

A Ladder of Swords

The long waiting was a sore trial, yet laughter was often upon her lips henceforth. The peasants, the farmers and fishermen of Jersey, at first—as they have ever been—little inclined towards strangers, learned at last to look for her in the fields and upon the shore, and laughed in response, they knew not why, to the quick smiling of her eyes. She even learned to speak their unmusical but friendly Norman-Jersey French. There were at least a half-dozen fishermen who, for her, would have gone at night straight to the Witches' Rock in St. Clement's Bay—and this was bravery unmatched.

It came to be known along the coast that "ma'm'selle" was waiting for a lover fleeing from the French coast. This gave her fresh interest in the eyes of the serfs and sailors and their women folk, who at first were not inclined towards the Huguenot maiden, partly because she was French, and partly because she was not a Catholic. But even these, when they saw that she never talked religiously, that she was fast learning to speak their own homely patois, and that in