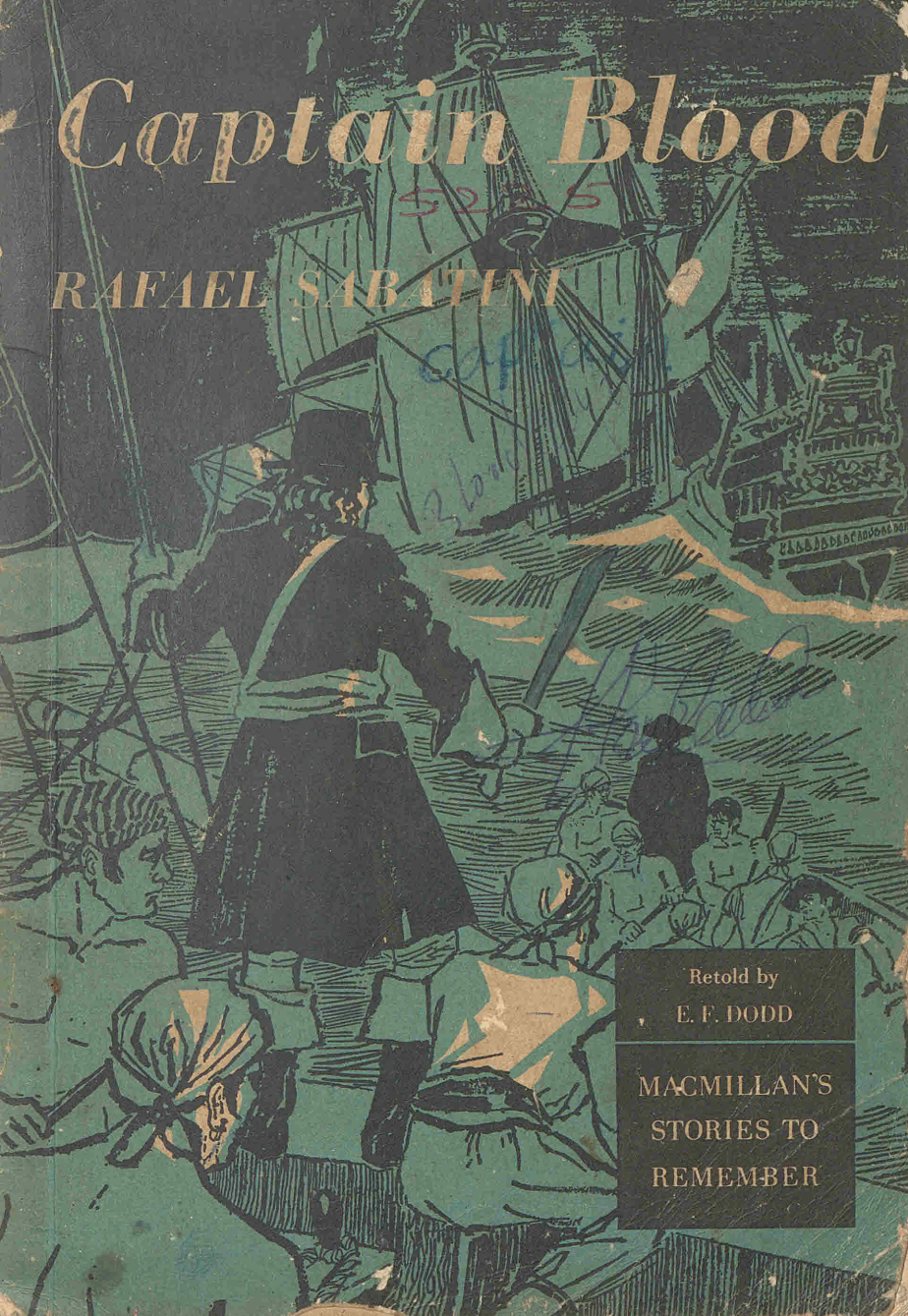
Captain Blood

RAFAEL SABATINI



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CAPTAIN BLOOD

5225

BY

RAFAEL SABATINI

Abridged and simplified

BY

E. F. DODD, B.A.

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PREFACE

Captain Blood is an exciting story of piracy in the Caribbean Sea: it is a work of fiction, but has an authentic historical background, covering the years 1685 to 1689 in England and the West Indies, during the troubled reign of the Stuart King of England, James II.

This abridged and simplified version has been written in straightforward English, and is suitable for supplementary reading in the higher forms of schools where English is taught as a foreign language.

E. F. D.

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MUNAVIRVI ISLAM HIGH SCHOOL
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They saw a tall slim figure on the top of the dunes behind them

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Chapter 1

The Messenger

Peter Blood, Bachelor of Medicine and several other things besides, smoked a pipe and watered the geraniums in his window box above Water Lane in the town of Bridgewater, in Somerset[1].

His attention was divided between his task and the groups of people in the narrow street below. These excited groups consisted mostly of men with green branches in their hats and the most absurd weapons in their hands. Some, it is true, carried guns and swords; but most of them were armed with clubs or farming knives. They were weavers, carpenters, builders, shoemakers, and representatives of many other trades. Bridgewater, like Taunton[2], had come out in full support of the Duke of Monmouth, who was claiming the English throne and rebelling against the king, James II. But Peter Blood, who was trained and skilled as a soldier, and who was certainly no coward, watered his geraniums and smoked his pipe on that warm July evening as if there was no such thing as

[1] *Somerset:* an English county in the west of England. This area is known as the West Country, which also includes the counties of Devon, Cornwall and Wiltshire.

[2] *Taunton:* the capital town of Somerset.

a rebellion. To him, these rebels were fools, rushing madly towards their own ruin.

You see, he knew too much about this fellow Monmouth. He knew he had no lawful claim to the throne, and this absurd pretence could only end in ruin and disaster. How could it be hoped that England would ever swallow such a deception? Mr. Blood laughed and sighed, and wondered how many of these simple West Country men would die before another sunrise. For he knew, as all Bridgewater knew, that Monmouth intended to fight that same night. The Duke was to lead a surprise attack upon the Royalist[1] army which was now encamped on Sedgemoor[2]. Mr. Blood thought it very probable that Lord Feversham, the Royalist leader, was equally well informed, and that the result of the battle would be the end of Monmouth's rebellion.

He knocked the ashes out of his pipe and drew back to close his window. He had had his fill of wandering and adventuring. He was now settled in the career for which he had been originally intended; he was a man of medicine and not of war; a healer, not a killer. And so he closed the window, drew the curtains, and turned to the pleasant, candle-lighted room, and the table on which his housekeeper had set his evening meal.

[1] *Royalist:* supporting the King.

[2] *Sedgemoor:* a moorland area near Bridgewater. This Battle of Sedgemoor (1685) was the last battle ever to be fought on English soil.

He ate his supper and went early to bed. He was peacefully asleep long before eleven o'clock, at which hour Monmouth rode out with his rebel army to attack the Royalists under Lord Feversham's command. The armies met at two o'clock in the morning, and, within an hour, the rebels were utterly defeated by the Royalist troops. Mr. Blood slept undisturbed through the noise of distant cannon. He did not wake until four o'clock, when the sun was rising over the blood-stained field of battle. He sat up in bed, rubbing his eyes, as he heard someone knocking loudly on the door of his house, and a voice calling his name. Putting on his dressing-gown and slippers, he went downstairs to open the door.

In the pale golden light of the new-risen sun, there stood a breathless, wild-eyed man and a steaming horse. Covered in dust and mud, the left sleeve of his coat hanging in rags, this young man opened his lips to speak, yet for a long moment remained speechless. In that moment, Mr. Blood recognised him as a young shipmaster, Jeremiah Pitt, whose aunts lived further down the street.

'Take your time, now,' said Mr. Blood. 'Get your breath first, and then you can talk more calmly.'

But the wild-eyed lad took no notice of this advice. He plunged into speech, gasping, breathless. 'It is Lord Gildoy,' he said. 'He is badly wounded.....

at Oglethorpe's Farm by the river. I carried him there.....and.....and he sent me for you. Come, please! Come at once!'

'Of course I'll come,' said the doctor. He was distressed. Gildoy had been a very kind and generous friend to him, and Mr. Blood was anxious to help him, even though he knew quite well that the young nobleman was an active supporter of the Duke of Monmouth. 'Of course I'll come. But first let me get some clothes and other things that I may need.'

A few minutes later, the two men rode off together on Pitt's tired horse. It was the beginning of a long, hard adventure for Peter Blood. For this Pitt, although he seemed no more than the messenger of a wounded rebel gentleman, was indeed the very messenger of Fate.

Chapter 2

The King's Dragoons[1]

Oglethorpe's Farm stood on the right bank of the river, about a mile to the south of Bridgewater. On the way, Mr. Blood and Jeremiah Pitt met a constant stream of men running from the battlefield: weary, broken men, many of them wounded, all of

[1] *Dragoons:* soldiers on horseback (Cavalrymen)

them terrified, struggling with the last remains of their strength to reach the shelter of the town

Presently Pitt turned into a pathway across the fields. Even here they met occasional groups of these poor wretches, who were scattered in all directions, looking fearfully behind them as they came through the long grass, expecting at every moment to see the red coats[1] of the dragoons.

At last they reached the farm, and were welcomed by Baynes, the owner of the property. In the hall the doctor found Lord Gildoy—a very tall and dark young gentleman—stretched on a cane day-bed under one of the windows, in the care of Mrs. Baynes and her pretty daughter. His cheeks were grey-white, and a faint, moaning noise came from his blue lips with each breath.

Mr. Blood quickly knelt to his task, tore off the wounded man's coat and underwear, and called for water and bandages to dress the dreadful wound in his side. He was still busy half-an-hour later, when the dragoons entered the farmhouse. The noise of horses' hooves and the shouts of the soldiers did not disturb him at all. But his lordship, who had now recovered consciousness, showed great alarm. Baynes was anxious, and his wife and daughter trembled. Mr. Blood spoke calmly.

' Don't be afraid,' he said. ' This is a Christian

---

[1] *red coats:* in those days the army uniform was red and black, not khaki. The soldiers were often called *red coats*.

ISLAM HIGH
Date.....

country, and Christian men do not make war upon the wounded, nor upon those who help them.'

And then they burst into the stone-floored hall—a dozen booted, red-coated troopers, led by a fat, black-browed fellow with a great deal of gold lace upon the breast of his coat. The officer shouted an order, then came forward, his hand resting on the handle of his sword.

'I am Captain Hobart of the King's Dragoons,' he said loudly to the farmer. 'What rebels are you hiding here?'

The farmer answered in a trembling voice. 'I.... I am no protector of rebels, sir. This wounded gentleman.....'

'I can see for myself.' The captain stamped forward to the day-bed, and looked down upon the grey-faced sufferer. 'There's no need to ask how he received his wounds. A damned rebel, and that's enough for me.' He turned to his dragoons. 'Out with him, my lads!' he shouted.

Mr. Blood stood between the day-bed and the troopers. 'In the name of humanity, sir!' he said angrily. 'This is a Christian country. The gentleman is dangerously wounded. He may die if he is moved.'

Captain Hobart was amused. 'Do you think we're taking him for the benefit of his health?' he said. 'There are gallows[1] being placed along the

[1] *gallows:* wooden structures on which criminals were hanged.

road from Weston to Bridgewater, and he'll finish up on one of those. We'll teach these rebellious fools a lesson they'll never forget.'

'You're hanging men without trial? Indeed, then, you're not Christians after all!' exclaimed Peter Blood.

The captain turned on him furiously. 'Who the hell are you?' he shouted.

'My name is Blood, sir—Peter Blood, at your service.'

The captain laughed unpleasantly. 'And what brings you here?' he asked.

'This wounded gentleman. I was fetched to attend him. I am a doctor in the town of Bridgewater.'

The captain sneered. 'And I have no doubt you are in the service of the rebel Duke,' he said, and turned to his soldiers again. 'Take up the day-bed,' he told them, 'and carry this wounded gentleman on it to Bridgewater. Put him in the prison until I receive orders about him.'

'He may not live through the journey,' Blood said again.

'So much the worse for him,' replied the captain with a cruel laugh. 'My job is to seize all rebels.'

Two of his men took up the day-bed. Gildoy made a weak attempt to put out a hand towards Mr. Blood. 'Sir,' he said, 'I owe you a great debt. If I live, I shall try to repay you.'

Mr. Blood bowed for answer; then he said to the soldiers, ' Carry him gently. His life depends on it.' He turned to the captain. ' With your permission, I'll now be going,' he said, as Lord Gildoy was carried out.

' With my permission, you'll remain awhile,' the captain ordered him. He turned to point at Jeremiah Pitt. ' Take him along to Bridgewater, too,' he said to his dragoons. And seize that fellow also.' He pointed to Baynes. ' We'll show him what it means to protect and comfort rebels.'

There was a moment of confusion. Baynes struggled in the grip of the troopers, and the terrified women began to scream. The captain walked across to them. He took the girl by the shoulders. She was a pretty, golden-haired creature with soft blue eyes that looked up, piteous and terrified, into the face of the dragoon. He grinned at her, took her chin in his hand, and hit her across the cheek.

' That's a promise of more to come!' he said, smiling grimly. ' Let that quiet you, little rebel, until I've finished with these rogues.' And he moved away again, leaving her faint and trembling in the arms of her unhappy mother. His men stood, grinning, awaiting orders. ' Take them away,' he went on, waving his hand at the two prisoners. As an afterthought, he added, ' And take this fellow with you.' He pointed at Mr. Blood.



Mr. Blood and his companions were each fastened to a trooper's stirrup-leather

Rude hands seized Peter Blood. He twisted out of the grip of the troopers, for he was strong and active, but they seized him again immediately, tying his hands behind his back. He was thrust by his guards into the courtyard, where Pitt and Baynes already waited.

Under the apple trees in the orchard Mr. Blood and his companions were each fastened to a trooper's stirrup-leather[1]. Then, at a sharp order, the little troop started for Bridgewater. And Mr. Blood began to think, as he struggled to keep up with the

[1]*stirrup-leather:* part of the horse's harness. The prisoners were forced to run alongside the troopers' horses.

trotting horses, that man was the most evil thing that God had made; and that only a fool would try to heal a race that was best wiped out for ever.

Chapter 3

Human Merchandise[1]

Some three months later, after the most horrible experiences in prison, Peter Blood, and with him Jeremiah Pitt and Andrew Baynes, were sentenced to transportation[2] for life to work as slaves on His Majesty's plantations in the West Indies. They were taken to Bristol and there shipped with fifty-three others aboard the *Jamaica Merchant.* They were locked in the holds at the bottom of the ship for the entire voyage. A sickness broke out among them, due to the terrible conditions, and eleven died. Among these was the unfortunate farmer from Oglethorpe's Farm. The death rate would have been higher than it was, if Peter Blood had not been there. The doctor worked day and night to help the sick, and to improve the conditions of his fellow-prisoners, and so checked the spread of the disease.

In the middle of December the *Jamaica Merchant*

[1] *merchandise:* goods for sale. The slaves were sold to their masters, as if they were animals.

[2] *transportation:* banishment to a foreign country.

dropped anchor in Bridgetown on the island of Barbados, and put ashore the forty-two surviving prisoners.

They found a guard of red-coated militia[1] lined up to receive them, and also a crowd of civilians, which did not seem very different from the crowd in any English sea-port, except that it contained fewer women and a great number of negroes. The head of the colony, Governor Steed, came out to inspect them. He was a short, fat, red-faced gentleman, who limped a little and leaned upon a stick. He was followed by a tall, heavy man, wearing the uniform of a colonel of the Barbados Militia, who had a cruel, ugly face. At the colonel's side, and in sharp contrast to his heavy coarseness, came a slim young lady in a smart riding-dress. Her curly, red-brown hair hung to her shoulders, and her skin was fair and soft, quite unspoiled by the hot, tropical sun. She looked at the wretched prisoners with an expression of gentle pity in her grey eyes.

Peter Blood stared in amazement at that lovely face. He felt uncomfortably conscious of his unwashed, unshaven appearance. His hair was unbrushed and dirty, and his clothes were in rags; he was in no condition for inspection by such dainty eyes as these. Nevertheless, they continued to inspect him with round-eyed, almost childlike wonder and pity. The girl put out her hand to touch the

[1] *militia:* a band of soldiers, usually enlisted from local men.

sleeve of her companion, and he swung round to face her with a bad-tempered grunt. Looking up into his face, she spoke to him earnestly, but the colonel only gave her half his attention. The governor had also paused, and for a moment the little group of three stood in conversation. Peter could not hear what the lady said, for she spoke softly; the colonel's voice reached him as a low grumble; but the governor had a high-pitched voice which carried far.

'But my dear Colonel Bishop,' he said, 'of course you must take first choice from this dainty bunch, and offer your own price. After that, we'll sell the rest to anyone else who wants them.'

Colonel Bishop nodded his thanks. He raised his voice in answering. 'Your Excellency[1] is very kind,' he said. 'But indeed, they're a miserable lot, not likely to be of much use in the plantation.' His small eyes examined the prisoners again. He went nearer to them, and stood in front of the handsome, fair-haired young Jeremiah Pitt. He felt the muscles of the young man's arm, and told him to open his mouth so that he could see his teeth. He was not considering a human being: he was examining a beast of burden.

At last he spoke to the captain of the *Jamaica Merchant*. 'I'll give you fifteen pounds for this one,' he said.

---

[1] *Your Excellency:* a polite form of address to the Governor.

'But he would be cheap at thirty pounds, sir!' the captain cried.

'I can get a negro for that. These white brutes don't live long. They're not fit for the labour. I'll go as far as twenty pounds. Not a penny more.'

Peter Blood was sickened by the loathsome bargaining. Colonel Bishop was already moving down the line. He passed Mr. Blood with hardly a glance, but the next man—a huge giant of a fellow called Wolverstone, who had lost an eye at Sedgemoor—interested him, and the bargaining began again.

Other buyers came and stared at them, and passed on. Blood took no notice of them. And then there was a movement at the end of the line. Blood noticed that the girl was speaking to Bishop, and pointing up the line with her silver-handled riding whip. Bishop shaded his eyes with his hand to look in the direction in which she was pointing. Then, with his heavy, rolling walk, he moved slowly back down the line, followed by the lady and the governor. When they reached Blood, the lady tapped his arm with her whip.

'This is the man I meant,' she said.

'This one?' said the colonel scornfully. Peter Blood found himself staring into a pair of small brown eyes sunk into a yellow, fleshy face. 'Bah! A bag of bones. What should I do with him?'

He was turning away when the ship's captain spoke.

'He may be thin, but he's strong and healthy. When half of them were sick, this fellow doctored them all. Say fifteen pounds for him, Colonel. That's cheap enough. He's strong, sir, I tell you —and he's just the man to bear the heat. The climate will never kill him.'

Governor Steed laughed. 'You hear, Colonel. Trust your niece. She knows a man when she sees one.' And he laughed again, pleased with his little joke. But the colonel's niece was not amused, and she looked at him in annoyance.

'I'll give you ten pounds for him,' said the colonel at last.

Peter Blood prayed that the offer would be refused. For some reason, he could not bear the thought of becoming the property of this horrible man, and, therefore, partly the property of that grey-eyed girl. But a slave is a slave, and has no power to shape his fate. Peter Blood was sold to Colonel Bishop for the miserable sum of ten pounds.

NAVAPVI ISLAM HIGH SCHOOL
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Chapter 4

Arabella Bishop

One sunny morning in January, about a month after the arrival of the *Jamaica Merchant* at Bridgetown, Miss Arabella Bishop rode out from her uncle's fine house on the hills to the north-west of the city. She was attended by two negroes who ran after her at a respectful distance, and she was going to Government House to visit the governor's wife, who was ill. On her way, she met a tall, slim man who was walking in the opposite direction. He was a stranger to her; and yet, somehow he did not seem quite a stranger.

Miss Arabella reined in her horse, and examined the man more carefully as he came nearer. Two brilliant blue eyes looked back at her out of a thin, handsome, sunburnt face. The man would have passed on, but she stopped him.

'I think I know you, sir,' she said.

The stranger paused. 'A lady should know her own property,' he answered.

'My property?'

'Your uncle's, anyway. Let me introduce myself. I am called Peter Blood, and I am worth exactly ten pounds. I know it, because that is the sum your uncle paid for me.'

She knew him then. She had not seen him since

the day of his arrival, a month ago, and it was not surprising that she had not recognised him at once. There was a great change in his appearance, for now he did not look at all like a slave. She remembered now that this man was a doctor. The governor, who suffered terribly from gout[1], had heard about him, and had borrowed the fellow from his owner. Peter Blood had been more successful than the governor's own doctor, and the governor's health was greatly improved. His wife had also been ill, and Peter Blood had cured her, too. He had become quite famous in Bridgetown, and Colonel Bishop had received good fees for Mr. Blood's services. He had found this slave was more usefully employed as a doctor, than as a worker on his sugar plantation.

'I have to thank you, madam, for my comparatively easy and clean condition,' said Mr. Blood, 'and I am glad to take this opportunity of doing so.' She looked at him in surprise. 'If some other planter had bought me,' he explained, 'it is unlikely that my abilities as a doctor would have been discovered. I should now be working on the plantations, like the poor wretches who were landed with me.'

'And why do you thank me for that? My uncle bought you.'

---

[1] *gout:* a form of rheumatism in the feet, which causes great swelling and pain.

'But he would not have done so if you had not persuaded him.'

'If I persuaded my uncle, sir, it was because I pitied you,' she said, just a little coldly, and went on to explain herself. 'My uncle may seem a hard man. No doubt he is. These planters are all hard men. But there are others here who are worse than he is. There is Mr. Crabston, for instance, up at Speightstown. He was there, waiting to buy my uncle's leavings. He is a dreadful man.'

Mr. Blood was still puzzled. 'But there were others who deserved your pity, too,' he said.

'You did not seem quite like the others.'

'I am not,' he said.

'Oh?' she stared at him. 'You have a good opinion of yourself!'

'On the contrary. The others are all worthy rebels. I am not. That is the difference.'

'But if you are not a rebel, how did you come here?' she asked.

Briefly, he told her his story.

'My God! What an injustice!' she cried, when he had finished.

'Oh, England's a sweet country under King James!' he said bitterly. 'There's no need to pity me any more. All things considered, I prefer Barbadoes. Here at least one can believe in God.'

He bowed, and she moved on. Her negroes jumped to their feet and went running after her.

Peter Blood remained standing where she had left him, looking down on the sunlit waters of Bridgetown Bay. It was a beautiful view, he thought, but it was a prison. He had not spoken the truth when he said he preferred it to England. He thought of a line of Lovelace[1]:

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage.

But he gave the words a new meaning, the very opposite of what the poet had intended. A prison was a prison, even though it had neither walls nor bars.

He sighed, and went on his way. He was luckier than his unfortunate fellow prisoners, but this did not bring him any satisfaction. On the contrary, the thought of their misery only increased his own bitterness. Colonel Bishop had bought twenty-five of the forty-two who had been landed from the *Jamaica Merchant.* The remainder had gone to other planters, some of them to Speightstown and others still farther north. Peter Blood did not know anything about the latter's sufferings, but he moved freely amongst Bishop's slaves, sleeping in their huts, and he knew how brutally they were

[1] *Lovelace:* RICHARD LOVELACE (1618—58) was a Cavalier poet, imprisoned by Cromwell for his Royalist sympathies, during which time he wrote his most famous poem, *To Althea from Prison,* in which these lines occur.

treated. They worked in the sugar plantations from sunrise to sunset, and if they rested for a moment, they felt the cruel whips of the overseers[1] on their backs. They went in rags, some almost naked; they lived in appalling conditions, and were half-starved. One of them had recently been flogged[2] to death for rebelling against the overseer; and another, who had been unwise enough to run away into the woods, was brought back, flogged, and then branded[3] on the forehead with the letter R for Runaway. After that, no one dared to rebel again, and they accepted their terrible existence with tragic despair.

Peter Blood alone, escaping the worst of these sufferings, remained outwardly unchanged, but inwardly he felt a deep hatred of mankind, a deep longing to escape from this place. He saw Miss Bishop occasionally, and she usually paused to speak to him for a few moments, showing her interest in him. But he would not allow himself to be charmed by her delicate beauty, her slim grace, her easy, friendly ways. He had never met a more brutal and beastly man than her uncle, and he could not separate her from the man. She was Bishop's niece, of his own blood, and some of the vicious cruelty of the wealthy planter must, he argued, be

[1] *overseers:* the men in charge of the slaves.

[2] *flogged:* whipped with terrible leather whips, until their backs were raw and bleeding.

[3] *branded:* burned with a red hot iron.

found in that pleasant body of hers. He argued this very often to himself, and tried to avoid her when it was possible, and was coldly polite when it was not.

Chapter 5

Pirates

The days passed slowly by, and conditions grew steadily worse for the wretched slaves on the plantations. Peter Blood was determined to find some way of escape for them all, and began to make secret enquiries about obtaining a small ship. Jeremiah Pitt was a qualified ship's captain, and there were several others among the slaves who were also sea-faring men. But no one was willing to risk his life by providing a ship: for the punishment for helping slaves to escape was death.

One day, matters came to a head on Colonel Bishop's plantation. It all began with the flogging of poor young Jeremiah Pitt, who had lost his temper one day and attacked Colonel Bishop himself. The Colonel had been whipping Pitt for some small offence, and suddenly the young man —stung beyond endurance—sprang upon his tormentor. He was seized at once by the watchful negroes who always formed Bishop's bodyguard.

Strong brown arms crushed the thin white body, and in a moment the unfortunate slave stood powerless, his hands fastened behind him with a leather strap. Breathing hard, his ugly face red with rage, Bishop looked at him for a moment. Then: 'Bring him along,' he said.

The wretched Pitt was dragged down the long avenue between the golden walls of sugar cane, while his fellow slaves watched with fearful eyes. He felt utter despair. As they came out upon the green grass in front of the slaves' quarters, he looked out over the wide expanse of the bay, and wondered if this was the last time he would ever see ships at anchor. Outside the bay, moving slowly towards the harbour entrance, there was a handsome naval ship, flying the English flag.

Colonel Bishop paused to look at the ship, shading his eyes with his fat, fleshy hand. It would be an hour, perhaps, before she[1] came to anchorage within the harbour. There was plenty of time for Pitt to receive his punishment before then! The young man was hurried forward, and fastened into the stocks[2] that stood ready for slaves who required correction. Colonel Bishop followed slowly, smiling a cruel smile.

'A bad-tempered dog that shows his teeth to his master must learn good manners,' he said, and

[1] *she:* ships are usually alluded to as *she*, and not *it*.
[2] *stocks:* a wooden frame, with holes for the feet and hands, in which a man was imprisoned.

picked up the terrible flogging-whip, with its nine straps of knotted leather.

He began to strike his victim across the head and shoulders. Pitt did not cry out, and his silence made the colonel more furiously brutal in his attack. At last he flung away the whip from very weariness, but not until the wretched slave's back was a bleeding mass of torn flesh from neck to waist. Pitt sank forward into the stocks and hung there, faintly moaning.

'Let that teach you a lesson!' said Colonel Bishop. He turned round and left the quarters, followed by his negro guard.

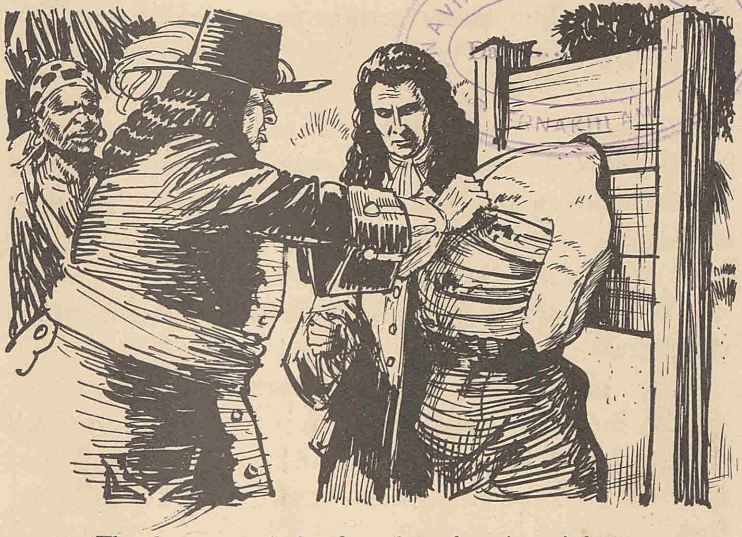
Pitt was found by Peter Blood, two hours later. The blazing midday sun, and a swarm of flies, had turned his back into a raw torment and he was screaming in agony. Blood first gave him a drink of water, and then began to wash his torn back and cover it with a soothing ointment. An angry voice interrupted him.

'What the devil are you doing here?' Colonel Bishop came striding across the grass, followed, as usual, by his negroes.

Mr. Blood turned to face him calmly. 'Doing?' he said. 'Why, the duties of my profession.'

The planter pushed him aside and, stepping forward, tore the bandages from the prisoner's back.

'In the name of humanity.....' began Mr. Blood.



The planter tore the bandages from the prisoner's back

The colonel swung upon him furiously. 'Out of this!' he commanded. 'And don't come near him again until I send for you, unless you want to be treated in the same way.'

Mr. Blood did not move. 'In the name of humanity,' he repeated quietly, 'you'll allow me to do what I can to ease his sufferings, or I swear to you that I'll forsake at once the duties of a doctor. I'll never attend another patient on these islands—not even the governor himself.'

For a moment the colonel was too amazed to speak. Then: 'By God!' he roared, 'Do you dare to take that tone with me, you dog?'

'I do!' The fearless blue eyes looked squarely into the colonel's, with a fearlessness born of despair.

Colonel Bishop considered him for a long moment in silence. 'I've been too soft with you,' he said at last. 'But that can be changed.' He tightened his lips. 'I'll have you flogged until there's not an inch of skin left on your back.'

'Will you? And what would Governor Steed do then?'

'You're not the only doctor on the island.'

Mr. Blood actually laughed. 'And will you tell that to His Excellency? You know very well that he will allow no other doctor to come near him.'

But the colonel was too angry to listen. 'If you're alive when my men have finished with you, you'll perhaps come to your senses,' he shouted, and turned to his negroes to give an order. But it was never given.

At that moment, a terrific roll of gunfire drowned his voice and shook the air. Colonel Bishop jumped, his negroes jumped with him, and so, even, did Mr. Blood. Then the four of them stared out towards the sea. Down in the bay, they saw the great naval ship, standing now in the harbour, a short distance from the fort. A cloud of smoke floated from the guns she had just fired, and the British flag had been lowered from the main mast.

In its place flew the gold and crimson flag of Spain[1].

At last they understood. 'Pirates[2]!' roared the colonel, and again, 'Pirates!'

There was fear and disbelief in his voice. He had grown pale under his sunburn until his face was the colour of clay, and there was a wild fury in his eyes. His negroes looked at him, grinning foolishly, all teeth and eyeballs.

Chapter 6

Spaniards

The stately ship that had been allowed to sail so calmly into Bridgetown Bay was a Spanish one, coming to revenge a recent attack by English pirates on two treasure ships bound for Spain. There was so much gold and treasure to be found in these parts that most ships carried a precious cargo, and the temptation to piracy was very great. Spain and England fought a bitter war on the high seas of the Spanish Main[3] and it was not only pirates and outlaws who took part in the battles.

[1] *Spain:* There was great competition and enmity between England and Spain in the West Indies.

[2] *Pirates:* fierce bands of sailors who attacked and captured the rich treasure ships sailing in these seas.

[3] *Spanish Main:* the name given in those days to the seas surrounding the West Indian islands and the eastern coast of Central America.

One of those treasure ships had been commanded by the Admiral of the Spanish fleet, Don Diego de Espinosa, who was a very proud and hot-tempered man. Furious at his defeat, he had sworn that he would teach the English a sharp lesson, and decided that he would raid an English settlement in the Spanish Main. He chose the island of Barbadoes for his attack, and he chose a moment when there were no warships at anchor in Bridgetown Bay.

He had succeeded so well in his plan, that he had roused no suspicion until he had saluted the fort with a broadside[1] of twenty guns. And now the four amazed watchers outside the slaves' quarters saw the great ship move slowly forward, under the rising smoke from its guns.

With the crashing roar of a second broadside, Colonel Bishop awoke from his astonishment and remembered his duty. As commander of the Barbadoes militia, his place was with his small band of troops down in the fort. He set off at a run, in spite of the heat, and his negroes trotted after him.

Mr. Blood turned to Jeremiah Pitt. 'What a fortunate interruption!' he said grimly. As a third broadside thundered out, he picked up the bandages and carefully replaced them on the back of his fellow-slave.

And then the overseer came rushing into the

[1] *broadside:* The firing of all the guns on one side of a ship.

slaves' quarters, followed by twenty or thirty plantation workers, all in a state of terror.

'To the woods!' the overseer shouted. 'Go to the woods, and hide there until this is over and we've beaten these Spanish devils!' And he ran off in haste after Colonel Bishop.

The slaves would have obeyed him at once, but Mr. Blood said calmly, 'There's no hurry. We may not need to go to the woods at all, and anyway it will be time enough to do so when the Spaniards have conquered the town.'

And so they stayed to watch the furious battle that was being fought below.

The fort was defended by the militia and by every islander capable of carrying a gun. They knew they could hope for no mercy if they were defeated. The battle continued all afternoon, through the blazing heat. The sound of gunfire spread ever deeper into the town, to show that the defenders were being driven steadily back. By sunset, two hundred and fifty Spaniards were masters of Bridgetown. The islanders had surrendered, and at Government House, Governor Steed—his gout forgotten in his panic—supported by Colonel Bishop and other officers, was being informed by Don Diego of the huge sum that would be needed for the ransom[1] of the town. And while he was settling these details, the Spaniards were smashing

[1] *ransom:* the money paid in order to buy a prisoner back from the enemy.

and stealing, feasting, drinking, and murdering the helpless islanders in the most cruel manner.

Mr. Blood, with great courage, went down at sunset into the town. He was so horrified and disgusted with what he saw, that he turned, white-faced, to go back to the slaves' quarters. In a narrow street he bumped into a young girl, her eyes wild with terror and her hair streaming behind her as she ran. She was pursued by a heavy-booted Spaniard, laughing and cursing. He had almost reached her when suddenly Mr. Blood got in his way. The doctor had taken a sword from a dead man's side, and—as the Spaniard paused in anger and surprise—Mr. Blood drew the sword and pierced him through the body. The man fell to the ground with a groan, and Mr. Blood caught the girl by her wrist.

'Come!' he said. They ran down the street and up another, and Mr. Blood almost dragged her up the hill towards Colonel Bishop's house. It was in darkness. He knocked loudly, and a voice answered from an upstairs window.

'Who's there?' The voice was Arabella Bishop's.

Mr. Blood almost fainted with relief. At least she was safe! He had imagined her down in that hell out of which he had just come.

'It is I—Peter Blood,' he gasped.

'What do you want?' At the sound of Arabella's voice, the girl Mr. Blood had rescued cried out,

'Arabella, it is I, Mary Traill.'

'Mary!' The head was withdrawn, and after a short pause the door was opened wide. Miss Arabella stood in the wide hall, a slim white figure with a lighted candle in her hand.

Mr. Blood walked in, followed by his weeping companion. He wasted no time.

'What servants have you here with you?' he asked.

The only male was James, an old negro groom.

'The very man we want,' said Blood. 'Tell him to get the horses. Then ride away to Speightstown, or even farther north, where you will be safe. You are in dreadful danger here.'

'But I thought the fighting was over....' Arabella began.

'So it is. But the devilry's only beginning. Miss Traill will tell you as you go. In God's name, Madam, take my word for it, and do as I ask.'

'He..he saved me,' sobbed Miss Traill.

'Saved you?' Miss Bishop was horrified. 'Saved you from what, Mary?'

'Let that wait,' exclaimed Mr. Blood impatiently. 'She can tell you later. Will you please call James, and do as I say—at once.'

'Yes, yes,' Miss Traill cried, shivering. 'Do as he says, for pity's sake, Arabella!'

Miss Bishop went off to speak to James, and he brought the horses round in a very short time. The

ladies set off on horseback into the starlit night, leaving Peter Blood standing outside Colonel Bishop's door. The last he heard of them was Mary Traill's childlike voice calling back, 'I shall never forget what you did, Mr. Blood. I shall never forget!'

But it was not the voice he wanted to hear. He stood there in the darkness till the sound of the horses' hooves faded away. Then he sighed and roused himself. He had much to do. His journey into the town had not been one of idle curiosity to see how the Spaniards behaved in victory. He had gone there with a different purpose, and he had obtained all the information he wanted. He had an extremely busy night in front of him, and he must be moving.

He went off quickly in the direction of the slaves' quarters, where his fellow-slaves awaited him in deep anxiety and some hope.

Chapter 7

The Rebels

When night fell, there were not more than ten men guarding the Spanish warship in Bridgetown Bay, and most of these were feasting on the lower deck to celebrate the Spanish victory. Above, only

two sailors kept watch; and even they were not as wide-awake as they should have been, for they did not see two rowing boats come silently across the water to the great ship's side.

One of the sentries turned the corner of the deck and found himself face to face with the black shadow of a man who had just climbed up the ladder over the ship's side.

'Who's there?' he asked, but he was not at all alarmed, thinking it was one of his fellow-sailors.

'It is I,' softly answered Peter Blood, in Spanish.

'Is it you, Pedro?[1]' The Spaniard came a step nearer.

'Peter is my name—but I doubt if I'm the Peter you're expecting,' said Mr. Blood, and he took the sailor in his arms and threw him over the side.

The Spaniard was taken completely by surprise. He made no sound, except for the splash as he hit the water. He sank at once, weighed down by his heavy armour.

'All right,' whispered Mr. Blood to his waiting fellow-slaves. 'Come on, now, and don't make any noise.'

Within five minutes they had climbed on board, the entire twenty of them. Sounds reached them of the celebrations on the lower deck; a rich male voice was singing a Spanish song, and the other Spaniards joined in the chorus.

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[1] *Pedro:* the Spanish form of *Peter*.

'Forward, after me,' whispered Mr. Blood.

Bending low, they moved as noiseless as shadows to the lower deck. Two-thirds of them were armed with muskets[1] which they had found in the overseer's house; the rest carried knives and cutlasses[2].

Meanwhile, the sailors below continued their celebrations with a feeling of complete security. The garrison[3] of Barbadoes was overpowered and disarmed, and their companions were in possession of the town. What was there to fear? Even when they found themselves surrounded by wild, hairy, half-naked men, the Spaniards could not believe their eyes.

Who would have dreamed that a handful of forgotten plantation slaves could have dared to seize a Spanish warship?

The drunken sailors, their laughter suddenly silenced and the song dying on their lips, stared in amazed disbelief as a slim tall fellow, with light blue eyes in a sunburnt face, stepped forward and spoke to them in fluent Spanish.

'You will save yourselves pain and trouble by regarding yourselves my prisoners,' he said calmly.

'Name of God!' swore one Spaniard, in utter amazement.

'If you please,' said Mr. Blood; and those gentle-

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[1] *musket:* an old type of hand gun.

[2] *cutlasses:* short swords with curved blades.

[3] *garrison:* the troop of soldiers defending a town.

men of Spain were quickly persuaded to enter the ship's hold, where they were firmly locked in.

After that, the twenty plantation slaves refreshed themselves with the good food and drink which the Spaniards had been enjoying, and spent the rest of the night in making all arrangements to complete their plan.

Soon after sunrise, a boat was seen to leave the shore. In it was Don Diego de Espinosa, with four great treasure chests containing the ransom delivered to him by Governor Steed. He was accompanied by his son, Don Esteban, and six sailors.

All was quiet and orderly aboard the Spanish ship. She rode at anchor, with the main ladder hanging down the side which could not be seen from the shore. Below, a gun crew waited in readiness, under the command of Ogle, a plantation slave who had once been a gunner in the Royal Navy.

Don Diego climbed the ladder and stepped upon the deck, alone, and entirely unsuspicious. Before he could even look round, he received a tap over the head with an iron bar which put him to sleep without the least fuss. He was carried away to his cabin, and the treasure chests were lifted on to the deck. Then Don Esteban and the six sailors came up the ladder, one by one, to receive the same quiet but effective treatment as Don Diego.

From the shore, Colonel Bishop and Governor

Steed watched miserably as the rest of the Spaniards left in the remaining eight rowing boats. The boats pulled away, with their loads of laughing, shouting sailors. They were midway between the shore and the ship, when suddenly the air was shaken by the sound of a gun.

The first shot hit the water within six feet of the leading boat, sending a shower of spray over its occupants. They paused at their oars, astonished into silence for a moment. Then they burst into angry speech, cursing the dangerous carelessness of their gunner, who should know better than to fire a salute from a cannon loaded with shot. They were still cursing him when a second shot, better aimed than the first, hit one of the boats, flinging its crew, dead and living, into the water.

The crews of the other seven boats jumped to their feet in anger and terror, begging Heaven and hell to inform them what mad man had been let loose among the guns. Right into their middle came a third shot, smashing a second boat. There was another moment of awful silence; then, with shouts and cries and a great splashing of oars, the Spaniards started rowing in every direction at once. Some tried to return to the shore, others wanted to row straight to the ship and find out what was the matter. While they argued, two more shots came over the water and a third boat was sunk.

Ogle was fully justifying his claims as a gunner.



The first shot hit the water within six feet of the leading boat

After the fourth shot, the Spaniards did not argue any longer. They rowed for the shore, or attempted to do so, for almost immediately two more of their boats were sunk. The three remaining boats were the target of Ogle's careful aim, and the last one flew into splinters just as it touched the landing stage.

That was the end of this pirate crew, which, ten minutes ago, had been laughingly counting up their share of the ransom treasure chests.

Chapter 8

Judgment on the Colonel

The watching islanders ashore were as puzzled as the Spaniards, until they saw the flag of Spain come down from the main mast of the warship, and the flag of England rise in its place. The Spanish ship was now in friendly hands. This was obvious to the people of Bridgetown. But who were the men in possession of her, and how had they got there? The only possible solution was that a daring party of islanders must have got aboard during the night and seized the ship. They must now discover who these mysterious saviours were.

Governor Steed was not well enough to go, so

Colonel Bishop set off in a boat at once, accompanied by two officers.

As he stepped from the ladder on to the ship's deck, the colonel saw the four treasure chests. It was a cheering sight, and his eyes shone with pleasure and relief. In two well-ordered rows upon the deck, there stood twenty men in Spanish armour. Colonel Bishop did not recognise, in these upright, soldierly figures, the ragged, unshaven slaves from his own plantations. Nor did he recognise at once the handsome gentleman who came forward to welcome him—a slim, graceful gentleman, dressed in fine Spanish clothes, with a gold-hilted sword at his side.

'Welcome aboard, Colonel darling,' a familiar voice greeted the colonel. 'We've made the best of the Spaniards' wardrobe in honour of this visit. You find yourself among old friends!'

The colonel stared in astonishment. Could this really be Mr. Blood? His face was carefully shaven, his hair as carefully dressed, and he now looked no more than the thirty-three years which was his real age.

'Peter Blood!' It was an exclamation of amazement. 'Was it you, then....?'

'It was! I and these good friends.' Mr. Blood waved a graceful hand towards the row of men standing at attention behind him.

The colonel looked more closely. 'Great hea-

vens!' he cried. 'And you seized the ship with only these fellows to help you? It was heroic!' He took off his broad hat and mopped his brow. 'You all deserve a reward, and you will find me grateful.'

'That's as it should be,' said Mr. Blood. 'The question is, how grateful shall we find you?'

Colonel Bishop looked at him, with a shadow of surprise on his face. For the first time it occurred to him that everything here might not be as friendly as it appeared.

'There's the matter of a flogging that's due to me,' Mr. Blood went on. 'You said, I think, that you wouldn't leave an inch of skin on my back.'

The colonel waved the matter aside. 'Nonsense! After this splendid deed of yours, do you suppose I could think of such a thing?' he said.

'I'm glad you feel like that about it. But I'm thinking it's lucky for me that the Spaniards came yesterday, and not today—or I'd be in the same condition as poor Jeremiah Pitt by now.'

'Why speak of it now?'

'I must, Colonel darling. You've done many wicked and cruel things in your time, and I want this to be a lesson to you, a lesson that you'll never forget. Poor Jeremiah is here, in a cabin, with a back that is every colour of the rainbow; and the poor lad will not recover for a month.'

One of the slaves, called Hagthorpe, now stepped forward. He was a tall, powerful man, with a

smiling, attractive face. 'Why are you wasting time with the pig?' he said. 'Throw him overboard, and finish with him.'

The colonel's face turned red with anger. 'What the devil do you mean?' he shouted.

And now the one-eyed giant, Wolverstone, joined in. 'Hang him from the yardarm[1]!' he cried, his deep voice harsh and angry, and more than one of the slaves agreed with him.

Colonel Bishop trembled. Mr. Blood turned round. He was quite calm. 'If you please, Wolverstone,' he said, 'I arrange matters in my own way. You'll please remember that I am captain here. I need Colonel Bishop as a hostage[2].' He turned again to the colonel. 'I promise you your life, but I must keep you aboard as a hostage until we put to sea.'

'Until you.....' Colonel Bishop was too horrified to finish his sentence.

'Just so,' said Peter Blood, and he turned to the two officers who had come with the colonel. 'The boat is waiting, gentlemen. You have heard what I said. Kindly inform His Excellency the Governor.'

'But, sir....' one of them began.

'There is no more to be said, gentlemen. My name is Blood—Captain Blood, if you please. You

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[1] *yardarm:* a wooden pole sticking out from the mast to support the sails.

[2] *hostage:* a person kept as prisoner, as protection against enemy attack.

will tell Governor Steed that we are leaving now. If a single shot is fired at us from the fort, Colonel Bishop will die. There's the ladder. You'll find it more convenient than being thrown over the side.'

They went, ignoring the shouts of Colonel Bishop, whose rage was fanned by terror.

Half-a-dozen of the slaves knew a little about ships, and now, under Hagthorpe's directions, they set sail and slowly left the harbour. There was no interference from the fort.

As they sailed out of the bay, Peter Blood returned to the colonel. ' Can you swim, Colonel?' he asked pleasantly.

Colonel Bishop looked up. His great face was yellow and his small eyes glassy with fear. He did not speak, and Blood continued, ' It's lucky for you that I'm not as bloodthirsty as some of my friends here. I have had great difficulty in persuading them not to kill you. I doubt if you're worth the trouble I've taken for you.'

He was lying. He had no doubt at all. If he had followed his own wishes he would certainly have hung the colonel from the yardarm: but the thought of Arabella Bishop made him merciful. The colonel was her uncle, after all.

' You shall have a chance to swim for it,' Peter Blood continued. ' It is only a quarter of a mile to the shore from here, and you should be able to

manage it. Indeed, you're fat enough to float. Come on!'

Colonel Bishop controlled himself and rose to his feet. Peter Blood gave an order. A plank of wood was tied firmly across the rail of the ship, stretching over the side.

'If you please, Colonel,' said Captain Blood.

The colonel looked at him with hate and fury in his eyes. Then he kicked off his shoes, took off his fine coat, and climbed upon the plank. He paused a moment, looking down in terror at the green water rushing past, twenty feet below him.

'Just take a little walk, Colonel darling,' said a smooth, laughing voice behind him.

Clinging to the ship's rail, the colonel looked round and saw the deck lined with the faces of men who, even yesterday, would have turned pale under his frown. Now those faces were all grinning wickedly. For a moment, rage overcame his fear. He cursed them aloud, then loosed his hold on the rail and stepped out upon the plank. He took three steps before he lost his balance and fell into the green depths below.

When he came to the surface again, gasping for air, the Spanish ship was already some distance away. But the roaring cheer from the rebels reached him across the water, to drive the iron of helpless rage deeper into his soul.

Chapter 9

Don Diego

Don Diego de Espinosa awoke, and looked round his cabin with weary eyes and an aching head. Then he groaned and closed his eyes again, trying to think. This was not easy, with the pain in his head and the confusion in his mind, but he felt that something was wrong somewhere. He thought over the adventures of yesterday. He clearly remembered the successful raid upon the island of Barbados; he remembered every detail up to the moment when he had stepped on to his own deck again. There, memory suddenly and mysteriously ceased.

At this moment the door opened, and Don Diego saw his best suit of clothes step into the cabin. It increased his puzzlement. The suit paused to close the door, then came towards the couch where Don Diego lay. Inside the suit came a tall, slim gentleman, of Don Diego's own height and shape.

'So you are awake?' the gentleman said in Spanish, regarding Don Diego with a pair of light-blue-eyes. He came forward, and touched the top of Don Diego's head, and the Spaniard gave a cry of pain. 'It's tender, is it?' said the stranger. He placed two fingers on Don Diego's wrist. And then, at last, the puzzled Spaniard spoke.

'Are you a doctor?' he asked.

'Among other things.' The gentleman continued to feel his patient's pulse. 'Firm and regular,' he said at last, and dropped the wrist. 'You have come to no great harm.'

Don Diego struggled up into a sitting position. 'Who the devil are you?' he said. 'And what the devil are you doing in my clothes and aboard my ship?'

The level black eyebrows went up, and a faint smile curled the lips of the wide mouth. 'You are mistaken, I'm afraid. This is not your ship. This is my ship, and these are my clothes.'

'Your ship!' cried the other. 'Your clothes? But....then....' His eyes looked wildly about him, examining each familiar object in the cabin. 'Am I mad?' he asked at last. 'Surely this is the Spanish warship?'

'It is!'

'Then....' The Spaniard's glance grew still more troubled. 'My God!' he cried out. 'Will you tell me also that you are Don Diego de Espinosa?'

'Oh, no, my name is Blood—Captain Peter Blood. This ship, like this handsome suit of clothes, is mine by right of conquest. Just as you, Don Diego, are my prisoner!'

Captain Blood went on to explain the facts. The Spaniard put a hand to the back of his head, and felt a lump as large as a pigeon's egg. It seemed

to prove the truth of the story. He stared wild-eyed at the smiling Captain Blood.

'And my son? Where is my son?' he cried out. 'He was in the boat that brought me aboard.'

'Your son is safe. He and the boat's crew, together with your gunner and his men, are also my prisoners.'

Don Diego sank back on the couch, his dark eyes fixed on the handsome face above him. He controlled his anger. Luck had turned against him in this adventure, and he must accept the situation.

'And now, Señor[1] Captain?' he asked calmly.

'And now,' said Captain Blood, 'being a kindly man, I am sorry that you're not dead from the tap we gave you. For it means that you'll be put to the trouble of dying all over again.'

'Ah!' Don Diego drew a deep breath. 'But is that necessary?' he asked.

Captain Blood sat on the edge of the long table. 'I am not a fool,' he said. 'You and your ten surviving sailors are a threat to this ship. I do not want to appear unnecessarily cruel, especially as I and my friends owe you so much. Your raid upon Barbadoes was most fortunate for us. But you must agree that I have no choice.'

'But, my friend, I do not agree!' said the Spaniard.

'If you can suggest any alternative, I shall be most happy to consider it.'

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[1] *Señor:* the Spanish for *Mr* or *Sir*.

Don Diego stroked his pointed black beard. ' Can you give me a few hours to think it over? My head aches so much at the moment.'

Captain Blood stood up. ' I can give you half an hour, Don Diego,' he said. ' If you can suggest no acceptable alternative by then, I shall have, most reluctantly, to ask you and your friends to go over the side.' He bowed, went out, and locked the door.

Don Diego sat in thought, with his face in his hands and his elbows on his knees; the lines on his thin brown face grew deeper as the moments passed. Half an hour later, the door reopened. The Spaniard sighed, and sat upright to face the returning Captain Blood.

' I have thought of an alternative, Señor Captain,' he said, ' but it depends upon your generosity. It is that you put us ashore on one of the islands, and leave us to manage for ourselves.'

Captain Blood shook his head. ' I'm afraid that would not be possible,' he said slowly.

' I feared it would be so.' Don Diego sighed again, and stood up. ' Let us say no more.'

The light-blue eyes looked at him with admiration. ' You are not afraid to die, Don Diego?' asked Captain Blood.

The Spaniard held up his head proudly. ' The question is an insult, sir,' he said.

' Then let me put it in another way: you do not want to live?'

'Ah, I can answer that! I do want to live; and, even more, I want my son to live. But the wish shall not make a coward of me for your amusement.' It was the first sign of anger he had shown.

Captain Blood sat himself once more on the corner of the table, and said, 'Would you be willing to earn life and liberty—for yourself, your son, and other Spaniards who are on board?'

'To earn it?' said Don Diego, and the watchful blue eyes did not miss the expression of hope on his face. 'To earn it, do you say? Why, if I could do so honourably....'

'I would not ask you to do otherwise,' said the captain. 'I realise that even a pirate has his honour.' And he went on to explain. 'If you will look from those windows, Don Diego, you will see what looks like a cloud on the horizon. That is the Island of Barbadoes, well behind us. We have been sailing east all day with the one intention—to set as great a distance as possible between Barbadoes and ourselves. But now we are in a difficulty. We have only one man who is fully trained in navigation[1], and he is very ill, as a result of certain ill-treatment he received ashore before we carried him away with us. I can handle a ship in action, and there are one or two men aboard

[1] *navigation:* the science of steering a ship, by the means of instruments and the position of the stars.

who can help me; but we know nothing of the art of finding a way over the ocean. And so it comes to this; we want to get to the Dutch settlement of Curacao as quickly as possible. If I give you your freedom, will you swear to me, on your honour, that you will guide us there? If so, we will release you and your men as soon as we arrive.'

Don Diego bowed his head and walked over to the windows. He stood looking out upon the sun-lit sea. This was his ship, which these English dogs had stolen from him; his ship which he was asked to bring safely into a port where she would be completely lost to him. That was on one side of the scales; on the other were the lives of sixteen men. Fourteen of them did not matter to him very much, but the remaining two were his own life, and his son's.

He turned at last, his back to the light, and the captain could not see how pale his face had grown.

'I agree,' he said.

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Chapter 10

Tortuga

When they reached the Dutch settlement, the Spaniards were put in a rowing boat and told to find their own way to the port. They left, cursing the English pirates, and swearing vengeance.

By this time, Jeremiah Pitt had recovered, and was able to take over the navigation of the ship, so Captain Blood decided to sail on to the island of Tortuga, which had been the stronghold of pirates for many years. The pirates there were under semi-official French protection, and had made Tortuga their chief port and hiding-place from which they could carry on their merciless piratical trade.

It was Blood's original intention to make his way to France or Holland, but in the long weeks of waiting for a ship to take him there, his small supply of money was all spent. He began to have doubts about leaving the West Indies. The thought of Arabella Bishop was constantly in his mind. He was deeply in love with her, and although he knew that she was utterly beyond his reach for ever, he could not bear the thought of never seeing her again. Also, he had no clear idea of what he could do when he reached Europe. He was, after all, an escaped slave, an outlaw[1] in his own land and a homeless wanderer in any other. There remained the sea, which is free to all, and particularly attractive to those who feel that the whole world is against them.

Can you wonder, or dare you blame him, that in the end he decided to remain in Tortuga, and join the pirates there?

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[1] *outlaw:* a person driven out by law from his own country, and threatened with death or imprisonment if he ever returned there.

Having made his decision, he went actively to work. M.[1] d'Ogeron, the French governor of the island, lent him money for the proper equipment of the Spanish warship, which he renamed the *Arabella*. He already had his twenty faithful followers, and he added sixty more, choosing his men carefully from amongst the adventurers of Tortuga. He made strict rules. Those who joined him must agree to obey him absolutely in all things. Any who were not prepared to do this were told to go and choose some other leader.

Towards the end of December, he put to sea in his well-equipped ship; and before he returned in the following May from a long and adventurous trip, the fame of Captain Peter Blood had spread across the face of the Caribbean Sea. There was a successful fight with a Spanish galleon[2]. There was a daring raid upon a Spanish pearl fleet, from which they had taken a rich cargo of pearls. And there were lesser adventures, in all of which the crew of the *Arabella* succeeded with credit and profit.

Don Miguel de Espinosa, the Admiral of Spain in the West Indies, and his nephew Don Esteban, who sailed with him, were determined to capture Captain Blood. With them, this business was a family matter, for Don Diego had died before

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[1] *M.:* short for *Monsieur*, the French word for *Mr.*

[2] *galleon:* a large ship-of-war.

reaching Curacao, and his brother and his son blamed Captain Blood for his death and had sworn to have their revenge.

One day as Captain Blood sat with Hagthorpe and Wolverstone over a pipe and a bottle of rum in a waterside inn, he was approached by a splendid-looking rascal in a gold-laced coat of dark-blue satin, with a crimson sash about the waist.

'*C'est vous qu'on appelle Le Sang?*'[1] the man said, in French.

Captain Blood looked up to consider the questioner before replying. The man was tall and well-built, with a sunburnt, brutally handsome face. He wore a large diamond ring on his rather dirty hand, and there were gold rings in his ears, half-hidden by his long, oily hair.

Captain Blood took the pipe from between his lips. 'My name is Peter Blood,' he said. 'The Spaniards call me Don Pedro Sangre[2], and a Frenchman may call me Le Sang if he wants to.'

'Good,' said the fellow in English, and he sat down at the table without further invitation. 'My name is Levasseur,' he informed the three men, who were regarding him suspiciously. 'You may have heard of me.'

They had, indeed. He commanded a pirate ship of twenty guns that had dropped anchor in

[1] '*C'est vous qu'on appelle Le Sang?*': 'Are you the man they call Blood?'

[2] *Sangre:* Spanish for Blood.

the bay a week ago, with a crew of French boucan hunters[1] from Northern Hispaniola. They were men who had good cause to hate the Spaniards. Levasseur was a roaring, quarrelsome, hard-drinking man, and he had a famous reputation as a buccaneer. He also enjoyed a reputation of another sort. Women seemed to find his boastful, loud-voiced manner surprisingly attractive, and he was very proud of his feminine conquests. People said that even Mademoiselle[2] d'Ogeron, the governor's daughter, had fallen in love with him, and that Levasseur had even dared to ask for her hand in marriage. M. d'Ogeron had given him the only possible answer: he had refused, and shown him the door. Levasseur had departed in a rage, swearing that he would make Mademoiselle his wife and that M. d'Ogeron would bitterly regret his refusal.

This was the man who now thrust himself upon Captain Blood, offering him his sword, his ship, and the men who sailed in her. Captain Blood was forced to admit that Levasseur's support would be a great help to him, but he disliked the man, and would not agree at once. He did, however, consent to think over the suggestion. Hagthorpe and Wolverstone did not seem to share his dislike

[1] *boucan hunters:* hunters of wild oxen. The French name for them was *boucaniers,* and, as many of these men were pirates, it gave rise to the word *buccaneers* as a name for pirates in the Spanish main.

[2] *Mademoiselle:* the French word for *Miss.*

of the Frenchman, and they at last persuaded him to come to an agreement; and this was signed, a week later, between Levasseur and Blood. Among other things, it stated that all prizes seized by the two ships should be shared equally, even if the ships were not working together at the time. A fixed proportion of these shares would be divided among the crew of each ship. Any man found guilty of stealing or concealing any part of a prize, would be hanged from the yardarm.

When everything was settled, they made ready for sea, and on the very eve of sailing Levasseur narrowly escaped being shot by the governor's guard, while he attempted to climb the wall of the governor's garden to say goodbye to Mademoiselle d'Ogeron. He gave up the attempt after having been fired upon twice, and he left, swearing that he would win her on his return.

That night he slept on board his ship, *La Foudre*[1], and there he received a visit from Captain Blood, who came to settle certain final details. Captain Blood was then rowed back to his own ship. He was a little heavy-hearted. He was a judge of men, and his judgment of Levasseur filled him with doubts which grew heavier every moment. He mentioned his doubts to Wolverstone, who met him as he stepped aboard the *Arabella*.

'You persuaded me against my will to join up

[1] *La Foudre:* French for *Lightning*.

with that man,' he said slowly. 'It will surprise me if any good comes of it.'

The giant rolled his single, bloodthirsty eye and grinned. 'We'll ring the dog's neck if there's any treachery,' he said.

'We will—if we are alive to ring it!' replied his captain. 'Well—we sail in the morning.' And he went off to his cabin.

ISLAM HIGH
Date
ERNAKULAM

Chapter 11

Levasseur's Treachery

At ten o'clock the next morning, an hour before the time arranged for sailing, a canoe[1] came alongside *La Foudre*, and a half-caste Red Indian[2] stepped out of it and went up the ladder. He carried a folded scrap of paper which he gave to Levasseur.

The captain unfolded the letter, recognising it as a hasty note written by the governor's daughter. Its contents may be roughly translated thus:

'My darling,—I am in the Dutch ship, *Jongvrouw*, which is about to sail. My cruel father is sending me to Europe in my brother's

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[1] *canoe:* a small boat, paddled with one oar.

[2] *Red Indian:* When the first European explorers set sail across the Atlantic Ocean, they were searching for an alternative route to India via the west. When they reached the islands off America they at first thought they had reached India: later they discovered this mistake, but they named these islands the West Indies, and called the inhabitants Red Indians because of the reddish-brown colour of their skins.

charge. He is determined to separate us for ever. I beg you to come to my rescue!—Your unhappy Madeleine, who loves you.'

Levasseur's furious glance swept across the bay for the Dutch ship, but she was nowhere to be seen. He roared out a question, and the half-caste pointed out to sea. In the far distance, a sail could be seen.

'There she go,' he said.

'There!' The Frenchman stared, his face growing white. The man's wicked temper awoke, and he turned furiously upon the messenger. 'And where have you been?' he shouted. 'Why didn't you come before now? Answer me!'

The half-caste shrank back, terrified by his rage. Levasseur took him by the throat, shook him twice, and then flung him over the side of the ship, where he sank like a stone.

'Steady, Captain. What's happening?' Cahusac, his lieutenant, placed a hand upon his shoulder.

Levasseur explained, with a flow of coarse and angry words.

Cahusac shook his head. 'Impossible!' he said. 'We cannot attack a Dutch ship.'

'And who the devil will stop us?' Levasseur shouted.

'For one thing, your own crew won't be very willing. For another, there's Captain Blood.'

'I care nothing for Captain Blood....'

'But it is necessary that you should. He is powerful, and, if I know him at all, he'll sink us before he'll allow us to fight with the Dutch. He has his own views on piracy, and the Dutch are a friendly nation.'

'Ah!' said Levasseur, showing his teeth. He stood in thought, but not for long. He soon decided on the course he would take. He knew that Cahusac was right. Blood would never agree to an attack on a Dutch ship in his presence; but it might be done in his absence; and, after it was done, it would be too late for Blood to protest.

Within the hour the *Arabella* and *La Foudre* set out to sea together. All day the Dutch ship was in sight, although by evening she was a mere speck on the northern horizon. Blood and Levasseur had agreed to travel eastwards along the shores of Hispaniola to an island called Saltatudos, and the *Arabella* continued steadily in that direction throughout the night, with the result that when day broke again she was alone. *La Foudre*, under cover of the darkness, had turned away to the north as fast as she could go.

Cahusac had tried again to protest against this.

'The devil take you!' Levasseur had answered him. 'A ship's a ship, whether she's Dutch or Spanish, and we need all the ships we can capture.'

His lieutenant said no more. But, knowing that

a girl and not a ship was the Frenchman's real objective, he shook his head sadly as he walked away to give the necessary orders.

At dawn, *La Foudre* was close behind the Dutchman, and the *Jongvrouw* was obviously uneasy at the sight of her. No doubt Mademoiselle's brother recognised Levasseur's ship, and had warned the captain. The *Jongvrouw* put out all her sails in a desperate effort to get away, but *La Foudre* was too fast for her. As soon as he was near enough, Levasseur fired a warning shot, and the *Jongvrouw* replied with all her guns. There was a short fight, but five minutes later the *Jongvrouw* was seized, and the buccaneers leapt noisily on to her deck.

The Dutch captain, purple in the face, stepped forward, followed closely by a pale-faced young gentleman whom Levasseur recognised as the governor's son.

'Captain Levasseur, this is a crime, and you shall be made to suffer for it,' said the Dutchman angrily. 'What do you want aboard my ship?'

'At first I wanted only what belongs to me,' replied Levasseur with a sneer. 'But since you chose war and opened fire on me, then war it is, and your ship is a prize of war.'

Mademoiselle d'Ogeron looked down from the upper deck, her glowing eyes upon her well-beloved hero. He seemed so splendid as he stood there, masterful, daring, beautiful. He saw her, and

sprang towards her with a glad shout. The Dutch captain tried to stop him, but Levasseur did not stay to argue with him. He swung his axe, and the Dutchman went down in a pool of blood, his skull split open. The eager lover stepped across the body and came on, smiling joyously. He opened wide his arms to enfold the girl.

But Mademoiselle shrank back in horror. Her lovely face showed nothing but fear and shock. She tried to push him away, her hands against his breast, and whispered, 'Why, why did you kill him?'

He laughed, as a hero should; and answered her heroically, 'He stood between us. Let his death be a sign, a warning to all who stand between us!'

He turned to the girl again with a loving smile. But no smile answered him from her unhappy face. She had seen her beloved hero's real nature for the first time, and she found the sight disgusting and terrifying. Suddenly she realised that what her brother had often said of this man was true.

Turning away, she ran weeping to her cabin and locked the door.

Chapter 12

The Ransom

Early the following morning, a strange scene was played on the beach of Saltatudos, at the foot of a ridge of sand-dunes.

Sitting upon an empty barrel, the French pirate was conducting important business: the business of making himself safe with the governor of Tortuga. Cahusac and five other buccaneers stood round him, forming a guard of honour. Young d'Ogeron stood before him, guarded by two Negroes. He had no coat or sword, and his hands were tied behind him. The young man's handsome face was deathly pale. Near at hand, and also under guard, Mademoiselle his sister sat upon a sand-dune. She too, was very pale, and extremely frightened.

Levasseur spoke to M. d'Ogeron. He spoke for some time. At the end he said, 'I hope I have made myself quite clear. I will repeat the main points, so that there will be no misunderstandings. Your ransom is fixed at twenty thousand pieces of eight[1], and you shall be free to go to Tortuga to collect it. In fact, I will provide the ship to take you there, and you shall have a month in which to come and go. Meanwhile, your sister remains with me as a hostage.'

The young Monsieur d'Ogeron raised his head and looked the captain boldly in the face. 'I utterly and absolutely refuse—do you understand?' he said.

'But what words!' laughed Levasseur. 'What heat and what foolishness! You have not considered the alternative. When you do, you will not

[1] *pieces of eight:* Spanish coins (the old Spanish dollar)

continue with your refusal. You would not like to see your sister hurt, would you?'

Levasseur's smiling eyes noted the horror on the young man's face. M. d'Ogeron threw a wild glance at Mademoiselle, and saw her grey despair. 'I hope that you will save yourself and your sister,' Levasseur continued. 'Why—the sum I have named is nothing to your wealthy father. He can well afford to pay twice as much. I have really been too modest in my demands. But since I have said twenty thousand pieces of eight, twenty thousand pieces it shall be.'

'And for what, if you please, have you said twenty thousand pieces?' asked a quiet and pleasant voice, which came from above their heads.

Startled, Levasseur and his officers looked up and round. They saw a tall, slim figure on the top of the dunes behind them. He was dressed in black with silver lace, with a crimson feather curling round the broad brim of his hat. Under that hat was the smiling face of Captain Blood.

Levasseur stood up with an exclamation of amazement. He had not expected Captain Blood to be on this side of the island. He had particularly chosen it because it was far from the natural harbour where they had arranged to meet. Captain Blood walked slowly down the sand to the beach. He was followed by Wolverstone and a dozen others. As he came to a standstill, he raised

his hat politely to the lady. Then he turned to Levasseur.

'Good morning, my Captain,' he said, and went on to explain his presence. 'When you did not turn up at our meeting-place, I decided to come and look for you. We've walked across the island to stretch our legs. But who are these?' And he pointed to the man and the woman.

Levasseur bit his lip angrily, but he controlled himself and answered, 'As you see—two prisoners.'

'Ah! Washed ashore in a storm, I suppose?'

'No,' replied Levasseur shortly. 'They were in a Dutch ship.'

'Do you mean to say that you have seized a Dutch ship?'

'I have. And these two are prisoners of my own—a personal matter. They are French.'

'French!' Captain Blood's blue eyes stared at Levasseur, then at the prisoners.

M. d'Ogeron stood as straight and stiff as before, but the grey horror had left his face. Hope had come to him with this interruption, which was obviously as unexpected by his enemy as by himself. His sister, moved by a similar feeling, was leaning forward with parted lips.

Captain Blood frowned thoughtfully at Levasseur. 'It seems that not even your own countrymen are safe from you,' he said.

'Haven't I said that this is a personal matter?' replied Levasseur angrily.

'Ah! And their names?'

Levasseur remained silent, but his prisoner answered for him. 'I am Henri d'Ogeron, and this is my sister,' he said.

'D'Ogeron?' Captain Blood stared. 'Are you by any chance related to my good friend the Governor of Tortuga?'

'He is my father.'

Captain Blood turned sharply to Levasseur. 'Are you quite mad, Levasseur?' he exclaimed. 'First you attack the Dutch, who are our friends; next you take two French prisoners; and now I find that they are the children of the Governor of Tortuga, which is our one safe place of shelter in these islands....'

Levasseur interrupted angrily. 'Must I tell you again that it is my own personal matter? I make myself alone responsible to the Governor of Tortuga.'

'And the twenty thousand pieces of eight? Is that also a personal matter to you?'

'It is.'

'Now I don't agree with you at all.' Captain Blood sat down on the barrel that Levasseur had lately occupied, and looked up calmly. 'I may inform you, to save time, that I heard the entire proposal that you made to this lady and gentleman, and I'll also remind you that you and I have

an agreement. You have fixed their ransom at twenty thousand pieces of eight. That sum belongs equally to your crew and mine. You'll hardly wish to argue. But I gather that you intended to conceal this part of your prize from me; and our agreement provides certain severe penalties for such an offence.'

'Ho, ho!' laughed Levasseur unpleasantly. He added, 'If you dislike my behaviour, you can end our agreement.'

'That is what I intend to do. But we'll end it when I choose. First you must keep the promise under which we sailed upon this trip.'

'What do you mean?'

'I'll be as short as I can,' said Captain Blood. 'You yourself fixed the ransom of this couple at twenty thousand pieces, and, I gather, the lady is to remain with you. But why should she be your possession more than another's? By the agreement, she belongs to all of us, as a prize of war.'

Levasseur's face was as black as thunder.

'However,' added Captain Blood, 'I'll not argue with you if you are prepared to buy her.'

'Buy her?'

'At the ransom price.'

'That is the ransom of the man. It is to be paid for him by the Governor of Tortuga,' Levasseur shouted.

'No, no. You've parcelled the two together.

You've set their value at twenty thousand pieces, and you may have them for that sum. But you'll pay it now, and it shall be divided between our crews.'

Levasseur laughed savagely. 'Ah! My God! That's a good joke!' he said.

'I quite agree with you,' said Captain Blood.

To Levasseur, the joke was that Captain Blood, with only a dozen men, should come and try to bully him, when he had a hundred men to support him. But when he turned to his officers, the laughter died in his throat. He saw from their faces that they completely agreed with Captain's Blood's suggestion that everyone must share in the ransom. It made him pause.

'You misunderstand me,' he said, swallowing his rage. 'I will share out the ransom when it comes, of course.'

'But supposing M. d'Ogeron refuses to pay it? What then?' said Captain Blood. He laughed, and got lazily to his feet. 'No, no. If you want to keep the girl, you must pay the ransom now.' Levasseur's men growled their agreement.

'You fool!' shouted the Frenchman. 'Where do you suppose that I have twenty thousand pieces?'

'Then let someone buy the prisoners who has the money,' said Captain Blood.

'And who do you suppose has it, if I have not?'

'I have,' said Captain Blood. He sat down

again on the barrel, and took a little leather bag from his coat pocket. 'I am glad to be able to solve the difficulty,' he said. He untied the bag and took out four or five enormous pearls. There were twenty in the bag, part of his share of those taken in that raid upon the pearl fleet the previous winter.

Cahusac took a pearl between coarse fingers and thumb, and examined it carefully. 'That's worth a thousand pieces,' he said.

'I'll accept your valuation,' said Captain Blood. 'Here are ten, representing ten thousand pieces of eight, which is *La Foudre's* share of the ransom. I will divide the other ten thousand pieces among my own men. And now, Wolverstone, will you take my property aboard the *Arabella*?' He stood up again, and pointed to the prisoners.

'Ah, no!' Levasseur cried out in fury. 'You shall not have her.' He faced Captain Blood, with his hand on his sword. His face was a white mask of rage. 'You do not take her while I live,' he cried.

'Then I'll take her when you're dead,' said Captain Blood, and his own sword flashed in the sunlight. He waved away the men who would have interfered, and the blades rang together.

It was soon over. Levasseur's brute strength was no match for the Englishman's practised skill. A few minutes later he lay on the white sand, cough-

ing out his rascally life. Captain Blood looked calmly at Cahusac across the body.

'I think that cancels the agreement between us,' he said.

Cahusac regarded the body of his leader with calm, unsympathetic eyes. He felt neither love nor loyalty for Levasseur, who was guilty of the one offence that pirates considered unpardonable: the crime of keeping for himself something which should have been shared among them all.

'If you still want to sail with me,' Captain Blood said to Cahusac, 'you may do so, on the condition that you release the Dutch ship and return her cargo.'

The condition was accepted, and Captain Blood turned to his guests, the children of the Governor of Tortuga. He took off his hat and bowed politely to the girl. 'Mademoiselle, please don't be afraid,' he said. 'You shall be treated with all honour aboard my ship. We will return at once to Tortuga to take you home to your father.'

Mademoiselle stared at him in unbelief. M. d'Ogeron rose to his feet. 'Monsieur, are you serious?' he said.

'I am. It may not happen often nowadays. I may be a pirate, but my ways are not the ways of Levasseur. I have a sort of honour—shall we say, some rags of honour?—remaining from better days.'

He bowed to them and turned to go, but Mademoiselle stopped him. 'Monsieur!' she cried sharply.

He turned again, and she went slowly up to him. 'How good and noble you are!' she cried, and she caught his hand and kissed it.

Captain Blood looked down at her, and smiled gently. 'I shouldn't put it as high as that myself,' he said. Then he sighed. His fame as a pirate, which had spread so quickly across the Caribbean Sea, would by now have reached the ears of Arabella Bishop. He knew that she would hate and despise him for it. But now he hoped that some news of this deed might reach her also, and make her hate him less. For the whole truth was that, in risking his life to save Mademoiselle d'Ogeron, he had been driven by the thought that Miss Bishop would have been pleased with his action if she had been there.

Chapter 13

The *Milagrosa*

The rescue of Mademoiselle d'Ogeron naturally made the Governor of Tortuga extremely grateful to Captain Blood. He proved his gratitude in every possible way, and, under his powerful protection, Captain Blood's fame among the buccaneers became enormous. He was almost an object of

worship in the eyes of the pirates, and they all fought among themselves for the honour of serving under him. When he next sailed away from Tortuga, he had a fleet of five fine ships and crews of over a thousand men.

And meanwhile, in the Caribbean, the Spanish Admiral Don Miguel de Espinosa awaited his chance. His hatred of Captain Blood, and his desire for vengeance, increased daily, and he went raging up and down the seas seeking his enemy. But for a whole year he sought him in vain. The circumstances in which they eventually met are very strange.

On the 15th September, 1688, three ships were afloat on the Caribbean, which were to play an important part in our story.

The first of these was Captain Blood's ship the *Arabella*, which had been separated from the buccaneer fleet in a heavy storm.

The second ship was the great Spanish galleon, the *Milagrosa*, with the vengeful Don Miguel aboard.

The third and last of these ships was an English man-of-war, the *Royal Mary*. She was on her way from Plymouth to Jamaica, and carried a very important passenger, Lord Julian Wade. He had been sent out from England on a special and important mission. King James II of England was becoming more and more annoyed by the behaviour

of the buccaneers, and the constant complaints from Spain about them; and Lord Sunderland, the Secretary of State, had appointed a strong man as deputy-governor of Jamaica. This strong man was Colonel Bishop.

Colonel Bishop had accepted the post with great eagerness, partly because it would give him many opportunities of revenge upon Peter Blood. Peter Blood, who had once been his slave, always seemed to escape him, however, and continued to annoy the Spaniards on sea and land. This led to further ill-feeling between England and Spain. Colonel Bishop admitted, in a letter to the Secretary of State, that he did not know how to deal with the problem. There seemed no way of solving it by ordinary means, so Lord Sunderland decided to try extraordinary ones. It occurred to him that Blood might not really want to be a pirate, and that he had been forced into it because he was an outlaw. He might welcome the chance to become an honest man again.

And so Sunderland sent out his cousin, Lord Julian Wade, with instructions to offer Captain Blood his pardon if he agreed to join the King's navy as a regular officer.

The *Royal Mary* made a good passage to St. Nicholas, her last port of call before Jamaica. Now, it happened that Colonel Bishop's niece had come to St. Nicholas some months earlier to visit

relatives, and she now wanted to return to Jamaica. A passage was arranged for her aboard the *Royal Mary*, and Lord Julian was very pleased at the arrangement. He enjoyed a woman's company, and Miss Arabella Bishop, with her rather boyish voice and her almost boyish ease of movement, was something quite new in his experience. He found her very attractive. Before they were out of sight of St. Nicholas they were good friends, and it is not surprising that Lord Julian talked to her of Captain Blood.

'I wonder now,' he said, as they were walking on the deck together, 'if you ever saw this fellow Blood, who was at one time a slave on your uncle's plantations?'

Miss Bishop stood still. She leaned against the ship's rail, and, after a moment, she answered quietly, 'I saw him often. I knew him very well.'

'Really?' said his lordship with interest. 'And what kind of a man was he?'

'In those days I thought of him as a very unfortunate gentleman.'

'You knew his story?'

'He told me,' Arabella answered. 'I admired him for his calm courage. But considering what he has done since then, I have begun to wonder if he was telling me the truth.'

'There is no doubt that he was wrongly tried after the Monmouth rebellion,' replied Lord Julian.

'He never fought with Monmouth; that is certain. But he has had his revenge, I think!'

'That is the unforgivable thing,' she said in a small voice. 'It has destroyed him.'

'Destroyed him?' His lordship laughed a little. 'Don't be so sure of that! He has grown rich, I hear. And his Spanish gold is being treasured up for him in France. His future father-in-law, M. d'Ogeron, has seen to that.'

'His future father-in-law?' she said, staring at him. 'M. d'Ogeron, the Governor of Tortuga?'

'Yes. You see, the fellow's well protected. It's a piece of news I learned in St. Nicholas. Didn't you know?'

She shook her head without replying. She had turned her face away, and her eyes were staring down at the gently-moving water. After a moment she spoke, her voice steady and perfectly controlled.

'But surely, if this were true he would have stopped his piracy by now? If he.... if he loves a woman, and is also rich, surely he would have given up this desperate life and....'

'Yes, you would have thought so,' his lordship interrupted, 'but I understand that d'Ogeron is greedy for more gold. And I'm told the girl's a wild creature, a suitable wife for such a man as Blood. She probably encourages his buccaneering ways. It would be no new experience for her. He killed a man to win her.'

'He killed a man for her?' There was horror in her voice.

'Yes—a French buccaneer called Levasseur. He was the girl's lover. It's an unpleasant tale, I admit.'

Arabella turned to face him. She was pale to the lips, and her brown eyes were blazing with anger. 'Who told you?' she asked.

'A man who sailed with them, a Frenchman named Cahusac. He was there when it happened, and when Levasseur was killed.'

'And the girl? Was she there, too?'

Date.....



'He killed a man for her'

'Yes. She saw the fight. Blood carried her off when he had killed Levasseur.'

She looked at him. He noticed how pale she was.

'How wrong I was in my judgment,' she said in a low voice. 'Once I admired him as an unfortunate but worthy gentleman. Now...' She paused, and smiled a little crooked smile. 'Such a man is best forgotten.' And she began at once to speak of other things.

Their friendship grew steadily, and then something happened which spoiled the pleasure of the voyage. That mad Spanish admiral suddenly attacked them, when they were half way across the Gulf of Gonaves. The captain of the *Royal Mary* bravely returned Don Miguel's fire. If this Spanish Don wanted to fight, the *Royal Mary* was just the ship to oblige him: and she might have been successful in putting an end to the wild career of Don Miguel de Espinosa that day, but a lucky shot from the *Milagrosa* landed among some gunpowder stored on the *Royal Mary's* deck, and blew up half the ship almost before the fight had started. The English captain was killed, and half his crew destroyed with him. Before the rest of them had recovered from the shock of the explosion, the Spaniards were aboard.

In the captain's cabin, Lord Julian was trying to comfort and encourage Miss Bishop. Suddenly the door was flung open, and Don Miguel walked

in. Lord Julian swung round to face him and put a hand to his sword.

'Don't be a fool,' the Spaniard said sharply, 'or you'll come to a fool's end. Your ship is sinking.'

There were three or four armed men behind Don Miguel, and Lord Julian realised the position. He slipped his sword back into its scabbard[1]. But Don Miguel smiled, and held out his hand.

'If you please,' he said.

Lord Julian hesitated, and glanced towards Miss Bishop.

'I think you had better give it to him,' she said calmly, and his lordship surrendered his sword with an angry shrug.

'Come, all of you, aboard my ship,' Don Miguel invited them, and walked out of the cabin.

They went, of course. There was nothing else to do, since their own ship was sinking. But Lord Julian was very angry. As soon as they were aboard the Spanish ship, he coldly asked for the name of his attacker.

'I am Don Miguel de Espinosa,' he was answered. 'Admiral of the Navies of the King of Spain.'

Lord Julian gasped. If Spain made such a fuss about a buccaneer adventurer like Captain Blood, what would England answer now?

'Will you tell me, then, why you behave like a damned pirate?' he asked.

[1] *scabbard:* the long sheath holding the sword.

Don Miguel smiled. 'Colonel Bishop is a rich man, and you, milord, are also rich, no doubt. I will arrange your ransom,' was all he said in reply.

'You're nothing but a murderous pirate!' stormed his lordship. 'And you have the impudence to call yourself the Admiral of the Spanish Navy. We'll see what your Spanish king has to say about this.'

The admiral stopped smiling. 'At least I have the honesty to do it in my own name,' he said. 'But you, you deceitful English beasts, you send your Captain Bloods, your Hagthorpes, and your Morgans[1] against us, and say you are not responsible for what they do.'

'Captain Blood and the rest are not admirals of England,' cried Lord Julian.

'Are they not? How do I know? How does Spain know? Are not all Englishmen liars?'

'Sir!' Lord Julian's voice was sharp with anger, and his eyes flashed. He swung a hand to the place where his sword usually hung. Then he shrugged his shoulders and said scornfully, 'Of course, it is typical of Spanish honour that you should insult an unarmed man who is your prisoner.'

The admiral's face flamed scarlet. He half raised his hand to strike. And then he turned on his heel and went out without answering.

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[1] *Morgan:* a famous English pirate, who was later pardoned and joined the English navy.

5225

MUNAVIRUL ISLAM HIGH SCHOOL
Date.....

Chapter 14

The Meeting

Don Miguel's treatment of his prisoners was thoughtful and polite. Lord Julian and Miss Bishop realised that they need not fear any violence or hurt, since they were to be held to ransom. The *Milagrosa*, with her accompanying ship, the *Hidalga*, steered south-west, and then turned east, and so ran straight into the arms of Captain Blood. That happened early on the following morning. After hunting his enemy in vain for a year, Don Miguel found him in this entirely unexpected fashion. But that is the way of Fate. It was also the way of Fate that Don Miguel came upon the *Arabella* at a time when she was alone, separated from the rest of the buccaneer fleet.

Miss Bishop had just got up and come out on to the upper deck with Lord Julian, when she saw the big red ship with its snowy-white sails bearing down upon them. The English flag fluttered from her mainmast in the morning breeze. The sight thrilled Miss Bishop.

'Look!' she said to Lord Julian. To his amazement, he saw that her eyes were shining with excitement. He wondered if she realised what was happening. Her next sentence showed him that she did. 'She's an English ship, and she means to fight,' she said.

'God help her, then,' said his lordship. 'Her captain must be mad. What can he hope to do against these two great ships? Look at that devil Don Miguel. He's absolutely delighted.'

From the lower deck, the admiral turned to flash a backward glance at his prisoners. His eyes were bright and he was laughing. He pointed to the advancing ship and shouted something in Spanish to his crew.

The gunners were ready at their guns, and the sailors were busy preparing for battle. Don Miguel signalled to the *Hidalga*, which came steadily forward until she was close to the *Milagrosa*. They could see signs of preparation aboard the advancing English ship as well. The *Arabella* was already within the range of their guns, and the gunners of the *Milagrosa* looked up impatiently at their admiral. He shook his head.

'Have patience!' he shouted. 'Save your fire until we have him. He is coming straight to his death!'

The *Arabella* seemed to be following a course which must carry her straight between the two Spanish ships. Lord Julian exclaimed, 'He's mad! He's coming straight into a death trap. He'll be crushed to splinters between the two ships.'

At that moment the admiral raised his hand, and immediately the gunners fired their guns. There were two heavy splashes in the sea in front of the

English ship. Almost at once, two flashes of flame leapt from the *Arabella's* guns, and the *Milagrosa* shook from stem to stern[1] from a direct hit. To avenge this, the *Hidalga* fired at the Englishman with both her forward guns, but both shots missed their target.

At a hundred yards' distance, the *Arabella's* guns fired again at the *Milagrosa*, and this time smashed her bows. When the smoke lifted, the English ship was found to be almost between the Spaniards, and she was still coming steadily on. Lord Julian held his breath, and Miss Bishop cried out, clinging to the ship's rail. She had a glimpse of the wickedly grinning face of Don Miguel, and the grinning faces of the men at the guns. At last the *Arabella* was right between the Spanish ships, and Don Miguel spoke to his trumpeter. The man raised his silver bugle[2] to give the signal for both ships to open fire. But even as he placed it to his lips, the admiral seized his arm to stop him. He suddenly realised that, if either of the Spanish ships now fired upon the Englishman, they would also be firing into each other. It was exactly what Captain Blood had planned. At that very moment, eighteen guns from each of the *Arabella's* sides emptied themselves into the *Milagrosa* and the *Hidalga*.

[1] *stem to stern:* *Stem* is the front, and *stern* the back end of a ship. The stem is more often called the *bows*.

[2] *bugle:* a trumpet.

Miss Bishop was thrown violently against Lord Julian by the force of the explosion. Great clouds of smoke blotted out everything, and there was grim confusion everywhere. The air was full of fierce Spanish curses and the screams of wounded men. The *Milagrosa* struggled slowly on, with a great hole in her side. The *Hidalga* was in an even more desperate state. She was sinking fast, and her crew were making a desperate effort to launch the boats.

Don Miguel shouted orders wildly, but nothing could be done. The *Arabella* had turned round and now came alongside the *Milagrosa*. There was a rattle and clank of metal and the Spanish ship was firmly gripped by the English one. A moment later, a wild, yelling crowd of buccaneers jumped aboard the *Milagrosa*. The Spaniards were helpless. There were groups of fighting men everywhere, and the buccaneers soon proved themselves the stronger. Don Miguel stood on the upper deck in helpless despair and rage. Behind him, Lord Julian and Miss Bishop looked on in amazement and horror at the fury of the battle. Soon they saw the Spanish flag come fluttering down the masthead. The English were in possession, and groups of disarmed Spaniards stood everywhere, like herded sheep.

Suddenly Miss Bishop leaned forward and stared, wild-eyed, while her cheeks turned deadly pale. A

tall man, with a handsome, sunburnt face, was climbing up the ladder to the upper deck. He moved with easy grace until he stood before the Spanish admiral.

'We meet again at last, Don Miguel,' he said, in excellent Spanish. 'I hope you are satisfied. Although the meeting is not, perhaps, exactly as you had planned it!'

Don Miguel de Espinosa gave a cry of rage, and his hand went to his sword. But Captain Blood seized his wrist.

'I shouldn't do that, Don Miguel!' he said quietly. 'You are my prisoner now.'

They stood looking into each other's eyes for a long moment.

'What are you going to do?' asked the Spaniard in a hoarse voice.

Captain Blood shrugged his shoulders. He smiled a little. 'I have already done all I want to do,' he answered. 'Your small boats are ready. You will be permitted to go in them, with your men, before we sink this ship. The island of Hispaniola is quite near—you should reach it safely. And if you'll take my advice, sir, you'll not hunt me again. I think I am unlucky to you.'

The defeated admiral turned without speaking, and went down the ladder to the boats. His conqueror, who had not even troubled to disarm him, watched him go, and then turned and faced those

two immediately above him. He stiffened suddenly and turned pale; he stood and gazed a moment, and then walked quickly up the steps. Lord Julian went forward to meet him.

'Surely you're not letting that Spanish villain go free?' he cried.

'And who are you?' asked Captain Blood. 'What business is it of yours?'

His lordship replied coldly, 'I am Lord Julian Wade.'

Apparently Captain Blood did not recognise the name. 'Are you?' he said. 'Then perhaps you'll explain what you're doing aboard this ship?'

Lord Julian explained, shortly and impatiently.

'So Don Miguel took you prisoner, did he? And Miss Bishop, too?'

'Do you know Miss Bishop?' asked his lordship in astonishment.

'I had that honour once,' said Captain Blood, bowing to the lady. 'But it seems that Miss Bishop has a shorter memory,' he added, as Arabella stared at him with cold scorn.

'I have no friends among thieves and pirates, Captain Blood,' she said.

His lordship exclaimed in excitement, 'Captain Blood? Are you Captain Blood?'

'I am, sir.' Blood spoke wearily, with his mind on other things. "I have no friends among thieves and pirates!" The cruel sentence filled his brain,



'I had that honour once,' said Captain Blood

and there was pain in his blue eyes. He added quietly, 'Will you go with Miss Bishop aboard my ship? This one will sink at any moment.'

Without another glance at Arabella Bishop, he turned and left them.

Chapter 15

Thief and Pirate

That evening, Captain Blood paced the deck of his ship alone. Everything was peaceful. The signs of the day's battle had been removed, and a group of sailors were singing softly in the calm beauty of the night.

Captain Blood did not hear them. He did not hear anything except the echo of those cruel words which had named him thief and pirate.

Thief and pirate!

When, three years ago at Tortuga, he had first been forced into this adventurer's course, he had known that Arabella Bishop would despise him for it, but he had thought that she was already lost to him for ever. He had never dared to hope that he would meet her again. Yet, in spite of this, he had thought about her constantly in all those wild years of buccaneering. Because of her, he had made the strictest rules for his followers, and had never allowed them to behave with the wicked

brutality of other pirate bands. Nevertheless, she had that day informed him that she had no friends among thieves and pirates.

Thief and pirate! How the words clung, how they stung and burnt his brain! That was what she called him, without any understanding of the deep wrongs he had suffered. She had no pity for him, no mercy. She had accused him, convicted him, and sentenced him in that one phrase. He was a thief and pirate in her eyes; nothing more, nothing less. In his despair, he held his face in his hands and a sob broke from him.

Meanwhile, Lord Julian, who had more experience of women than Captain Blood, was interested in solving the curious problem that had so completely escaped the buccaneer. Why had Miss Bishop been so cruel to Captain Blood? Why had she shown no gratitude for her rescue from the Spanish ship? How well had she known him during those days when he had been a slave on her father's plantation? Lord Julian had noticed that Blood's ship was named the *Arabella*, and he knew that Arabella was Miss Bishop's name. Surely there must be some connection. Lord Julian remembered her coldness when he had told her the story of Blood's fight with Levasseur and his rescue of M. d'Ogeron's daughter. Was Miss Bishop's behaviour due to anger and jealousy on this account? His lordship's pale, dreamy eyes watched

her, wonderingly. 'I wonder why she hates him so much?' he said to himself.

Lord Julian himself felt a great admiration for Captain Blood, both as a seaman and a man, and he was glad that he had the power to turn the pirate into an honest officer, serving in King James's navy. He went in search of Blood, and found him still pacing the deck. Lord Julian slipped an arm through one of the captain's, and began to walk beside him.

'What's this?' asked Captain Blood shortly, for he was not in a friendly mood.

His lordship was not disturbed. 'I should like us to be friends, sir,' he said. 'It's a strange coincidence that we should have been brought together in this way, because I came out to the Indies specially to find you.' He went on to explain himself and his mission.

When he had finished, Captain Blood, who had been staring at him in astonishment, removed his arm from his lordship's and stood squarely before him.

'You're my guest aboard this ship,' he said, 'and I still have some knowledge of decent behaviour, even though I am a thief and pirate. So I'll not tell you what I think of you for daring to bring me this offer, or of my Lord Sutherland for having the impudence to send it. But do you think I would accept a commission from King James? I tell you

I wouldn't soil my hands with it, even though they are the hands of a thief and pirate. And who made me a thief and pirate, if it wasn't your king, James Stuart[1]? I was not a rebel. I was convicted for what I did as a doctor—because I dressed the wounds of a rebel. You'll find it in the records of the trial. And for that reason I was sold into slavery.'

He checked suddenly at the very height of his anger, and gave a little laugh of weariness and despair. 'But there!' he went on. 'I grow hot for nothing at all. I am grateful to you, Lord Julian, for your kind intentions, but I think you'll understand my feelings.'

Lord Julian stood still. He was deeply disturbed by the other's words, the angry outburst that had so convincingly explained the man's bitter case against humanity. His lordship looked at that handsome, fearless face, and his own eyes were troubled.

He gave a heavy sigh. 'It's a pity,' he said slowly. 'A great pity!' He held out his hand. 'But there's no quarrel between us, Captain Blood.'

'Oh, no quarrel. But....I'm a thief and a pirate.' He laughed without amusement, and, taking no notice of the outstretched hand, turned and walked away.

[1] *Stuart:* James I of England was the first Stuart king, having inherited the throne through his mother, Mary (Stuart), Queen of Scotland.

Lord Julian stood a moment, watching the tall figure as it moved away towards the ship's rail. 'I have never met a man I liked better,' he said to himself. 'Yet there's nothing I can do for him.' And he went slowly to his cabin.

Chapter 16

War

Three months later, Captain Blood was back in Tortuga, having sent Miss Bishop and Lord Julian ashore at Port Royal, the capital of Jamaica, and set sail again before the deputy-governor was able to seize him and his ship. The Colonel's hatred of Peter Blood was much stronger than any gratitude he might feel for the rescue of his niece, and he felt nothing but rage that the *Arabella* had once more escaped him. Finally, he decided to set sail, with the entire Jamaican fleet, to hunt his enemy. He knew the buccaneers would not remain for long in the shelter of Tortuga, and as soon as they went to sea again, Colonel Bishop would be ready for them. He did not care that his deputy-governor's duties actually demanded that he should remain ashore, particularly at that time, when war with France, as well as Spain, was a very definite possibility.

The ambitions of Louis XIV of France had set

Europe in a blaze of war. And there was worse than this: there were rumours of civil war in England, where the people had grown tired of the cruel selfishness of King James. It was reported that William of Orange[1] had been invited to come over.

Weeks passed, and every ship from England brought additional news. William had crossed to England, and in March of that year 1689, they learnt in Jamaica that he had accepted the crown, and that James had fled to France for protection. Colonel Bishop's sense of duty, indeed, should have kept him in Port Royal; but his sense of duty was drowned in hatred. In the great cabin of the British ship, *Imperator*, the deputy-governor of Jamaica got drunk each night, to celebrate his conviction that Captain Blood's career as a pirate was swiftly coming to an end.

Meanwhile, Captain Blood, returning to Tortuga, had found his fleet awaiting him—the four ships which had been separated from him in that storm before he rescued Miss Bishop and Lord Julian from the Spaniards. He was in a grim and unhappy mood. Sometimes he asked himself why he had come back to Tortuga at all. Possessed by the thought of Arabella and her scorn of him as a thief and pirate, he had sworn that he had

[1] *William of Orange:* William and his wife Mary were both Stuarts, and thus had a claim to the English throne. William was the son of James II's sister, Mary, who had married William II of Orange; and his wife was James II's daughter by Anne Hyde.

finished with buccaneering. Why, then, was he here? He could only answer that question with another: where else could he go? It seemed that he could move neither backward nor forward.

But at last something happened to shake him out of his moodiness. One sunny morning the Governor of Tortuga came aboard the *Arabella*, accompanied by a fat little gentleman with a cheerful face. M. d'Ogeron introduced him as M. de Cussy, the Governor of French Hispaniola.

'You have a good force here under your command, my Captain,' said M. de Cussy to Captain Blood after they had greeted each other.

'About eight hundred men, Monsieur,' replied the captain.

'And I understand they grow restless with nothing to do?'

'They may go to the devil when they please,' said Captain Blood.

M. de Cussy smiled. 'I have something better to suggest than that,' he said. 'News has reached us from France that there is war with Spain. It is our intention that this war shall be carried into the New World.[1] A fleet is coming out from Brest[2] under the command of M. le Baron de Rivarol, and I have letters from him asking me to provide him with not less than a thousand men to join him on

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[1] *New World:* the West Indies and the American Continent.

[2] *Brest:* an important French port.

arrival. I have therefore come to suggest to you that you enrol your ships under M. de Rivarol's flag.'

Captain Blood sat in thought. This, after all, was not piracy. It was honourable employment in the service of the King of France.

'I will consult my officers,' he said; and he sent for Wolverstone and Hagthorpe, and a young French buccaneer called Yberville, who was in command of another of the pirate ships, the *Lachesis*.

After some argument about the terms of the agreement, it was signed that very day. The buccaneers were to be at Petit Goave by the end of January, when M. de Rivarol had announced that he would be expected.

The following month, Captain Blood and his fleet sailed from Tortuga, and anchored in the bay of Petit Goave, where M. de Rivarol arrived a few days later. Including the volunteers and negroes, M. de Rivarol had twelve hundred men directly under his command, and, with Captain Blood's eight hundred buccaneers, they made a strong and powerful fleet. They set sail for Cartagena in the middle of March, to attack the Spanish fleet.

They just missed the Jamaican fleet with Colonel Bishop, which sailed north for Tortuga, in search of Captain Blood, two days after the Baron de Rivarol's southward passage.

Chapter 17

Cartagena

In the early days of April the French fleet came in sight of Cartagena, and M. de Rivarol held a meeting aboard his flagship to discuss the best method of attack.

'It is important that we take the city by surprise,' he told them, 'before it can defend itself and remove its treasures inland. I intend to land a force to the north of the city after dark tonight.' He explained his plan in detail.

He was heard respectfully and approvingly by his officers, and scornfully by Captain Blood. Captain Blood knew exactly what difficulties lay ahead, because he had himself considered a raid upon the place two years ago. He had actually visited Cartagena secretly, and made a careful study of the area. On the other hand, M. de Rivarol's knowledge of the district had only been gained by the examination of maps.

Geographically, Cartagena was a peculiar place. It was sheltered on the east and north by hills, and the town faced south onto two natural harbours. The entrance to the outer harbour was through a narrow strait called the Boca Chica—or Little Mouth—which was defended by a fort. Beyond this, there was another very narrow channel, a gateway into the safe and sheltered inner harbour.

Another fort defended this second strait. To the west and north-west the town lay directly open to the sea; and on this side there seemed to be no defences at all. But those appearances were deceptive, and they had utterly deceived M. de Rivarol.

Captain Blood, however, knew better. 'I understand, M. le Baron, that you called us here in order to discuss our plan of attack,' he said.

'Then you understood wrongly,' replied Rivarol coldly. 'You are here to receive my commands. I have already decided upon a plan. I hope you understand.'

'Oh, I understand,' laughed Blood. 'But do you?' And without giving the baron time to answer, he went on, 'You say you have decided. But, unless you wish to destroy us all, you will change your mind when you hear what I have to say. This city of Cartagena looks very easy to attack on the northern side, where it stands open to the sea. But ask yourself, M. le Baron, why the Spaniards have been at such trouble to protect it to the south, if it is really so easily conquered from the north.'

M. de Rivarol bit his lips in silence.

'The Spaniards are not quite the fools you think,' Blood continued. 'Two years ago, I made a careful examination of Cartagena, because I was planning to raid it. I came here with some friendly

Indian traders, disguised as an Indian myself. I discovered that, on the side where it looks so easy to attack, there is shallow water for over half a mile out to sea. No ship could come near enough to bomb the city.'

'But we can land our attacking forces in canoes and small boats,' cried a French officer impatiently.

'There is a line of rocks just below sea level, and the waves are so enormous that any small boat would be overturned,' replied Captain Blood.

'Nevertheless, we shall try,' said the baron. His pride would not allow him to give way in front of his officers.

'If you still choose to do so in spite of my advice, you are, of course, the person to decide,' said Blood. 'But I do not lead my men into unnecessary danger.'

'If I command you....' the baron began, but Blood calmly interrupted him.

'M. de Cussy asked us to join you, chiefly on account of our knowledge and experience of this kind of warfare. I have given you my knowledge and experience in this particular matter. I will add that I gave up my own plan of raiding Cartagena, because my forces were not strong enough to overcome the forts at the entrance of the harbour, which is the only way into the city. You now have sufficient strength for that purpose.'

'But while we were doing that, the Spaniards

will have time to remove a great part of their treasure. We must take them by surprise.'

Captain Blood shrugged his shoulders. 'I didn't realize this was just a pirating raid,' he said scornfully.

M. de Rivarol bit his lip in anger. 'Oh, to the devil with that!' he shouted. 'It seems that I am followed by cowards. If you are afraid to do this thing, I will do it myself. The weather is calm and I am sure we can make a good landing.' He waved his hand coldly. 'You may return to your ship.'

He received the lesson he deserved. During the afternoon he took his ships to within a mile of the coast, and, as soon as it was dark, three hundred men set off for the shore in the canoes and ship's boats. The first six boats were caught in the huge waves and broken into pieces on the rocks before their occupants could save themselves. The thunder of the sea and the cries of the shipwrecked warned those who followed, and saved them from sharing the same fate. They turned and rowed away again out of danger, but nearly fifty lives were lost in the adventure, and half a dozen boats carrying guns and ammunition.

The baron went back to his flagship in a rage. He was angry with everyone, but chiefly with Captain Blood. For some strange reason, he blamed the buccaneer for this misfortune. He

went to bed, thinking furiously about what he would say to Captain Blood the next morning.

He was awakened at dawn by the rolling thunder of guns. Coming up on deck in his night clothes, he saw an astonishing sight. The four buccaneer ships were in full sail, half a mile off the Boca Chica, attacking the great round fort that guarded the narrow entrance. The fort was returning the fire. But the buccaneers timed their attacks with extraordinary cleverness, to catch the defenders while they were reloading their guns. Then they swung away again, moving all the time to escape the Spaniards' shots.

M. de Rivarol stood and watched this action, cursing Blood for daring to make an attack without his permission. The officers of the *Victorieuse* crowded round him, agreeing with him because of their hatred of Captain Blood.

Meanwhile, the fight went merrily on. The fort was suffering badly, and the buccaneers themselves were not escaping punishment; all four of their ships had been hit, and the *Arabella's* main sail had been shot away. The foolish baron's fierce eyes shone with satisfaction.

'I pray Heaven the Spaniards will sink all his ships,' he cried.

But Heaven didn't hear him. He had scarcely spoken when there was a terrific explosion, and half the fort went up in flames. A lucky shot from

the buccaneers had found the ammunition store.

A couple of hours later, Captain Blood stepped on to the deck of the *Victorieuse* and saluted M. de Rivarol, who was still in nightgown and night-cap.

'I have to report, M. le Baron, that we are in possession of the fort on Boca Chica,' said Captain Blood. 'The French flag is flying from its tower, and the way into the outer harbour is open for your fleet.'

M. de Rivarol had to swallow his fury, although it choked him; but his face was pale with anger.

'You are fortunate to have succeeded,' he said coldly. 'Another time, you will please await my orders before you make any attack.'

Blood smiled with a flash of white teeth, and bowed.

'I shall be glad of your orders, now, General,' he said. 'You realize that it is most important for us to strike quickly.'

He pointed out the fort at the mouth of the inner harbour, which must be put out of action before they could seize the town. He suggested that the French ships should enter the outer harbour, and begin the attack at once. Meanwhile, he would land, with three hundred buccaneers, on the eastern side, and attack the fort from the rear.

M. de Rivarol's manner suddenly changed. He saw the wisdom of Captain Blood's plan, and gave

the necessary orders at once. But he did not forgive him. By evening, the fort had surrendered, and Cartagena sent offers of surrender to M. de Rivarol.

The treasure obtained by the French was enormous. During the next four days, over a hundred mules, laden with gold, went out of the city and down to the boats which were waiting at the beach to carry the treasure aboard the ships.



Over a hundred mules went out of the city

Date

Chapter 18

The Honour of M. de Rivarol

For some time after the surrender, Captain Blood and his buccaneers were kept utterly in ignorance of what was happening. Although Blood had been chiefly responsible for the conquest of the city, he was not even invited to M. de Rivarol's council of officers to decide the terms of surrender.

Captain Blood took this insult calmly, but his men were angry and suspicious, and finally persuaded their captain to call on the baron in order to discuss the sharing out of the treasure. M. de Rivarol received him coldly, but he turned hot with anger at Blood's first words.

'I have come to remind you, Monsieur,' said Captain Blood, 'that you made a definite agreement with us, to give us a fair share of the treasure from Cartagena. But we have so far received nothing, and my men are not satisfied.'

'Of what are they not satisfied?' asked the baron.

'Of your honesty, M. de Rivarol.'

The Frenchman jumped to his feet, his eyes blazing, his face deathly pale. 'Do you really dare to say that, you and the dirty thieves that follow you?' he shouted.

'My men know that you have a huge amount of treasure aboard your ships,' Captain Blood interrupted coolly. 'They insist that the treasure

should be produced and weighed in their presence, and then shared out fairly.'

'What do you mean, you rogue? I am a leader of armies, not of a gang of thieves,' shouted the baron.

Blood laughed at his anger. 'Whatever you may be, I warn you that, if you don't agree to their request, you may never leave Cartagena at all!' he said.

'Am I to understand that you are threatening me?' cried Rivarol. He continued to shout and storm for some time, but in the end he promised to make the necessary arrangements, saying that the treasure would be produced the next morning and weighed in the buccaneers' presence.

Blood returned to his own ship and told his men, who cheered loudly. But when dawn broke over Cartagena, the only ships in the harbour were the *Arabella* and the other three buccaneering ones. The French ships had gone. They had quietly and secretly sailed out of the harbour during the night. M. de Rivarol had gone off with the treasure, taking with him the troops and sailors he had brought from France.

'We must follow, and punish them!' the buccaneers cried, and Captain Blood agreed with them, although he sailed with a heavy heart. What would Arabella think of him, if she ever heard?

'O God!' he groaned to Jeremy Pitt. 'I thought

I had finished with piracy, but what else can I do? Loyal service with the English was made impossible for me. Loyal service with France has led to this. What remains, then, except piracy?'

But something remained—the last thing that he could have expected—something towards which they were rapidly sailing over the tropical sunlit sea.

They set sail for Hispaniola, since they judged that Rivarol must go there to refit his ships before attempting to cross to France. The *Arabella* and the *Elizabeth* sailed northward for two days and nights without catching sight of the French ships. But at daylight on the third day, they heard a booming sound in the distance.

'Guns!' said Pitt, who stood with Blood upon the upper deck.

Blood nodded, listening.

'Ten miles away, perhaps fifteen—somewhere off Port Royal, I should judge,' Pitt added.

'Guns off Port Royal....that means Colonel Bishop is probably in action against friends of ours. I think we should go and see if we can help,' said Captain Blood.

Guided by the sound of battle, they sailed on for an hour; then the guns were suddenly silent. Presently an object came into view, which soon revealed itself as a great ship on fire. Her masts stood out sharp and black above the smoke and flames, and

through his telescope Blood saw the flag of St. George flying from her mainmast.

'An English ship!' he cried. He searched the seas for the conqueror in the battle, and at last found the shadowy outlines of three tall ships, some three or four miles away. To his amazement, he realized that the largest of these three ships was Rivarol's *Victorieuse*.

They took in sail and stopped as they came up with the drifting boats laden with survivors. And there were others adrift on some of the wreckage, who must be rescued, too.

Chapter 19

The Service of King William

One of the boats containing survivors bumped alongside the *Arabella*, and a fat little gentleman, in a coat of purple satin and gold lace, climbed on board. Quite clearly, he was no buccaneer. He was closely followed by a fat large gentleman, with a full, round, sunburnt face whose mouth was humorous and whose eyes were blue and twinkling. He also was very well-dressed, and was obviously a man of importance.

As the little man stepped from the ladder on to the deck, where Captain Blood stood to receive him, he said crossly, 'And where the devil am I

now? Are you English, or what the devil are you?'

'My name is Blood—Captain Peter Blood, and this is my ship, the *Arabella*,' Blood answered him.

'Blood!' shrieked the little man. 'A pirate!' He turned to the huge man who followed him. 'A damned pirate, Van der Kuylen. We've come from Scylla[1] to Charybdis.'

'Is that so?' said the other, in a strong foreign accent. Then he saw the humour of it and began to laugh.

'What is there to laugh at, you idiot?' cried the little man. 'This will make a fine tale in England! Admiral Van der Kuylen first loses his fleet in the night, then has his flagship set on fire by the French, and ends up by being captured by a pirate. I'm glad you find it amusing. I'm damned if I do.'

'There's a misunderstanding, sir,' said Blood quietly. 'You are not captured; you are rescued. When you realize that, perhaps it will occur to you to be grateful.'

The fierce little gentleman stared at him, and then introduced himself. 'I am Lord Willoughby, King William's Governor-General of the West Indies, and this is Admiral Van der Kuylen,

[1] *Scylla and Charybdis:* the ancient classical names for the six-headed monster living on a rock, and the whirlpool, on each side of the Straits of Messina. If sailors tried to avoid Scylla on the one side, they risked being caught by Charybdis on the other.

Commander of His Majesty's West Indian fleet.'

'King William?' exclaimed Blood. 'And who is King William?'

Lord Willoughby looked at him in astonishment, and then answered, 'His Majesty King William III, who, with Queen Mary, has been ruling England for two months now.'

There was a moment's silence, until Blood realized what he was being told. 'Do you mean, sir, that they've kicked out that rascal James at last?' he asked.

His lordship smiled. 'Hadn't you heard?' he said. 'Where the devil have you been?'

'Out of touch with the world for the last three months,' said Blood.

'Indeed, you must have been! And in that three months the world has had some changes.' He explained briefly. King James had fled to France and was living at the court of King Louis. For this and other reasons, England was now at war with France. M. de Rivarol must have heard the news from somewhere, otherwise he would never have dared to attack the flagship of the English fleet.

The news excited Peter Blood. If James was no longer king, there was no reason why Blood should not return to England, and take up his life again at the point where it was so unfortunately interrupted four years ago. He said so to Lord Willoughby.

'Go home if you wish,' said his lordship. 'You

may be sure that anything that happened four years ago will be forgiven and forgotten. But why be in such a hurry? We have heard of your fame upon the seas. Here is a great chance for you, since you say you are tired of piracy. Serve King William out here during the war. Your knowledge of the West Indies would be very valuable to His Majesty's Government.'

Blood said he would think about it. 'But first we must think about your lordship's concerns,' he went on. 'I expect you wish to go to Port Royal.'

'To Port Royal?' the little man shook his head angrily. He told Blood that they had called at Port Royal last evening, to find its deputy-governor was not there. 'He had gone on some wild chase to Tortuga after buccaneers, taking the whole fleet with him.'

Blood stared in surprise a moment, then began to laugh. 'But is he mad, to leave his post at such a time?' he asked in amazement.

'Taking the whole fleet with him, and leaving the place open to French attack!' said his lordship. 'That is the sort of deputy-governor that King James's Government chose to appoint. I agree that it seems unbelievable.'

The smile faded from Blood's face. 'Does Rivarol know this?' he cried sharply.

The Dutch admiral answered him. 'M. de Rivarol took some of our men prisoners. They

would tell him that Port Royal is unguarded. He is sure to seize the opportunity.'

His lordship's anger increased. 'That rascal Bishop shall be punished severely if Port Royal is damaged in his absence,' he cried. 'What possible excuse can he have for sailing for Tortuga?'

Captain Blood laughed. 'It's myself he's hunting at Tortuga, my lord. But I think that while he's away, I had best look after Jamaica for King William.' He shouted an order to Pitt. 'Set a course for Port Royal, Jeremy, at full speed.'

Both Lord Willoughby and the admiral were on their feet.

'But you are not equal to it!' cried his lordship. 'The Frenchman's ships are three times as powerful as yours.'

'If I can't defeat him, I can sink my own ships in the entrance to the harbour, and prevent him from escaping until Bishop gets back,' Blood replied.

'And what good will that do?' asked Willoughby.

'I'll tell you, my lord. Rivarol is a fool to take this risk, considering what he's got on board. He carries in his ship all the treasure taken from Cartagena. He has gone into Port Royal with it. Whether he defeats me or not, he doesn't come out of Port Royal with it again!'

His lordship stood up, and held out his hand. 'Captain Blood, you are a great man!' he said. And they began at once to discuss a plan of attack.

Chapter 20

The Last Fight of the *Arabella*

It was the afternoon of that same day, and the two buccaneer ships rocked gently with idly flapping sails, hidden by a long, narrow stretch of land from the great natural harbour of Port Royal. It was two hours since they had arrived there, unseen by the city and by M. de Rivarol's ships; and all the time they had heard the roar of guns from sea and land, announcing that a battle was raging between the French and the defenders of Port Royal.

'Why do you wait, my friend?' said Van der Kuylen to Captain Blood.

Blood faced him, smiling confidently. 'I'll not keep you waiting much longer,' he promised, 'but there's nothing at all to be gained by haste, and a great deal to be gained by waiting. The French ships will be receiving some damage from the guns in the fort, and that will all be a help to us.' He stopped to listen. 'I think the time has come,' he went on. 'There's no more firing from the fort. We must now attack.'

He began to shout orders to Jeremy Pitt, and in a moment the whole ship's crew came to life and the *Arabella* and the *Elizabeth* began moving towards the harbour. Within a quarter of an hour they had rounded the headland and stood in the harbour

entrance. The fort was now nothing but a smoking rubbish heap, and the victorious French ships were sweeping forward to take possession of the town.

Blood examined the enemy ships, and smiled. The *Victorieuse* had only received a few scars, but the other two were obviously badly hit.

'You see!' he cried to Van der Kuylen. 'I was right to wait.' And he shouted an order to his men, crying, 'Swing round and attack her with everything you've got!'

The sight of that great ship sailing towards him must have given Rivarol a considerable shock. Before he could move to give an order, a shower of fire and metal burst upon him from the buccaneers, and his decks were swept by the murderous attack of their guns. And then, while the Frenchmen were still confused, the *Arabella* swung about, and returned to loosen a second round of gunfire to follow the first.

'On, now, Jeremy,' cried Blood, 'straight into them before they recover their wits. Stand by, there! Prepare to board! Hayton—the hooks! And tell the gunner in the prow[1] to fire as fast as he can load.'

He quickly explained himself to his guests. 'We must get on board and fight them, hand to hand. It is our only chance. We cannot hope to compete for long with their guns.'

[1] *prow:* the front of the ship.

By now the Frenchmen had recovered from their surprise, and began to fire back. The *Arabella* rocked and staggered under that terrific hammering. For a moment she seemed to hesitate, then she plunged forward again, her prow in splinters, her foredeck smashed, and a gaping hole just above the water-line. She struggled forward to come to grips with her grappling-hooks; but before she could succeed in her object, the *Victorieuse* had reloaded her guns and pounded her advancing enemy once more with another broadside. Amid the thunder of cannon and the screams of wounded men, the half-wrecked *Arabella* rocked and staggered into the cloud of smoke that hid her from her enemy. Pitt shouted that they were sinking fast. Even though the *Victorieuse* was now quite close, it seemed certain that they must sink before they could reach her.

But they had not yet completely failed. Within seven or eight yards of the *Victorieuse*, when their lower deck was already under water, and they could see the eyes of the laughing, cheering Frenchmen, Blood's men leapt forward, and threw their grappling-hooks across the gap between the two ships. Two hooks reached the Frenchman's decks and fastened there. The experienced buccaneers pulled with all their strength, to force the ships together. At last they swung hard against each other, and the sinking *Arabella* was literally kept

afloat by the half-dozen hooks that held her firmly to the *Victorieuse*.

Led now by Blood himself, the buccaneers threw themselves upon the French. The battle raged aboard the French ship for fully half an hour. The French resisted strongly, and they had the advantage of greater numbers to encourage them. But the buccaneers fought with the desperate fury of men who know that retreat is impossible, for there was no ship to which they could retreat. They must win and make the *Victorieuse* their own, or die.

And they made her their own in the end, although nearly half their men were killed. At last Rivarol went down with a bullet in his head, and the few remaining Frenchmen surrendered and cried for mercy. Blood ordered the hooks to be loosed at once, and, from the deck of the conquered *Victorieuse*, he took one last look at the ship that had served him so well, the ship that he had grown to love so dearly. Slowly the *Arabella* sank, until the waves that broke above her masts were the only things to mark the spot where she had met her death.

And as he watched, the brave Captain Blood—doctor, adventurer, slave and pirate—stood with the tears running down his cheeks, with grief for the loss of the *Arabella*.



The buccaneers threw themselves upon the French

Chapter 21

His Excellency the Governor

A few days later, the remainder of Van der Kuylen's fleet came to anchor in the harbour of Port Royal, and Lord Willoughby was in haste to set sail on an inspection of the other West Indian settlements.

'And meanwhile,' he complained to his admiral, 'I am delayed here by the absence of this fool of a deputy-governor.'

'But why should that detain you?' said Van der Kuylen. 'You have here just the man you need. He will know how to make Port Royal safe, better than you or I.'

'You mean Blood?'

'Of course. You could not find a better man. You have seen what he can do.'

'So you think so, too? I must admit I had thought of it; and indeed, why not?' remarked Lord Willoughby. 'He'll be a better governor than Colonel Bishop.'

Blood was sent for. He was a little overcome by the honour offered to him. It was far beyond anything he had ever dreamed, and he was filled with doubts of his own ability to undertake such an important post. His thoughts were on Miss Bishop, too. She was somewhere here in this very house in which they stood, but he had not seen her since his arrival. If she had shown him any friendship

or pity...! But she had ignored his presence altogether.

Willoughby continued to persuade him, however, and at last it was settled. Captain Blood was elected deputy-governor, in the presence of the garrison commander and the other officers, greatly to the Dutch admiral's satisfaction.

'Now we can go about our business,' said Van der Kuylen.

'We will sail tomorrow morning,' said his lordship.

Blood looked at him in surprise. 'And Colonel Bishop?' he asked.

'He is your affair. You are now the governor. You will deal with him on his return. I'll leave a letter for him. I hope he'll like it.'

Captain Blood took up his duties at once. There was much to be done to place Port Royal in a proper state of defence again. He made an inspection of the ruined fort, and issued instructions for the repairs to be started immediately.

On the following morning, while Van der Kuylen's fleet was finally making ready for sea, Blood received the news in the governor's office that Bishop's returning fleet was in sight.

'I am glad he will arrive before Lord Willoughby's departure,' said Blood. 'He must be placed under arrest as soon as he steps ashore. Then bring him here to me.'

Peter Blood sat back in his chair and stared at the ceiling. Time moved on. There was a knock at the door, and a servant entered to ask if his Excellency would receive Miss Bishop.

His Excellency turned pale. He sat quite still, staring at the servant for a moment. Then he quietly agreed.

He rose to his feet when she entered, and she was almost as pale as he was. For a moment they stood looking at each other in silence. Then she moved forward, and began to speak at last in an unsteady voice.

'I...I have just heard the news...your Excellency,' she stammered.

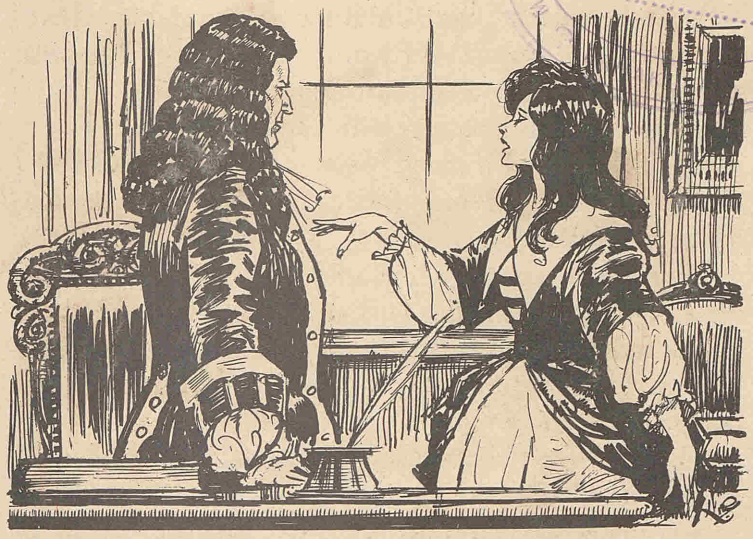
'You need not be afraid, Miss Bishop,' he said. 'Whatever may be the quarrel between me and your uncle, I shall not take advantage of my position to revenge myself on him. On the contrary, I shall try to protect him. Lord Willoughby advised me to treat him without mercy, but I intend to send him back to his plantation in Barbados.'

She came slowly forward. 'I...I am glad that you will do that. Glad above all for your own sake.' She held out her hand to him.

He looked at it coldly. Then he bowed over it. 'I'll not dare to take it in the hand of a thief and pirate,' he said.

'You are no longer that,' she said, and tried to smile. 'Will you never forgive me for those words?'

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Date.....



She held out her hand to him

'I'm finding it a little hard, I confess. But what does it matter, after all?'

Her clear eyes looked sadly into his for a moment. Then she put out her hand again. 'I am going, Captain Blood. Since you are so generous to my uncle, I shall return to Barbados with him. We are not likely to meet again. Once I wronged you, I know. And I have said that I am sorry. Won't you...won't you say goodbye?'

At last he seemed to shake off his bitterness. He took her hand in his, and said softly, 'Arabella!' His voice was pleading. 'Do you mean it? Must

I let you go back to Barbados and never set eyes on you again? Or will you stay with me here until we can go home to England together? Why, you're crying! What have I said to make you cry, my dear?'

'I...I thought you'd never say it,' she laughed at him through her tears.

They had, of course, a great deal to say to each other; so much, indeed, that they sat down to say it, while time passed by, and Governor Blood forgot the duties of his office. He had reached home at last.

And meanwhile, Colonel Bishop's fleet had come to anchor, and the colonel had landed. He was an angry and disappointed man, and he would be more disappointed yet. A guard of militia waited to receive him, headed by the fort commander, Major Mallard, and two other men who were unknown to the deputy-governor.

Major Mallard stepped forward. 'Colonel Bishop, I have orders to arrest you,' he said.

Bishop stared, his face purple with rage. 'What the devil...! Arrest me, you say? Arrest *me*? By whose orders?'

'By order of the Governor of Jamaica,' said the smaller of the two strangers behind Major Mallard. Bishop turned on him angrily.

'The governor? You're mad!' He looked from one to the other. 'I am the governor.'

'You were,' said the little man drily. 'But we've changed that in your absence. You left your post without proper cause, at a moment when the town was in great danger. It's a serious matter, Colonel Bishop, as you will find. Your successor will decide whether you're hanged or not.'

Bishop caught his breath, and, shaken by a sudden fear: 'Who are you?' he asked.

'I am Lord Willoughby, Governor-General of His Majesty's Colonies in the West Indies. You knew that I was coming, I think.'

The remains of Bishop's anger fell from him like a cloak. He broke into a sweat of fear. 'But, my lord...' he began.

'Sir, I am not interested in your excuses,' his lordship interrupted him. 'I am on the point of sailing and I have not the time. The governor will hear you, and no doubt deal fairly with you.' He waved to Major Mallard and Bishop was led in silence to the governor's house—the house that had been his own home. He was left to wait in the hall, while Major Mallard went ahead to announce him.

Miss Bishop was still with Peter Blood when the commander entered. 'You will be merciful with him? You will spare him all you can, for my sake, won't you, Peter?' she begged.

'You may be sure I will do all I can,' he answered gently, and she slipped out into the garden as Major Mallard fetched the colonel.

'His Excellency the Governor will see you now,' he said, and opened wide the door.

Colonel Bishop went in, and stood waiting.

A man sat at the table. Nothing could be seen of his head except the top of his curly black hair. Then his head was raised, and a pair of blue eyes looked coldly at the prisoner. Colonel Bishop made a noise in his throat, and, speechless with amazement, stared into the face of the man he had been hunting in Tortuga!

THE END

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QUESTIONS

Chapter 1

1. Describe the type of men in the Duke of Monmouth's army, and the strange weapons they used.
2. Explain why Peter Blood had not joined the rebels.
3. What happened early the next morning to set Peter Blood on his ' long, hard adventure' ?

Chapter 2

1. Describe the captain of the King's Dragoons, and give the reasons for Mr. Blood's exclamation, ' You're not Christians, after all!'
2. Write in your own words a description of the scene at Oglethorpe's Farm and say what happened to the innocent occupants and their friends.

Chapter 3

1. Write a description of Colonel Bishop and his niece, giving examples of the great contrast between them.
2. Describe how Peter Blood became the property of Colonel Bishop.

Chapter 4

1. Who was ' the stranger who did not seem quite a stranger ' whom Arabella Bishop met on her way to Government House one morning? Describe his appearance, and explain why he was not working on the plantations like the other slaves.

2. Describe the treatment of the slaves on the sugar plantations, and explain why Peter Blood avoided Miss Arabella Bishop whenever possible.

Chapter 5

1. Describe Pitt's punishment in the stocks. What had both he and Colonel Bishop noticed as they looked out to sea across the Bay?
2. Who helped and cared for Pitt while he was still in the stocks? Give in your own words a description of the scene that followed.
3. What happened to save Mr. Blood from the punishment threatened by Colonel Bishop?

Chapter 6

1. Why did the Spanish ship sail into Bridgetown Bay? Explain why it was allowed to do so without rousing suspicion.
2. Whom did Peter Blood rescue in the town, and to whom did he take her? What arrangements did he make for their safety?

Chapter 7

Describe how Peter Blood and his friends captured the Spanish ship.

Chapter 8

1. What made the watching islanders realize that the Spanish warship was now in friendly hands?—Who went aboard to discover the reason?

2. What did Blood and his fellow-slaves plan to do with the Spanish ship? Explain why they kept Colonel Bishop with them until they left the harbour, and describe their arrangements for his return to the shore.

Chapter 9

On what terms did Captain Blood offer freedom to Don Diego and his men? Explain why this bargain was necessary.

Chapter 10

1. Give the reasons why Peter Blood gave up his original intention to go to France or Holland after his escape to Tortuga. Describe his plans for equipping the Spanish warship. What name did he give her?
2. Describe the appearance and reputation of Levasseur. Whom did he want to marry, and did her father approve of the proposal?
3. Explain why Captain Blood had such grave doubts about joining up with Levasseur.

Chapter 11

1. '*La Foudre*, under cover of darkness, had turned away to the north as fast as she could go.' Explain why she did this, and describe what happened at dawn the following day.
2. What happened to make Mademoiselle d'Ogeron understand Levasseur's true nature? Describe the scene between them.

Chapter 12

1. What ransom did Levasseur demand for young M. d'Ogeron and his sister? Give Captain Blood's arguments proving the wrongness of Levasseur's claims in this matter.

2. Who paid the ransom of the two prisoners? Explain how they were saved from Levasseur.
3. What was Captain Blood's chief reason for rescuing Mademoiselle d'Ogeron?

Chapter 13

1. Name the three ships in the Caribbean Sea which were to play an important part in the story. Who had travelled from England in the third ship, and what was his mission?
2. Who joined the English man-of-war at St. Nicholas? What post did her uncle now hold, and why was he particularly pleased about this?
3. Describe Arabella Bishop's reactions to the news Lord Julian gave her about Peter Blood.
4. What happened to the *Royal Mary* to spoil the pleasure of the voyage?

Chapter 14

1. Describe the battle between the *Arabella* and the two Spanish ships, and explain the success of Captain Blood's plan of attack.
2. " ' I have no friends among thieves and pirates.' The cruel sentence filled his brain." Write a short essay explaining this sentence.

Chapter 15

Lord Julian was deeply disturbed by Captain Blood's ' angry outburst that had so convincingly explained the man's bitter case against humanity '. Write an essay on this subject.

Chapter 16

1. Explain briefly the historical background which caused (*a*) the threat of civil war in England, and (*b*) war in Europe between France and Spain.
2. ' Colonel Bishop's sense of duty should have kept him in Port Royal, but his sense of duty was drowned in hatred.' Explain this, and say what Colonel Bishop decided to do.
3. Who was M. de Cussy, and what agreement did he make with Captain Blood and his buccaneers?

Chapter 17

1. ' Geographically, Cartagena was a peculiar place.' Explain why, and give Captain Blood's reasons for advising against landing a force to the north of the city.
2. Describe M. de Rivarol's unsuccessful raid on the north side of Cartagena, and tell how the city was finally captured.

Chapter 18

1. Explain why the buccaneers suspected M. de Rivarol's honesty. What promise did he eventually make to Captain Blood?
2. Did Rivarol keep his promise? What did the buccaneers decide to do?
3. Describe what happened on the third day after the buccaneers sailed northward, and the scene that met their eyes an hour after dawn.

Chapter 19

1. Give the names and descriptions of the two important survivors rescued by the buccaneers, and explain why they had come to the West Indies.

2. What news did Blood receive from these survivors, which made him realize that he could now return to England whenever he wished?
3. There was a second piece of news that made Blood realize he must go to Port Royal at once. What was this news, and why was he so disturbed by it?
4. 'If I can't defeat him, I can sink my own ships in the entrance to the harbour.' To whom was Blood referring, and why was he so determined to prevent him from escaping?

Chapter 20

1. 'Why do you wait, my friend?' said Van der Kuylen to Captain Blood outside Port Royal harbour. What reasons did Blood give him? Was his delay justified?
2. Describe the last fight of the *Arabella*.

Chapter 21

1. Who was made deputy-governor of Jamaica to replace the absent Colonel Bishop? Explain his doubts about accepting the post.
2. What did Captain Blood decide to do with Colonel Bishop?
3. Describe the scene between Peter and Arabella, and the happy ending to their troubles.

This is an interesting and very simple to read.

Mohammed Ali
Bangalore
Bangalore

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This is very interesting book





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This is a good novel.

This is the story of Dr Blo

This is a story of Da

You must read this story

And enjoy this story

By El Brot

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Balaji M.A.