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Several corner lots on Clay street with joining inside lots to go with; corner ones if desired.

W. M. JANES

520 B'Way, Paducah, Ky

ALICE of OLD VINCENNES

By MAURICE THOMPSON

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Alice was absolutely charmed. She sat on a low wooden stool and gazed into Gaspard Roussillon's face with dilating eyes in which burned that rich and radiant something we call a passionate soul. She drank in his flamboyant stream of words with a thirst which nothing but experience could ever quench. He felt her silent applause and the admiring involuntary absorption that possessed his wife. The consciousness of his elementary magnetism augmented the flow of his fine descriptions, and he went on and on until the arrival of Father Beret put an end to it all.

The priest, hearing of M. Roussillon's return, had come to inquire about some friends living at Detroit. He took luncheon with the family, enjoying the downright refreshing collation of broiled birds, onions, meat cakes and charcuterie, ending with a dish of blackberries and cream.

M. Roussillon seized the first opportunity to resume his successful romance and presently in the midst of the meal began to tell Father Beret about what he had seen in Quebec.

"By the way," he said, with expansive casualness in his voice, "I called upon your old time friend and coadjutor, Father Sebastian, while up there. A noble old man. He sent you a thousand good messages. Was mightily delighted when I told him how happy and hale you have always



Alice was absolutely charmed.

been here. Ah, you should have seen his dear old eyes full of loving tears. He would walk a hundred miles to see you, he said, but never expected to see you in this world. Blessings, blessings upon dear Father Beret, was what he murmured in my ear when we were parting. He says that he will never leave Quebec until he goes to his home above—ah!

The way in which M. Roussillon closed his little speech, his large eyes upturned, his huge hands clasped in front of him, was very effective.

"I am under many obligations, my son," said Father Beret, "for what you tell me. It was good of you to remember my dear old friend and go to him for his loving messages to me. I am very, very thankful. Help me to another drop of wine, please."

Now the extraordinary feature of the situation was that Father Beret had known positively for nearly five years that Father Sebastian was dead and buried.

"Ah, yes," M. Roussillon continued, pouring the claret with one hand and making a pious gesture with the other. "The dear old man loves you and prays for you. His voice quavers whenever he speaks of you."

"Doubtless he made his old joke to you about the birthmark on my shoulder," said Father Beret after a moment of apparently thoughtful silence. "He may have said something about it in a playful way, eh?"

"True, true; why, yes, he surely mentioned the same," assented M. Roussillon, his face assuming an expression of confused memory. "It was something sly and humorous, I mind, but it just escapes my recollection. A right jolly old boy is Father Sebastian. Indeed very amusing at times."

"At times, yes," said Father Beret, who had no birthmark on his shoulder and had never had one there or on any other part of his person.

"How strange!" Alice remarked. "I, too, have a mark on my shoulder—a pink spot, just like a small, five petaled flower. We must be of kin to each other, Father Beret."

The priest laughed.

"If our marks are alike, that would be some evidence of kinship," he said. "But what shape is yours, father?"

"I've never seen it," he responded.

"Never seen it! Why?"

"Well, it's absolutely invisible," and he chuckled heartily, meantime glancing shrewdly at M. Roussillon out of the tall of his eye.

"It's on the back of his shoulder," quickly spoke up M. Roussillon, "and you know priests never use looking glasses. The mark is quite invisible therefore so far as Father Beret is concerned!"

"You never told me of your birth-

mark before, my daughter," said Father Beret, turning to Alice with sudden interest. "It may some day be good fortune to you."

"Why so, father?"

"If your family name is really Tarleton, as you suppose from the inscription on your locket, the birthmark, being of such singular shape, would probably identify you. It is said that these marks run regularly in families. With the miniature and the distinguishing birthmark you have enough to make a strong case should you once find the right Tarleton family."

"You talk as they write in novels," said Alice. "I've read about just such things in them. Wouldn't it be grand if I should turn out to be some great personage in disguise?"

The mention of novels reminded Father Beret of that terrible book which he last saw in Alice's possession, and he could not refrain from mentioning it in a voice that shuddered.

"Rest easy, Father Beret," said Alice. "That is one novel I have found wholly distasteful to me. I tried to read it, but could not do it. I flung it aside in utter disgust. You and Mother Roussillon are welcome to hide it deep as a well for all I care. I don't enjoy reading about low, vile people and hopeless unfortunates. I like sweet and lovely heroines and strong, high souled, brave heroes."

"Read about the blessed saints, then, my daughter. You will find in them the true heroes and heroines of this world," said Father Beret.

M. Roussillon changed the subject, for he always somehow managed to have the good priest fall into the strain of argument he was about to begin. A stray sheep, no matter how refractory, feels a touch of longing when it hears the shepherd's voice. M. Roussillon was a Catholic, but a straying one, and he had promised the dying woman who gave Alice to him that the child should be left as she was, a Protestant, without undue influence to change her from the faith of her parents. This promise he had kept with stubborn persistence, and he meant to keep it as long as he lived.

A few weeks had passed after M. Roussillon's return when that big hearted man took it into his head to celebrate his successful trading ventures with a moonlight dance given without reserve to all the inhabitants of Vincennes. It was certainly a democratic function that he contemplated, and motley to a most picturesque extent.

Rene de Ronville called upon Alice a day or two previous to the occasion and duly engaged her as his partner, but she insisted upon having the engagement guarded in her behalf by a condition so obviously fanciful that he accepted it without argument.

"If my wandering knight should arrive during the dance, you promise to stand aside and give place to him," she stipulated. "You promise that?"

You see, I'm expecting him all the time. I dreamed last night that he came on a great bay horse and, stooping, whirled me up behind the saddle and away we went!"

There was a childish, half bantering air in her look, but her voice sounded earnest and serious, notwithstanding its delicious tinkle of suppressed playfulness.

"You promise me?" she insisted.

"Oh, I promise to slink away into a corner and chew my thumb the moment he comes!" Rene eagerly assented. "Of course I'm taking a great risk. I know, for lords and barons and knights are very apt to appear suddenly in a place like this."

"You may banter and make light if you want to," she said, pouting admiringly. "I don't care. All the same, the laugh will jump to the other corner of your mouth; see if it doesn't. They say that what a person dreams about and wishes for and waits for and believes in will come true sooner or later."

"If that's so," said Rene, "you and I will get married, for I've dreamed it every night of the year, wished for it, waited for it and believed in it, and—"

"A very pretty twist you give to my words, I must declare," she said, "but not new by any means. Little Adrienne Bourcier could tell you that. She says that you have vowed to her over and over that you dream about her and wish for her and wait for her, precisely as you have just said to me."

Rene's brown face flushed to the temples, partly with anger, partly with the shock of mingled surprise and fear. He was guilty, and the guilt showed in his eyes and paralyzed his tongue, so that he sat there before Alice with his under jaw sagging ludicrously.

"Don't you rather think, M. Rene de Ronville," she presently added in a calm, advisory tone, "that you had better quit trying to say such foolish things to me and just be my very good friend? If you don't I do, which comes to the same thing. What's more, I won't be your partner at the dance unless you promise me on your word of honor that you will dance two dances with Adrienne to every one that you have with me. Do you promise?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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