



**THE ADVENTURES OF NANCY LAPLANTE
IN THE 19TH CENTURY**

BY
MICHEL POULIN

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**A HISTORICAL FICTION NOVEL
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WARNING TO READERS

THIS NOVEL CONTAINS GRAPHIC DESCRIPTIONS OF WAR AND VIOLENCE, AS WELL AS LANGUAGE UNSUITABLE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN. WHILE THIS NOVEL DESCRIBES AND INVOLVES MANY HISTORICAL PERSONS OR EVENTS, THIS NOVEL IS A WORK OF FICTION. THE ACTIONS AND WORDS ATTRIBUTED IN THIS NOVEL TO HISTORICAL CHARACTERS WHO EXISTED DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT HISTORICAL REALITY AS WE KNOW IT. HOWEVER, THE CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY OF THE HISTORICAL PERSONS DESCRIBED IN THIS NOVEL WERE REPRODUCED AS CLOSELY TO THE HISTORICAL REALITY AS POSSIBLE, AND THIS BASED ON EXTENSIVE HISTORICAL RESEARCH BY THE AUTHOR.

NOTE TO READERS

This novel is a compilation of chapters drawn from two of my other novels, *TIMELINE TWIN* and *FROM THE FIELDS OF CRIMEA TO THE SANDS OF MARS*, two works of science-fiction based on the theme of time travel. The present novel is meant to consolidate the adventures in the 19th Century of Nancy Laplante 'B', a young field agent of the Time Patrol, and thus satisfy the tastes of the readers who enjoy books on historical fiction and historical romance. For those readers who would wish to read other novels written by me, they will be able to find PDF format copies of them available for free on my author's page at Goodreads.com, or at Free-Ebooks.net. If any problem is encountered in getting a copy of one of my novels, then the readers are welcome to contact me directly at natai@videotron.ca and I will be most happy to send them a copy for free.

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Jeanne de Brissac, swimming in the Anse des Grandes Salines, Guadeloupe.

CHAPTER 1 – JEANNE DE BRISSAC

15:39 (Guadeloupe Time)

Monday, May 18, 1846

Anse des Grandes Salines

French colony of the Guadeloupe, Caribbean

Knight Pierre Alphonse d'Orléans, wearing a simple shirt and short trousers, was supervising his black employees who were busy extracting blocks of sea salt from the salt flats bordering the beach, on which he stood barefoot. Pierre took a moment to admire the sea and sky of the l'Anse des Grandes Salines, situated at the southeastern tip of the island of Grande-Terre, the second largest of the archipelago of the Guadeloupe. His parents, like many aristocrats, had fled France after the start of the French Revolution and its bloody period called 'The Terror' in 1789, when thousands of nobles had been summarily executed by resentful mobs of impoverished peasants and common workers. After much hard times, his family, a minor branch of the House of

Orléans, had managed to successfully establish itself in the Americas. Born and raised in New Orleans, Pierre had eventually decided to go live in the Guadeloupe, with its flourishing commerce of sugar and rum. Now, at the age of 36, he was the owner of a large sugar cane plantation, which included a sugar refinery and a small rum distillery, enough for him to live very comfortably. He had also created large salt flats on the coast near his plantation, with the salt produced there providing him with a substantial extra income. Despite the restoration of the monarchy in France at the start of this century, Pierre felt no urge to return to his country of origin, which he had never seen in his life. France's economy was still fragile and the social climate there poisonous, if he could believe the captains and passengers of the ships that regularly docked in the ports of Pointe-à-Pitre and Saint-François. He would be perfectly happy if not for the fact that he was without a wife. That didn't mean that he went without sex though, since more than one young black woman among his freed ex-slaves were quite willing and eager to sleep with him. However, young European women of noble or respectable birth were rare in the Guadeloupe and were all married already...or were as ugly as frogs.

As he was looking at the Island of La Désirade on the horizon, his eyes caught on a number of floating objects on the surface of the waves, about 600 meters off the beach he was on. Focusing on the objects, he was soon able to recognize them as debris from a wrecked ship. He was not surprised by that, as more than a few ships sank every year around the Guadeloupe because of tropical storms or collisions with reefs. Calling his foreman and telling him to continue to supervise the work of salt extraction alone, Pierre got closer to the edge of the water in order to better see. The currents and waves actually seemed to be pushing the debris towards the beach of fine white sand he was standing on. Pierre's heart accelerated when he saw some movement near one of the floating objects. After looking for a moment, he was ready to swear that someone was clinging to that piece of debris. He however hesitated to enter the water to swim towards the debris: the waves were strong and the currents dangerous along this coast. He finally took a decision when he was able to clearly distinguish a human head and heard a female voice.

"Help! Help me!"

"FERNAND, COME HERE WITH TWO MEN AND THE ROLL OF ROPE WE HAVE IN OUR CART, QUICKLY!" shouted Pierre to his foreman while starting to take

off his shirt. Keeping only his short trousers on, he tied around his waist one end of the rope Fernand brought to him at a run.

"Hold on tight to the other end of this rope with your two men, so that the currents won't wash me away. I'm going to get that girl."

"Understood, monsieur." replied the foreman, who then tied the other end of the rope around his own waist and walked into the water with his employer. While Fernand and the two black workers with him stopped once water came to their upper legs, Pierre started swimming resolutely towards the girl in distress. The latter, seeing him approach, let go the piece of floating debris she had been clinging to and started swimming to join up with him. Twice the surf threw her back away from the beach, cancelling her efforts. With an ultimate surge of energy, the girl finally managed to link up with Pierre, who firmly grabbed her in his arms at once and shouted towards the beach.

"I HAVE HER, MEN! PULL!"

Fernand and the two black workers immediately started pulling on the rope with all their strength, towing Pierre and the shipwrecked girl towards the beach. Pierre was finally able to walk on the bottom but had to drag the young woman, who was apparently exhausted, out of the water and onto the sand. Gently putting her down on her back once on dry sand, he examined her while untying the rope around his waist and catching his breath. He quickly had to revise his first impression of the girl, who only wore a wet night shirt that was now clinging to her body. While very tall, her face was that of a teenager, not that of an adult woman. She was also beautiful, with long dark hair and a sensual and athletic body. The foreman smiled while admiring the appetizing curves of the girl, whose nipples were visible through her wet shirt.

"Well, monsieur, it seems that you have caught quite a nice fish today."

"It seems so, my good Fernand. Pass me your water bottle, please."

Taking the tin flask offered by his foreman, Pierre knelt beside the teenager and gently raised her head while offering her the opened flask. The girl avidly gulped three long pulls of the water before looking up at Pierre, who could now see that her eyes were green.

"Thank you very much, monsieur. You are a most brave and kind man."

"You are welcome, mademoiselle. I am Sire Pierre Alphonse d'Orléans, owner of a nearby plantation. And what is your name?"

"I am Jeanne Marie Céleste de Brissac, but call me simply Jeanne. Where am I?"

"On the southeastern tip of the Island of Grande-Terre, in the Guadeloupe. Do you know if there were other survivors from your ship, Jeanne?"

"I...I don't know. I don't think so. I didn't see a single person during the day following the sinking. The ship sank at night, without a warning sign. All that I heard was a terrifying crack just before water filled the under decks. I barely had time to leave by a skylight."

"And your parents, Jeanne? You were traveling with your parents, weren't you?" The teenager closed her eyes for a moment, as if reliving a nightmare, before answering in a weak voice.

"They had been dead for four weeks already, killed by the pirates who boarded our ship. I was then put on the pirates' ship, while my original ship went south with a boarding crew."

Pierre nodded his head, not surprised by her story. Even in this century there were still a few pirates around the Caribbean Sea, most of them coming from the coasts of South America. The French Navy, which was only a shadow of its past Napoleonic glory, rarely patrolled the waters of the Caribbean, something pirates used to their advantage. The teenager was however awakening a particular interest inside Pierre's brain, even without her story about pirates.

"You have an aristocratic name, am I right, Jeanne?"

"I am of modest lineage, monsieur. Why do you ask?"

"Oh, just simple curiosity. Do you feel strong enough to get up now?"

"I think so."

Pierre helped her get up on her feet, finding out then that she was clearly taller than him. She was in fact taller than most men. Her wet shirt also revealed a muscular body...and a very appetizing chest.

"Come with me to my cart: I will bring you to my plantation, so that you could bathe and change. FERNAND, TELL THE MEN TO STOP WORKING: WE WILL CONTINUE THE EXTRACTION TOMORROW."

"YES, MONSIEUR!"

Jeanne looked at the two black men who started following the foreman, as well as at the dozen other black men visible further away.

"Are these black men slaves?"

“No! I freed all of my slaves a year ago. They now get a part of the profits from my plantation as their pay, plus a number of benefits.”

Pierre thought that he saw an approving look in the teenager’s eyes then before she followed him to the cart. Making her sit on the driver’s bench, he waited for the blocks of salt already extracted from the flats to be loaded in the back before grabbing the reins and urging his two mules forward.

With his foreman sitting in the back of the cart and with the black workers walking behind, Pierre waited a moment before trying to start a conversation with the teenager, wanting to leave her time to recuperate some of her strength.

“So, Jeanne, how old are you, if I may ask?”

“Sixteen, monsieur.” lied Nancy Laplante ‘B’, who had just attained the age of fourteen. Her body was however a lot more developed for her age than a typical 19th Century girl’s body would be.

“Please, simply call me ‘Pierre’. And why were your parents bringing you to the Guadeloupe, Jeanne?”

“My parents were practically broke following some disastrous financial speculations in France, and were hoping to build back their fortune here. Pirates then intercepted and seized our ship, killing my parents in the process, along with the whole crew.”

“And what was the name of your ship? I will need to warn the authorities in Basse-Terre about this.”

“It was called the GROS GAILLARD. We were the only passengers aboard. It was captured a month ago.”

“So, it is the original pirate ship that sank near here, right, Jeanne?”

“That’s exact, Pierre.”

Something in her tone and attitude, which denoted unease, told Pierre that she was not telling him everything, but he didn’t insist and stayed silent during the four kilometer trip to his plantation. Finally arriving at the limits of his property, Pierre proudly showed with a sweep of one arm the vast sugar cane fields, the sugar extraction plant, the rum distillery, the small workers’ village and his own house.

“This is my plantation, ‘Sweet Dreams’.”

Jeanne smiled with amusement on hearing that and looked at him.

“I like that name. Was it your wife who gave it that name?”

"I am an old single guy, Jeanne. I am also a bit of a poet."

"Not married, a strong and handsome man like you?"

The compliment made Pierre smile in turn.

"Let's say that well-born girls are rare in the Guadeloupe, Jeanne. I am also in rather poor terms with most of my white neighbors, who think that I am way too soft on my black workers. I was even accused a few times of sheltering and protecting running slaves."

"From what I have heard during my trip about the living conditions of those slaves, I can't blame them at all for wanting to run away. Such cruel conditions could not possibly be condoned by God."

"Very well said, my dear Jeanne. However, too many people here worship gold rather than God."

"The same is true in France." replied the teenager, her expression hardening a bit.

"Well, enough about this! We will go to my house right away, so that you could wash and then rest."

Jumping down on the ground with Jeanne once in front of his residence, Pierre let the cart in the hands of Fernand and showed the wooden façade of his house, which seemed to have been damaged and then repaired summarily.

"You will excuse the appearance of my house, Jeanne, but a terrible earthquake struck this island three years ago. My house actually resisted much better to it than many other houses. Just in Pointe-à-Pitre, the main port in the island, there were over 3,000 dead from that earthquake."

Jeanne nodded her head while inspecting the façade.

"A wooden house normally resists to earthquakes better than stone houses. The repairs you did seem adequate to me."

She then followed Pierre inside. The latter shouted at once when inside a large lounge.

"MARTHE! MARTHE! I NEED YOU!"

A stoutly-built black woman with a sympathetic face came in at once from the kitchen, to open wide eyes on seeing Jeanne, who was still only wearing her half-dried shirt.

"Dear Lord, monsieur, what happened to this poor girl?"

"She was shipwrecked off the coast and I saved her on the Grandes Salines beach, Marthe. Can you prepare a good hot bath for Jeanne and also wash her hair.

Use some of my clothes to dress her up afterwards: I am afraid that she is way too tall to fit any dress in this plantation.”

“Right away, monsieur.” said Marthe before walking to Jeanne and bow to her with a warm smile. “If mademoiselle will follow me.”

With Jeanne following the servant, Pierre then ended alone in his living room. Going briefly to the kitchen, he advised his cook that there would be a guest for supper and then returned to the living room, where he poured himself a glass of rum before sitting down in his favorite sofa. Barely twenty minutes later, Marthe entered the lounge at a near run, looking and sounding troubled.

“Monsieur, the girl is now in the bathtub.”

“Yes, and?” said Pierre, not understanding her excitement.

“She was flogged and also branded repeatedly with red hot irons, monsieur! Her torso and buttocks are covered with scars.”

Pierre got up at once from his sofa, shocked by this.

“WHAT? Did she tell you how she ended up with these scars?”

“I didn’t dare ask her, monsieur. What do I do now?”

Pierre thought for a moment before looking again at Marthe.

“The branding marks, are they shaped like fleurs-de-lis?”

Marthe shook her head at that, understanding what he was alluding to. Prostitutes often were branded by the royal justice, which used irons shaped like a fleur-de-lis.

“No, monsieur. I believe that she was tortured, severely. Her scars seem to date from a few weeks at the least.

“Those pirate bastards!” swore Pierre, suddenly understanding what could have happened to Jeanne. “Very well, Marthe. Continue to help her wash up and don’t mention her scars with her. I will talk with Jeanne afterwards.”

“Understood, monsieur.” replied Marthe before walking away, leaving Pierre alone with his thoughts.

Marthe returned with Jeanne a bit less than one hour later, as another servant was preparing the covers on the dining table, situated at one end of the lounge. Pierre smiled to Jeanne, who was now wearing a male set of clothes that ill fitted her.

“I believe that my first priority tomorrow will be to go in town with you to find some proper clothes for you, my friend.”

Jeanne, who seemed to be still disoriented, returned his smile.

“You already did a lot for me, monsieur. I don’t know how to properly thank you for saving me and now caring for me.”

“You can start by sharing this supper with me, Jeanne.” replied Pierre while pointing at the dining table. Getting up from his sofa, Pierre led Jeanne to the table and gallantly helped her sit down before taking the chair facing her. Filling Jeanne’s cup with wine, then filling his own cup, Pierre raised it and smiled to the beautiful teenager.

“To your health, Jeanne.”

“And to yours, Pierre.” replied Jeanne while raising her own cup and making it touch that of Pierre. They each drank a short pull of wine before putting back down their cups, looking at each other in silence while a servant brought in two plates of soup. Jeanne waited for the servant to be back in the kitchen before speaking, her eyes lowered and with embarrassment on her face.

“I noticed the reaction of Marthe, your maid, when she saw my scars. I suppose that she told you about them?”

“Yes, but if you don’t want to talk about them now...”

“You have the right to know about them, Pierre. That is the least I can do. When pirates attacked my ship over a month ago, killing my parents and the whole crew, I defended myself and managed to kill two pirates and to wound another one before being overpowered. The pirates, enraged, punished me by flogging me. When I resisted again as the pirate captain was trying to rape me, he had me tortured with red hot irons to break my resistance, then took me by force. The next few weeks were like Hell for me, with the captain beating me when I was not cooperating. On top of killing my parents and taking all that we owed, those bastards also took away my dignity and sullied me in an unspeakable way. I am afraid that I am not worthy of your hospitality, Pierre.”

“Nonsense, Jeanne!” said softly Pierre while putting his left hand over her right hand. “You have nothing to be ashamed of in all this. You were helpless and a prisoner. As for those pirates, they have now paid for their crimes and will not abuse anyone anymore.”

“But what will people think of me now? I am not even sure yet if those pirates didn’t make me pregnant or not. I also can’t prove who I am: all my family documents are now at the bottom of the sea and the pirates took away my family ring.”

“Don’t worry about that, Jeanne. Just rest for the next few days and get over your misadventure. You are my guest here and you will always be respected at ‘Sweet Dreams’.”

Jeanne lowered her head, tears in her eyes.

“You are too good, Pierre. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart.”

Moved, Pierre quickly got up and went around the table to go gently grab her shoulders and to speak softly in her ears.

“Forget about all this, my dear. You are a noble and will be treated as such here. Tomorrow, we will go together to Saint-François, the main town in this area, to buy some clothes worthy of you. Now, just eat and relax.”

Going back to his place, Pierre sat back and ate in silence, respecting her obvious embarrassment. He was however thinking furiously as he kept looking discreetly from time to time at Jeanne, who was eating slowly. The news that she had been tortured and raped by the pirates was saddening him for more than one reason. The idea of eventually marrying this beautiful girl he had saved from the sea was already in his head, but he would have to wait a few months to make sure that she was not pregnant before proposing marriage to her. If not, the busybodies around Saint-François would not hesitate to call a baby born too quickly from Jeanne a bastard. He would thus have to temper his temptations towards her for a few months before courting her favors. Somehow, Pierre knew that this was not going to be easy.

On her part, Nancy Laplante ‘B’ eyed discreetly Pierre, a handsome and solidly built man who wore black hair cut at the neck and who shaved his face. He was muscular and stood at about 175 centimeters, with gray eyes and a square jaw that reinforced his apparent strength of character. She had not needed to simulate her embarrassment when she had told him about her scars. Even though she had successfully resisted the tortures inflicted to her in the Bastille in 1651, that experience had deeply traumatized her and had marked her mentally as well as physically. She could have had her scars treated via the highly advanced medical science of the 34th Century and have made them disappear completely, but she had decided to receive only basic medical care. That decision had greatly pained her parents, but she had insisted on that in order to keep her cover identity in 1651 plausible. A recovery that would prove too ‘miraculous’ would have attracted many questions and nasty rumors at the King’s court. As a consequence, she had been forced to modify slightly her original cover story

for her role as Jeanne de Brissac in 1846. Thankfully for her, Pierre Alphonse d'Orléans seemed to be the kind of man that she could truly love. The knowledge that Pierre had less than one year to live according to history then came back to her mind, attracting tears on her cheeks. Pierre, misunderstanding the cause for her tears, hurried up again to go comfort her.

"Do not cry, Jeanne: your misfortunes are over, I promise you that."

"Excuse me, Pierre." said Nancy between two sobs. "So many things happened to me lately. I don't know what to expect anymore from life."

"Maybe some rest will do you good, Jeanne. Would you like to go to bed after supper?"

She nodded her head at that. Returning to his place, Pierre let her finish her supper, then escorted her to the guest room of his house, showing her the bed covered by a mosquito net.

"Marthe will bring you a night gown and some underwear. If you need anything, just ask."

"Thank you again, Pierre. You are too good."

"Not at all: I am only doing what a good Christian is supposed to do. Sleep now and forget about those pirates, Jeanne."

He then left the bedroom and returned to the lounge, where he poured himself some more wine, drinking it while dreaming about the girl he had saved from the sea.

Next morning, Pierre had his cart readied and left with Jeanne for the small town of Saint-François, situated a few kilometers to the southwest of his plantation. Keeping to small talk on the way, Pierre did his best to relax Jeanne by chatting about the town and the local life. The dresses and other clothes he found for her in Saint-François, while of decent quality, were not however what a noble would expect to wear. Despite the fact that Jeanne seemed more than satisfied by his acquisitions, Pierre promised himself to one day bring her to Pointe-à-Pitre, the main port of the Guadeloupe and a place where he knew that he would find some gowns worthy of an aristocrat girl. On the other hand, Jeanne, with her uncommon height and athletic body, was well noticed in Saint-François, where the coming of new French settlers was fairly rare these days. Some of Pierre's French neighbors were also in town with their wives that day and didn't miss the tall and beautiful teenager going around with Pierre. Most of them being in rather poor terms with Pierre d'Orléans, the ideas that came to their mind then and the

comments they made about the couple were not exactly charitable. Jeanne's origin in particular attracted many questions in the heads of those neighbors. One plantation owner, intrigued by Jeanne, visited a tailor shop after Pierre and Jeanne and spoke with the tailor, who told him in turn about the scars on Jeanne's torso. That made the plantation owner and his wife think about all kinds of hypothesis, which they of course diligently shared with other people around them.

Returning to the plantation by the end of the afternoon with a Jeanne apparently happy about their acquisitions, Pierre took one hour to go inspect the various works in progress in his fields and in his sugar extraction plant. As he was about to reenter his house just before supper, Pierre suddenly slowed down his pace and stopped in front of his door, perplex: somebody was playing the piano he had in his lounge. He was supposed to be the only one able to play the piano in 'Sweet Dreams'. The answer that came to his mind then made him smile and he resolutely entered his house, walking quietly to his lounge. He found Jeanne there, wearing one of her new dresses and playing with brio a piece of music unknown to Pierre. Seeing him approach, Jeanne gave him a big smile while continuing to play.

"You didn't tell me that you had a square piano, Pierre. Do you have other musical instruments, by chance?"

"Uh, I have a guitar, plus a banjo that I bought in New-Orleans. You didn't tell me that you knew how to play the piano. I must say that you seem to be quite good at it."

"Thank you! In truth, the guitar is my favorite musical instrument, but I am also well practiced with the piano and the harpsichord. I also like to sing."

"Really?" said Pierre, ecstatic. "Could I then ask you to sing something for me?"

"But, with pleasure, my handsome knight." replied Jeanne in a playful tone before changing her tune on the piano. Concentrating for a moment, she then started singing a song in French that Pierre had never heard before but that he found beautiful. He also found that she had a very pretty voice and that she seemed to have a clear talent for singing. His heart warmed up as he watched Jeanne sing and play, radiant with beauty and talent. He applauded her at the end of the song, truly impressed.

"Bravo, Jeanne! That was beautiful! Do you know many other songs?"

"I do, but many of them are in English, with a few more in Spanish and in German."

Pierre looked at her with big surprised eyes.

“You can speak four languages?”

“Seven, actually.” replied Jeanne, who didn’t seemed to be bragging. “I also know Gaelic, Greek and Latin. I do have a special talent for languages.”

What Nancy didn’t tell him was that her I.Q. of 153 made her a certified genius and that she already held a diploma in robotics engineering, a discipline marrying mechanical science, electronics and computer programming. On his part, Pierre then felt immense relief wash over him. The multiple talents just shown by Jeanne basically ruled out a possibility that had worried him since yesterday: that Jeanne had lied to him and was in reality a pirate herself, a thought brought by her tall and strong body and her torture marks. However, the chances that a girl raised among pirates could speak seven languages, play the piano like a virtuoso and sing the way she just did were about nil, her talents denoting instead the education of a true aristocrat.

Pierre listened to two more songs by Jeanne, who played the guitar for her last song. She then proved to be really good with a guitar, playing as well as anyone he had seen before, including in New Orleans. Now truly hooked on, Pierre shared an agreeable supper with Jeanne, whose morale seemed to have improved a lot since yesterday. After the meal, the two of them sat in a comfortable sofa of the lounge with glasses of rum, spending a good two hours conversing together. That time with Jeanne finished convincing Pierre that she had received a quality education that only a true aristocrat could get. The only point that detracted from that was when she told him that she liked to practice combat sports, including fencing. Her explanation that she had been fascinated since her tender youth about the girls of the ancient Greek city of Sparta however reassured him somewhat. In truth, Pierre wanted to believe her, conquered by her personality and her beauty. When the time came to go to bed, it took him all of his strength of will not to follow her into her bedroom. Sleep came with difficulty for him that night, with images of Jeanne filling his mind.

During the following days, Jeanne revealed herself to be a girl with a heart of gold and with liberal, progressive ideas, treating with respect and kindness the ex-slaves of the plantation and their families and showing interest in their welfare. Pierre, who was in bad terms with his white neighbors because of his so-called ‘softness’ towards his black workers, much appreciated that side of Jeanne, while she gained quickly the

affection of the plantation's workers. Jeanne also proved to be singularly useful to Pierre around the plantation. On the third day at 'Sweet Dreams', she told Pierre that she was going to go fishing at a nearby beach, leaving with a young black boy carrying a harpoon, a fishing net and a large haversack containing only a water bottle and a loaf of bread, plus a knife. She returned in the evening with her haversack full of shellfish and with nine big fish carried inside her fishing net, enough to provide a well-received extra for the supper of the workers of the plantation and their families. From then on, she went to swim and fish nearly every day, telling Pierre that the swimming helped her keep in shape and invariably returning with an impressive amount of fish and shellfish. She often returned as well with quantities of mussels harvested from the sea bottom, sometimes from impressive depths, proving herself to be a first class swimmer with impressive lung capacity. Pierre quickly realized how useful her fishing was to him when he saw the substantial savings he made in terms of food supplies for his workers and to the cost of his own table. Leaving early each morning with her young black assistant, Jeanne would return by noon hour with her catches, then would wash and change into simple work clothes to help Pierre run and maintain his plantation. She further surprised Pierre in that respect, proving to be incredibly knowledgeable about mechanical sciences and also being highly skilled at mechanical repairs, diagnosing and then repairing a problem with the gear mechanism of the crushing rollers used to crush the sugar canes cut down by Pierre's workers. When Jeanne casually told him how she had done those repairs, Pierre could only look at her with his jaw wide opened in disbelief. After washing a second time before supper, Jeanne would put on a gown and become again an aristocratic girl, entertaining Pierre's evenings by singing, playing music and conversing with him. She also often went out to the small village housing the plantation's workers and would play her guitar and sing, to the enjoyment of the black workers and their families. Even though she was still officially only a guest at the plantation and had not had sexual relations yet with Pierre, the latter nearly felt like he was married and was now happier than he had ever been since his youth in New Orleans.

Two weeks after her arrival at the plantation, Jeanne went to see Pierre, a big smile on her face.

"I have a very good news, Pierre: my menstruations showed up last night. I don't have to worry anymore about becoming pregnant from those damn pirates."

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