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Jeanne of the Marshes

BY E. P. OPPENHEIM

(Continued)

A flash of triumph lit up Forrest's face, but it lasted only for a second. Kate had suddenly turned upon them, and was standing with her back to the wall. The hand which had been hidden in the folds of her dress so long was suddenly outstretched. There was a roar which rang through the place like the rattle of artillery, the smell of gunpowder, and little clouds of smoke. Through it they could see her face; her lips parted in a smile, the wild disorder of her hair, her sea-stained gown, her splendid pose, all seemed to make her the central figure of the little tableau.

"I have five more barrels," she said. "I fired that one only to let you know that I was in earnest. Now if you will not let us go free, and without conditions, it will be you who will stay here instead of us, you who will stay here for ever!"

CHAPTER XVI.

The smoke cleared away. Engleton had risen to his feet, the light of a new hope blazing in his eyes. Forest and Cecil de la Borne stood close together near the door, which still stood ajar. The girl who stood with her back to the wall, saw their involuntary movement towards it, and her voice rang out sharp and clear.

"If you try to go on I shoot!" she exclaimed. "You know what that means. Cecil, a pistol isn't a plaything with me."

Cecil looked no more toward the door. He came instead a little farther into the room.

"My dear Kate," he said, "we are willing to admit, Forest and I, that we are beaten. You can do exactly what you like with us except leave us here. Our little joke with Engleton is at an end. Perhaps we carried it too far. If so, we must face the penalty. Take him away if you like. Personally I do not find this place attractive."

Kate lowered her revolver and turned to Engleton.

"Come over to my side," she said. "We are going to leave this place."

Engleton staggered towards her. He had always been thin, but he seemed to have lost more in the last few days. "For God's sake let's get out!" he said. "I don't breathe some fresh air soon it will be the end of me."

"In any order you please," Cecil de la Borne said smilingly. "The only condition I make is that before you leave the place altogether, Kate, I have a few minutes' conversation with you. You can hold your pistol to my temple, if you like, while I talk, but there are a few things I must say."

"Afterwards, then," she answered. "We are going first out of the place. We shall turn seawards and wait for you. When you come out you will find us with electric torches and go on in front."

"You are quite a strategist," Forrest remarked grimly. "Do as she says, Cecil. The sooner we are out of this the better."

Kate passed her hand through Engleton's arm.

"Come along," she said. "Lean on me if you are not feeling well. Do not be afraid. They will not dare to touch us."

Engleton laughed weakly, but with the remains of the contentment which he had always treated his jailers.

"Afraid of them?" he exclaimed contemptuously. "I fancy the boot has been on the other leg. Who you are, my dear young lady, I do not know, but upon your word you are the most welcome companion a man ever had."

The pair moved toward the doorway. Neither Forest nor Cecil de la Borne made any effort to prevent their passing out. Kate turned a little to the right and then stood with the revolver clamped in her hand.

"Please come out now," she said. "You will give me electric torch to him."

She indicated Engleton, who stretched out his hand. Cecil and Forrest obeyed her command to the letter. Engleton held the torch, and they all four made their way along the noisome passageway. Forrest turned his head once cautiously toward his companions, but Cecil shook his head.

"Wait," he whispered softly.

The thunder of the sea grew less and less distinct. Before them shone a faint glimmer of light. Soon they reached the gun-room. Cecil and Forrest followed. Cecil carefully closed the door behind them.

"You see," he remarked, "we are reconciled to our defeat. Let us sit down for a moment and talk."

"Open the window and give me some brandy," Engleton said.

Kate felt him suddenly grow heavy upon her arm.

"Bring a chair quick," she ordered. "He is going to faint."

She bent over him, alarmed at the sudden change in his face. Her attention for one moment was relaxed. Then she felt her wrist seized in a grip of iron. The revolver, which she was still holding, fell to the ground, and Cecil calmly picked it up and thrust it into his pocket.

"You have played the game very well, Kate," he said. "Now I think it is our turn."

She looked at him indignantly, but without any trace of fear.

"You brute!" she exclaimed. "Can't you see that he has fainted? Do you want him to die here?"

"Not in the least," Cecil answered. "Here, Forrest, you take care of this." He added, passing the revolver over to him: "I'll look after Engleton."

He led him to an easy-chair close to the window. He opened it a few inches, and a current of strong fresh air came sweeping in. Then he poured some brandy into a glass and gave it to Kate.

"Let him sip this," she said. "Keep his head back. That's right. We will call a truce for a few moments. I am going to talk with my friend."

He turned away, and Kate, with a sudden movement, sprang toward the fire-place and pulled the bell. Cecil looked around, and smiled contemptuously.

"It is well thought of," he remarked, "but unfortunately there is not a servant in the house. Go on ringing it, if you like. All that can awake are the echoes."

Kate dropped the rope and turned back towards Engleton. The color was coming slowly back to his cheeks. With an effort he kept from altogether losing consciousness.

"I am not going to faint," he said in a low tone. "I will not. Tell me, they have the pistol?"

"Yes," Kate answered, "but don't be afraid. I am not going back there again, nor shall they take you."

He pressed her hand.

"You are a plucky girl," he muttered. "Stick to me now and I'll never forget it. I've held out so long that I'm d-d if I let them off their punishment now."

Cecil came slowly across the room.

"Feeling better Engleton?" he asked. Engleton turned his head.

"Yes," he answered, "I am well enough. What of it?"

"Well," he said, "I have a better understanding of what it is."

"Have it, then, and be d-d to you!" Engleton answered. "You won't get me alive into that place again. If you are going to try, try."

"Come," Cecil said, "there is no need to talk like that. Why not pass your word to treat this little matter as a joke? It's the simplest way. Go up to your room, change your clothes and shave, have a drink with us, and take the morning train to town. It's not worth risking your life for the sake of a little bit of revenge on us for having gone too far. I admit we were wrong in keeping you here. You terrified us. Forrest has more enemies than friends and I am unknown in London. If you went to your club with your story people would believe it. We should all be laughing at that is why we were afraid to let you go back. Forget the last few days and cry quits."

"I'll see you d-d first!" Engleton answered.

Cecil's face changed a little.

"Well," he said, "I have made you a fair offer. I shall leave it to you. You may not find him so easy as I have been."

Kate stepped for a moment forward, and laid her hand on Cecil's shoulder.

"Mr. de la Borne," she said, "we don't want to have anything to say to your friend. We trust him less than you. Open the door and let us out."

"Where are you going to?" Cecil asked. "Engleton is not fit to walk anywhere."

"I am going to take him back home with me," Kate answered. "Oh, I can get him there. I shall leave it to you. You may not find him so easy as I have been."

"It is impossible, my dear Kate," Cecil answered. "Take my advice. Leave him to us. We will deal with him reasonably enough, Kate, listen."

He passed his arm through hers and drew her a little to one side.

"Kate," he said, "I'm afraid I haven't behaved exactly well to you. I got up in London amongst a lot of people who seemed to look at things so differently, and there were distractions, and I'm afraid I forgot some of my promises. But I have never forgotten you. Why do you take the part of that miserable creature over there? He is just a young simpleton, who because he was half-drunken, dared to accuse us of cheating. We were obliged to keep him shut up until he took it back. I give you my word, and I will never forget it."

Kate looked at him a little curiously.

"Will you keep your promise?" she asked curiously.

Cecil hesitated, but only for a minute. "Yes," he said, "I will even do that."

She withdrew her arm firmly, but without haste.

"Is that all you have to say," she asked. "I offer you my promise," he answered. "Isn't that worth something?"

"Something," she answered, "not much. I want no more to do with you. Mr. Cecil de la Borne. Don't think you can make terms with me, for you can't. I only hope that you get punished for what you have done."

Cecil raised his hand as though about to strike her.

"You little cat," he exclaimed. "We'll see the thing through, then. You are prisoners here just as much as though you were in the vault."

Forrest, who had spoken very little, came suddenly forward.

"We have talked too much," he said, "and wasted too much time. Let us have the issue before us in black and white. Engleton, are you well enough to understand what I say?"

"Perfectly," Engleton answered. "Go on."

"Will you sign a retraction of your charges against us, and pledge your word of honor never to repeat them, or to make any complaint, formal or otherwise, as to your detention here?"

"I'm d-d if I will!" Engleton answered.

"Consider what your refusal means first," Forrest said. "Open the passage door, Cecil."

Cecil pushed it back, and a little breath of the noxious odor stole into the room.

"You either make us that promise, Engleton," he said, "or as sure as I'm standing here, we'll drag you both down that passage, right to the end, and throw you into the sea."

"And hang for it afterwards," Engleton said, with a sneer.

"Not we," Forrest declared. "The current down there are strange ones, and it would be many weeks before your bodies were recovered. Your character in London is pretty well known, and Kate here has been seen often enough on her way up to the Hall. People will soon put two and two together. There are a dozen places in the Spinney where one could slip off into the sea. Oh, there is nothing for us to fear. I can assure you. Now then, I can see it's no use arguing with you any longer."

"One moment," Kate said. "What about the young lady I left outside?" Cecil turned upon her swiftly.

"Don't tell lies, Kate," he said. "It's a poor sort of tale that."

"At any rate it's no lie," Kate answered. "When I came to your front door, I left the young lady who was staying here only a few weeks ago, Miss Le Mesurier you called her, sitting in the barn waiting."

Cecil laughed scornfully.

"Did she drop from the clouds?" he asked.

"She has been staying at the farm," Kate answered, "for days. I brought her with me tonight because I thought that she might know something about Lord Ronald's disappearance. She is there waiting. If I do not return by daylight, she will go to the police."

"I think," Forrest remarked, ironically, "that we will risk the young lady outside. Your story, my dear, is ingenious, but scarcely plausible. If you are ready, Cecil—"

The four of them were suddenly stupefied into a dead silence. Their eyes were riveted upon the door which led to the underground passage. Cecil's face was almost grotesque with the terrible swiftness of fear. Distinctly they could all hear footsteps stumbling along the uneven way. Forrest was the first to recover the power of speech. He called out to Cecil from the other end of the room.

"Shut the door! Shut it, I say!"

Cecil took no notice of the warning. Before he could reach the door, however, the girl had thrown her arms round his waist.

"You shall not close it," she cried.

"Who is coming?" Cecil cried panting.

"God knows," she answered. "They say the ghosts walk here."

He strove to loosen himself from her grasp, but he was powerless. Nevertheless he got a little nearer to the door. Forrest came swiftly across the room. Engleton struck at him with a chair, but the blow was harmless in its effect.

"Stand aside, Cecil," Forrest said, "I'll close it."

"I'm hanged if you will," was the sudden reply.

Andrew de la Borne stepped out of the darkness and stood upright, blinking and looking at them in amazement.

(To be continued)

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(To be continued)

Fashion Hint for Times Readers



WINTER HAT WITH AIRY TRIMMING

Laces and tulle are being largely used for even midwinter hats for dressy wear. This charming model distinguished in its graceful lines, is simply, but strikingly, trimmed with a band and huge bow of maline shirred over folded velvet ribbon. The hat is in two tones of the same color—one of the new French millinery blues. Felt hat and velvet ribbon, forming the cording under the tulle are slightly darker in tone. This model is turned up on the right side, the trimming being on the left—a change from the summer hats which reversed this method.

MAY HAVE TO MODIFY REQUESTS FOR AID TO DRY DOCK PLANS

Four Per Cent. Considered Too High—Hon. Mr. Graham Answers Criticism of I. C. R.—Borden Hedges on Naval Policy

Ottawa, Oct. 29.—There is not much likelihood that the government will endorse the recent proposal made to them by representatives of Canadian steamship companies and Harland & Wolff for a four per cent fifty-year bonus on an expenditure of \$2,000,000 for dry dock repair plants at Lewis and St. John.

The opinion of the government is that the promoters of these enterprises are asking too much. To give four per cent for the time and on the amount asked would, it is claimed, mean that the government would practically pay the whole cost. The bonus is also asked on repair, shipbuilding and salvaging plant, as well as on dry dock, which is a policy the government has not yet declared for.

The government, however, is decidedly in favor of dry dock construction at both St. John and Lewis, and if that decision were made, the demand for aid being said in approval of the manner in which the road is being run.

"I have just now before me an article written by a prominent United States journalist, who has been touring Canada and writing up our transportation facilities, and his comments on the Intercolonial are very eulogistic, as to roadbed, dining service and train service."

Speaking of dismissals, Mr. Graham said: "There have been quite a number, and I am free to confess this phase of the situation is of more pressing worry to me than others, for it is a serious thing for a man to be asked to seek new employment, particularly if he has a family. It must be remembered, however, that a railway is an enterprise on which it is expected that the income will, at least, balance the expenditure, and that the railway corporations reduce their staffs the moment there is a falling off in traffic without any hesitation."

"During the past three years the Canadian lines have laid off thousands of men, and if the Intercolonial were to be closed, the number of men laid off would be increased. The board could do nothing but reduce the staff until such time as business warranted its increase again."

"I would be pleased to see such a betterment of traffic as would compel the board to largely increase the number of employees."

"I have noticed the criticisms, most of which are fair and not unexpected, but I think it not quite just to single out one official for special attack when he is but one member of the board, each one of whom must accept responsibility for what is done."

"All who have given the question study husband leaves his wife periodically, absenting himself for months at a time, and providing nothing for the maintenance of his family when he returns. Several charitable societies have cared for them at different times, but the woman, although strong and healthy, refuses to work for her living. One child is in the reform school, and an infant is being taken care of by a private family. The court officials are considering whether they should go to the trouble and expense of finding the parents and sending them to jail."

Montreal, Oct. 29.—The officials of the recorder's court do not take kindly to the tenets of the Socialists, as exemplified by cases that come before them for attention. The latest problem set for their solution is the case of two children, aged two and four years, who were abandoned in the porch of the Grey Nunnery on Saturday morning.

The sisters, on discovering the little boy and girl, telephoned to Captain Baker, of the St. Catherine street police station, to take charge of them and find their parents, as there was no room for them at the Guy street institution.

Captain Baker soon found that the little ones were part of the family of Antonio Dipanni, and that they had been deserted before. Neither the father or the mother have been seen since, and the children are being taken care of at the Assistance Publique.

The recorder's court officials in explaining the circumstances connected with the abandonment, said today that Dipanni and his wife are Socialists, and on the advice of Socialist leaders have deserted their children on more than one occasion. The

three attesting witnesses to the alleged will could not be located.

The estate now goes to a brother, John Monahan of Chicago, Elizabeth McGowan, Mary McGowan and Annie McGowan, sisters living in Ireland, and another sister Bridget Traynor of East Boston.

THE HUMACAO DISASTER
St. John, N. B.
To the Editor of the Times:
Sir,—The reading of the loss of life occasioned by the wreck of the steamer Hostia may recall to the minds of some of the older inhabitants, a somewhat similar disaster which happened September 23, 1885, in which eleven out of twelve St. John carpenters lost their lives on the wreck of the steamer Humacao, which stranded on Murr Ledges, Grand Manan, seven miles from the scene of the present mishap.

These carpenters went from St. John to Grand Manan on the tug Dringo to work on the stranded ship Humacao, and after working the day, the tug came to take them to the mainland, but, thinking there would be no danger, they decided to remain on board. During the night, however, a gale arose and the wreck began to break up. The men on board set out on a