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The dilemma in which our Acadian lovers found themselves requires some explanation. Batiste Le Blanc was one of those Shubenacadie settlers who had incurred the dangerous hostility of Abbe Le Loutre by refusing to join in raiding the English settlement. Batiste had some years before, while yet but a boy, taken along with his father the Conditional oath of allegiance to King George; and this oath he refused to violate at the behest of Le Loutre. Thereupon the Abbe's converted Indians, a sorry flock, burnt down the young man's house and barn, ruined his standing crops, and threatened his life if he would not leave the neighborhood.

Batiste succeeded in rescuing his cattle, which he drove to the French camp at Chignecto, and sold at a sacrifice. With the money in his pocket he made his way to Grand Pre, where he bought a plot of ground, and a single ox to help him till it. He had been at Grand Pre now three years, and had supplemented the small returns of his farm by building a boat and going into the fisheries of Minas Basin and the Bay of Fundy. But not yet had he been able to do more than build himself a rough shed, which served him as barn and dwelling in one. A sort of shadow, a premonition of approaching disasters, seemed to check prosperity in the Grand Pre region; and for a year or two the fisheries had been a failure.

Batiste was gaining ground, by dint of severest industry and economy; for he had been for a year or more the lover of Therese Marin. But his progress did not satisfy Therese's father, who wished to make the best bargain possible out of the beauty of his daughter. For a time he tolerated the young man, but at last a suitor had appeared who was entirely to his taste. Monsieur Erosette was the wealthiest man in the village, a widower with but one child, and that a girl grown up and married. Erosette would give Therese a home of comparative luxury, and her father, who was truly fond of her in his way, didn't understand how she could wish any happier fate. When he saw her ill-content with the fate he offered her, it occurred to him at once that some romantic folly with young Le Blanc was the obstacle to his designs. He determined to put a stop to that, and if necessary, for the good of the girl herself, to marry her to the old man out of hand. Therese, not without the aid of her mother's counsel, perceived the danger, and called to her aid that most faithful ally of her sex, dissimulation. She veiled her scorn of old Erosette, whereupon her father became reconciled to a little delay, such as Therese protested would be nothing more than seemly.

"The wedding shall be at New Year's," announced Marin; and Therese replied by that silence which is supposed to mean consent.

Meanwhile the lovers' meetings were few and far between, there being so much at stake. Batiste with the energy at half-despair, devoted himself to the fishing, which yet remained unfruitful; while Therese kept her wits at work till she was well-nigh distracted, seeking to unravel the toils which were slowly drawing tighter about her happiness. The thought of going into exile, and forsaking the mother who was absorbed in her, was like a knife in her heart. Yet, she thought, surely her mother would bid her do it rather than see her marry the old miser. One day, wearied out with the vain labor of her thought, she discreetly sounded her mother on the subject; but the result was so disappointing that she fled away through the larches to the shore, where she could weep her heart out and call forth no question.

Two or three fishing-boats were just coming in, dropping their red sails as they entered the little creek; and far out, toward the heights of Charivari, Therese could just make out another sail, not making for shore. This, her heart told her, was the sail of her lover's boat, and a wave of anxious fear went over her, for a storm was threatening. Presently, when all the fishermen had left the landing but one, a grizzled, kindly-faced old man whom Therese knew and trusted, the girl hastened over to the creek and asked if there had been any that tide.

"Better than none!" replied the old man. "The shade is beginning to come in, but they're mighty slow about it. I've got a matter of half a hundred here, may be, and the other lads took in a few."

"Where is Batiste," queried the girl in consequence.

"Oh, the lad wouldn't come in, all I could say!" answered the old fisherman, regretfully. "And its going to be a dirty night, I'm thinking. He was that pleased, at getting a few fish, that he vowed he'd drift out the next tide, hoping to catch the first big run. I told him there was a storm brewing, but he wouldn't listen. That's him now, yonder to Charivari!"

"Is it?" said Therese, as if she hadn't known it for the last half hour.

As Therese turned homeward her heart was heavy with new care. Already the wind was freshening fitfully, sobbing in the gray, weird larches; and ere she reached her door it grew dark suddenly. By the



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time supper was over it was blowing a gale, and the doors and windows rattled fiercely. Soon, unable any longer to conceal her tortures, Therese crept off to her room under the low roof, and trembling at the fury of the tempest and the throbbing roar of the waves beyond the larch-wood.

Meanwhile, what of Batiste. Elated with the poor, half-success of his day's fishing, he had refused to see the signs of

approaching storm. Beyond Blomidon the clouds hung low, and of an ominous blue-black, and across them the sun at setting scored a dagger of fierce orange. Overhead the sky wore a tinge of yellow-green, and at dusk the water was everywhere covered with little whitecaps, which seemed to spring up capriciously, and all independently of each other. Batiste looked proudly at his halt barrel of fish, and dreamed of a mighty haul the next drift. He paid out his net in high spirits, nor heeded the jumping of his boat. When the net was all out, however, and he sat down in the bow to take breath, he realized that the situation was not all that could be desired.

It was about this time that the storm deepened suddenly, and that Therese crept off to bed. The gale drove down the Basin, and at first the heights of Charivari broke the force of it. Batiste began pulling in the net, fearful of being swamped. Before half this task was done, he had drifted out of shelter, and the boat, dragged down by the weight of net over her stern, was on the point of foundering. There was nothing for it but to cut loose all his hopes. A few strokes with the keen fisherman's blade severed the ropes, and then Batiste sat down, not greatly caring whether he ever got to shore again or not. At this moment the crest of a wave, whipped off by the wind, smote him in the face, and reawoke his manhood. He found the boat filling rapidly; and seizing the oars, he strove bravely to keep her head before the wind.

Finding himself successful in this his hope of life returned, and with it a rush of sanguine expectations. In the awful gloom, the tumult, and the cruel half-stealthy paralyzing of the waves, his mind grew phenomenally clear. He seemed to see many things that he could do to earn money, and that in time to demand Therese before the New Year. He would sell his farm, or borrow money on it, and buy up all the fish his neighbors could catch. These he would take in his boat and sell direct to the various military ports. He had observed the enormous profits made by middlemen engaged in such trade and he saw that he could give the Acadians better prices and yet make a handsome penny that very season. All this passed through his mind as he sat there battling for his life, when suddenly his dream was broken by deepening thunder.

The noise in a few minutes resolved itself into the crash and roar of breakers. Batiste could not see more than twenty paces ahead of his boat, but presently, as the giant voices swelled louder and louder in his ear, he knew that he was being driven right on Blomidon. He thought of changing his course to one side or the other, but saw that the least attempt to do so would cause the boat to founder. The gloom thickened ahead of him, as if a mountain were rushing to overwhelm him, and along the base of the approaching terror he marked the darting gleams of the shattered and flying surf. This, after all, was to be the end of his dreams! His fate was surely now upon him, not to be averted. But he set his face and nerved his

heart to meet it, and kept his boat steady as she drove right out into the towering mass before him.

A great wave carried the boat in upon its crest. Batiste never knew just how it happened, but after the shock, the crash with which his boat went to splinters beneath him, he found himself gasping and half-strangled in a crevice of the rocks. Another wave went over him, but he kept his desperate hold. As it receded he struggled to a higher point, and the next wave only struck him with its crest. A moment more and he was above the breakers' reach; and finding a crevice deep enough to protect him from the wind he crouched down and tried to balance his misery with the good fortune of his marvellous escape.

After a time, worn out he slept; and he slept till the east was aflame with dawn. Opening his eyes he lay for a time unstirring, too cramped to move, but thrilled through his impressionable nature by the desolate splendor of the scene. Presently his attention was caught by a vivid violet gleam

in the face of the rock a few feet above his head. Finding the glory a steady one, he struggled at last to his feet, and reached up the cliff to the source of that ethereal radiance. What he found,—and the consciousness of its value set his heart beating like a trip-hammer,—was a huge, deep-colored, flawless amethyst, so lightly embedded that his trembling fingers plucked it forth without an effort.

Need I add that Therese's father was soon brought to see that Batiste would make a much more desirable son-in-law than the old Erosette; and that the wedding which on *Ile aux Abelles* at New Year seemed entirely to the satisfaction of Therese! As for the amethyst, after bestowing the benediction of Blomidon upon our Acadian lovers, it found its way to France, and became illustrious among the crown jewels.

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Just another idol
Fallen from its place,
One more hollow found behind
An old familiar face!
Comrade mine, I thought to twine
Our hearts for evermore,
And lo! another idol
Broken on the floor.

Kinsfolk reared from childhood
In one mother's ways,
School friends more than brothers loved
In heart-open days,
Lovers dear as kinsfolk ne'er
Are themselves no more;
What, must all the idols
Shatter on the floor?

Lo! another idol!
Set it up on high!
Never heed the broken gods,
Leave them where they lie!
On it shower love's every flower,
Make it all—your all,
Feed it with your heart's blood
And—once day it will fall.

"Loved you not these false gods
Broken on the floor?"
"I would fain have worshipped them
All for evermore."
I loved well—'twas they who fell."
"Comrade, let them lie,
And when you love another,
Shine it high of high!"
—Douglas Staden in Frank Leslie's Monthly.

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