diamonds and the most sought-after precious stones; they shone like two suns; they were gentle with gentleness it-

self, clear as a mirror. In her eyes one saw paradise; they drew one to Her; it seemed that She wanted to give herself and to draw. The more I looked at her, the more I wanted to see her; the more I saw her, the more I loved her, and I loved her with all my strength.

21 The eyes of the beautiful Immaculate One were like the gate of God, from which one saw all that can intoxicate the soul. When my eyes met those of the Mother of God, I felt within myself a happy upheaval of love and of vows to love her and to melt with love.

22 As we looked at each other, our eyes spoke to each other in their own way, and I loved her so much that I would have liked to kiss her in the middle of her eyes, which softened my soul and seemed to draw it and make it melt into hers. Her eyes set a sweet trembling through my whole being, and I was afraid of making the slightest movement that might displease her in the least.

23 The mere sight of the eyes of the purest of Virgins would have been enough to be the Heaven of one of the blessed; would have been enough to bring a soul into the fullness of the will of the Most High in all the events that happen in the course of mortal life; would have been enough to make that soul perform continual acts of praise, thanksgiving, reparation and expiation. This sight alone gathers the soul into God and makes it like one dead yet living, looking on all the things of earth, even those that seem most serious, as nothing but children's games; it would want to hear of nothing but God and what concerns his Glory.

24 Sin is the only evil She sees on earth. She would die of grief if God did not uphold her. Amen.

[25] Castellammare, 21 November 1878. Mary of the Cross, Victim of Jesus, born Mélanie Calvat, Shepherdess of La Salette. Nihil obstat: imprimatur. Given at Lecce, at the Episcopal Curia, 15 November 1879. The Vicar General, Carmelo Cosma, Archpriest.

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