

But after a time came a change in Belle Marie: her former manner had changed to a more demure, maidenly one, her eyes seemed softer and acquired a new light, and she came less frequently to hear the tales of the world so unknown and strange to her. He wondered at the change, and resolved to question her sometime as to why she came so rarely.

One day he found her sitting in a little nook on the shore, a small cave formed beneath two shelving rocks; the sky was clear, and of that intense blue characteristic of midsummer: the waters were rising and falling as the incoming tide washed them nearer to her every moment; but she was paying no attention to the heavens overhead, or the music the waters made as they slowly came to her, for she was sitting, leaning back against the rocky wall—her bare brown arms clasped above her head, her hair forming a striking background for both form and face—but her eyes were looking far out beyond the scene, and she neither dreamt for a moment of the picture she made, nor was conscious of the gaze bent upon her.

"Belle Marie," he said softly. She started at the sound of his voice, while a wave of color suffused the swarthy skin and told in an instant the tale he wished to know. He had taught her his own language, and she spoke it fairly well, that child of the forest to whom books were unknown; her sole lessons until she met him being learnt from the carols of the birds, the winds whistling through the trees, the perfume of the flowers, and the murmuring of the waters as they beat upon the shore.

"Mon Maitre" she replied, rising suddenly while the color left her cheeks, taking with it even the roses that were always there.

"Where have you been, *ma Belle*?" he asked.

"In the woods: on the river: with my people," was the disjointed reply, as she looked down at the sand beneath her feet.

"But you have not been to see me for long—I have missed you very much. Why did you stay?" He came nearer to her but she turned on him with the fury of a young tigress as she exclaimed:—

"You did not miss me. You—you—who talked to me just to pass the time away, because the women you have known,