

A Ladder of Swords

"'Tis much to get for so little given," she said, with a quiver in her voice; "yet this price for friendship would be too high to pay to any save the Seigneur of Rozel."

She hastily turned to the men who had rescued Michel and Buonespoir. "If I had riches, riches ye should have, brave men of Jersey," she said, "but I have naught save love and thanks, and my prayers, too, if ye will have them."

"'Tis a man's duty to save his fellow an' he can," cried a gaunt fisherman, whose daughter was holding to his lips a bowl of congeel soup.

"'Twas a good deed to send us forth to save a priest of Holy Church," cried a weakened boat-builder with a giant's arm, as he buried his face in a cup of sack and plunged his hand into a fishwife's basket of limpets.

"Ay, but what means she by kissing and arm-getting with a priest?" cried a snarling vraic-gatherer. "'Tis some jest upon Holy Church, or yon priest is no better than common men, but an idle shame."

By this time Michel was among them.