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The Alabastine Co., Limited
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Jeanne of the Marshes

Continued from page 14

tongue and your venomous face! You think you can get the better of us, do you? Well, you are mistaken. You'll tell no stories from amongst the seaweed."

"I shall take particular good care," he said, "to avoid the seaweed."

"Enough," Forrest declared. "Listen! Here is the issue. We are tired of negative things. To-night you sign the paper and give us your word of honor to keep silent, or before morning, when the tide is full, you go into the sea!"

"I warn you," Engleton said, "that I can swim."

"I will guarantee," Forrest answered suavely, "that by the time you reach the water you will have forgotten how."

CHAPTER XXXII.

STRANGE THOUGHTS.

THE days that followed were strange ones for Jeanne. Every morning at sunrise, or before, she would steal out of the little cottage where she was staying, and make her way along the top of one of the high dyke banks to the sea. Often she saw the sun rise from some lonely spot amongst the sandbanks or the marshes, heard the awakening of the birds, and saw the first glimpses of the morning life steal into evidence upon the grey chill wilderness. At such times she saw few people. The house where she was staying was apart from the village, and near the head of one of the creeks, and there were times when she would leave it and return without having seen a single human being. She knew, from cautious enquiries made from her landlady's daughter, that Cecil and Major Forrest were still at the Red Hall, and for that reason during the daytime she seldom left the cottage, sitting out in the old-fashioned garden or walking a little way in the fields at the back. For the future she made no plans. She was quite content to feel that for the present she had escaped from an intolerable situation.

The woman from whom Jeanne had taken the rooms, a Mrs. Caynsard, she had seen only once or twice. She was waited upon most of the time by an exceedingly diminutive maid-servant, very shy at first, but very talkative afterwards, in broad Norfolk dialect, when she had grown a little accustomed to this very unusual lodger. Now and then Kate Caynsard, the only daughter of the house, appeared, but for the most time she was away, sailing a fishing boat or looking after the little farm. To Jeanne she represented a type wholly strange, but altogether interesting. She was little over twenty years of age, but she was strong and finely built. She had the black hair and dark brown eyes, which here and there amongst the villagers of the east coast remind one of the immigration of worsted spinners and silk weavers from Flanders and the north of France, many centuries ago. She was very handsome, but exceedingly shy. When Jeanne, as she had done more than once, tried to talk to her, her abrupt replies gave little opening for conversation. One morning, however, when Jeanne, having returned from a long tramp across the sand dunes, was sitting in the old orchard at the back of the house, she saw her landlady's daughter come slowly out to her from the house. Jeanne put down her book at once.

"Good morning, Miss Caynsard!" she said.

"Good morning, miss!" the girl answered awkwardly. "You have had a long walk!"

"I went so far," she said, "that I had to race the tide home, or I should have had to wade through the home creek. It is a wonderful country. When I saw it first it seemed to me that it was depressing. Now I love it."

"And I," the girl remarked, with a sudden passion in her tone, "I hate it!" Jeanne looked at her, surprised.

"It sounds so strange to hear you say that," she remarked. "I should have thought that anyone who had lived here always would have loved it. Every day I am here I seem to discover new beauties, a new effect of coloring, a new undertone of the sea, or to hear the cry of some new bird."

To be concluded.



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