

"But how did they know he killed the others?" the girl asked presently. "A little boy saw it, but was too frightened at first to say anything about it. I remember well the grief of the parents, for the girl was an only child. Her mother died soon after, in fact four people owed their deaths to her thoughtless conduct, for I believe she was not really bad. Ah! Else, think well before you raise the demon of jealousy in a man's soul. Ole loves you, and a good man's love is worth cherishing."

But Else was too self-willed to take her grandmother's advice.

The story she had heard startled her somewhat. She was fond of her own life, she did not wish to have it strangled out of her on the sand-dunes.

It was not Ole she feared, but the other, Karl; there were times when he had looked so fierce, so mad even in his wild rago, that he had seemed capable of anything in his fury. She remembered how he said, "I could kill you or him, when I see his kisses on your lips which should belong to me alone."

She half resolved that she would have nothing more to do with Karl Malen as she slowly unwound the string of coral from her neck and shoulders.

Hers was an essentially selfish nature. She would like nothing to interfere with her pleasures, and she had a dim idea that if she led Karl on too far he might prove troublesome, and she had not the slightest intention of giving up the position she would hold as Ole Bertel's wife.

Her grandmother's story had made some impression upon her and she resolved that she would not see so much of Karl, or at least not so openly. She had not thought the old woman's eyes would be so sharp, she would not let him come near the cottage again.

For a few days she kept to her resolution, avoiding the places where she knew she would meet Karl, and delighting Bertel by the way in which she sought his company, unasked.

He did not know that it was partly fear that made her do so, and was more than ever enamoured of his beautiful betrothed.

No thought of her treachery and falseness had ever entered his mind. She had given herself to him; he would not let the memory of her former flirtations disturb his peace. Now she was his, he would trust her entirely.

Little did she think how their footsteps were dogged by a maddened, jealous creature, to whom every caress bestowed on her by her betrothed lover was as red-hot iron eating into his soul, and consigning him to the depths of a yet more insane despair.

She did not see the clenching of the fingers, or hear the grinding of Karl Malen's teeth, as in the intervals of the work at the amber reef he watched them with miserable, jealous eyes. Every kiss given and received, every caress went to his heart like a knife. Just so had she pressed her lips to his. Just so had she permitted his caresses. Just so had she laid her golden head on his own breast. The memory was maddening.

He knew that Else Breben was not worth the love that both he and Bertel lavished upon her, but that knowledge did not serve to abate his passion in the slightest.

For the time being, Ole Bertel was perfectly happy, that is, happy as a mortal can expect to be in this world of change and chances.

He was successful. There is so much in that.

He was successful in the amber-fishing. Luck still followed him, but then he worked hard for it. He did not sit down to rest upon his first good fortune, he assiduously followed it up.

Though he had enough to keep himself in comfort he wished for more, so that every wish of Else's might be gratified. He would keep her as a queen.

Never would he ask his darling to work, that should be his task.

He filled the cottage among the sand-dunes with unheard-of treasures, that is to say, unheard-of among the hardy fishers of the Samland, who were generally quite content with the bare necessities their huts afforded, and looked with wondering eyes at the delicate china cups and plated forks and spoons that he managed to procure to give pleasure to his bride.

Bertel took her there one day, to show her all the rare and curious things he had gathered together to do her honor.

There were stores of hams and dried beef.

The walls were hung with copper dishes and pans that shone like gold, so highly were they burnished.

Jugs, dishes and plates, all were in neat array when Ole took his betrothed to see the home of which so soon she was to become the mistress.

Else was delighted. Her vanity was soothed. There was not a cottage among the sand-dunes that would equal hers. She went from room to room as pleased as a child over a new toy, uttering little exclamations of admiration over everything she saw.

How different was this pretty little home from the hovel where she now lived. She longed for the day to come when she could leave it and take up her abode here, forgetting or ignoring the fact that she might have made her grandmother's hut far more home-like had she chosen to exert herself a little, and work for the old woman who had sheltered her youth and girlhood, and who was now past doing much in the way of work herself.

But even had she been told this, Else would not have put herself out to make the old woman more comfortable.

Happily for Ole he was unconscious of the imperfections of his idol. To his partial eyes she was everything that was good, true and womanly. He watched her with loving eyes as she flitted about the cottage, picturing to himself the time when she would be there always, his very own indeed.

"You are satisfied with it?" he asked, as at length they left the cottage to return to her grandmother's abode.

"Oh! yes, it is beautiful," she returned, her eyes glistening at the thought of the many treasures she would soon be able to call her own.

(To be Continued.)

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