

A BEAUTIFUL PIRATE BY GUY BOOTHBY

Author of "A Bid for Fortune," "The Marriage of Esther," etc., etc.

"But since you lost none of that I have been thinking over, Alie, you must not come to England. The risk would be too great."

"There will be no risk at all, and I shall take every precaution to insure my own safety. You may rest assured of that," she answered.

"Oh, Alie," I cried, "how can I thank you? You have given me the one thing of all others that I desired. Now in my turn I have a present for you. This ring—here I drew a ring from my finger—was my poor dead mother's last gift to me, and I want you to wear it."

"I placed it on her finger and, having done so, took her in my arms and kissed her on the lips. This time she offered no resistance."

"Then we said good-by, and I went on deck. An hour later the Leno Star had faded away into the night, and I was aboard the Pearl Queen bound for Thursday Island and the port of London."

"When I came to think of it, I could hardly believe that it was nearly four months since Walworth had found me out in the Occidental hotel, Hongkong, and induced me to become the servant and at the same time the lover of the Beautiful White Devil."

I had her own assertion that she would be in England on the 1st of May, and I had never known her fail to keep her word. Just as that thought passed through my brain there was a ring at the bell, and a few seconds later my man brought up a telegram on a salver. With fingers trembling with eagerness I tore the envelope open and read the following message:

Arrived this morning. Bundaberg House, Brisbane. Come quickly. There and then I ran out of the room, gave the telegraph boy in the porch half a crown for his trouble, seized my hat and stick, hailed a hansom and bade the cabman drive me with all possible speed to Waterloo. The man was a smart whip, and as he possessed a good horse we covered the ground in grand style. When we reached the station, I paid him off, purchased my ticket and ran on to the platform just in time to catch the 6.15 express. Pantlessly at five and twenty minutes to 7 I left the train again at Surbiton and, proceeding into the station yard, called another cab.

"Do you know Bundaberg House?" I asked the man as I took my place in the vehicle. He shook his head and called to one of his mates.

"Where's Bundaberg House, Bill?" "Out on the Portsmouth road nearly to Thames Ditton," was the reply; "that big house with the long brick wall next to Tiler's."

"I know now, sir," said the man, climbing out to his box. "An extra shilling if you hurry up," I cried, and away he went. At the end of a short drive we pulled up before a pair of massive iron gates. A passer-by threw them open for us, and we drove in, passed round a shrubbery and pulled up at the front door. I paid the cabman off, and then, having watched him drive down and through the gates again, rang the bell. Next moment the door opened and a trim maid-servant, without inquiring my name, invited me to enter. The front door opened on to a stately built and furnished hall, and from it I passed into a handsome drawing room. It was empty, but before I had time to look round the folding doors on the other side were thrown back and Alie entered the room. I must leave you to imagine our greeting. I can only say that it sends a shiver of terror through me to this day to remember it. I know that while I held Alie, who seemed more beautiful than ever, in my arms she whispered:

"You are still of the same mind, George?" "Doesn't this look as if I am, darling?" I whispered. "Yes, I love you more fondly than ever, and I have come tonight to claim the fulfilment of your promise."

"You have been very patient, George?" "It was because I loved and believed in you, Alie!" I replied. "But come, darling; I want my answer."

"And you shall have it," she said softly. "There it is!" As she spoke she raised her beautiful white hand and pointed to the ring I had given her, saying as she did so, "It has never left my finger since you placed it there!"

then to call on Alie. We found her walking in her garden, which led down to the river, and I must be excused if I say that, proud as I was of my darling, I was infinitely prouder as I noticed the look of astonishment and admiration that came into Janet's face when she was introduced to her. Alie's radiant beauty and charming manners were irresistible, and before they had been together half an hour the two women were on the best of terms. It was Alie's earnest desire that we should remain to luncheon, and she herself walked to the railway station with us when we at last took our departure.

"Now what do you think of my sweetheart?" I asked as we steamed out of the station. "I think that she is a very beautiful and charming girl," was my sister's immediate reply, "and if I know any thing of my sex she is as good as a's beautiful."

This pleased me, as you may be sure, and when Janet went on to tell me that she had invited Alie and Mrs. Barker to spend a few days with her and that the visit would commence the following afternoon my opinion of my sister's kindness became even more exaggerated than before.

And so that week went by and another after it, till Alie had thoroughly settled down among us and nearly all the preparations for our wedding were complete. By that time, you may be sure, she had won golden opinions on every side. On each occasion that I saw Janet she was more and more profuse in her praises of her, until I had really to tell her that unless she moderated them a little I should soon become insufferably conceited about my good fortune.

One morning when I was beginning to think of getting up the following morning three gentlemen entered the box opposite us. One was brought to me with my shaving water. It was from my sister and had evidently been written the previous evening.

DEAR OLD GEORGE—I have succeeded in inducing Alie and Mrs. Barker to prolong their visit to me until the 1st of October. I am sure you will be glad to hear of this. I shall be glad to see you on Wednesday evening. I shall be glad to see you on Wednesday evening. I shall be glad to see you on Wednesday evening.

Need it be said that I accepted, or that on Wednesday evening I was proud of my charges as they took their seats in the box Janet had been at some pains to secure?

The house was packed from pit to gallery, and I noticed that more than one glass was leveled at the beautiful girl who took her place at Janet's side in the front of the box. Alie herself, however, seemed quite unconscious of the admiration she excited and throughout the piece kept her eyes fixed upon the stage with never failing earnestness. What the play was I have not the very vaguest recollection.

In the middle of the first act I noticed that three gentlemen entered the box opposite us and from the vociferous nature of their applause gathered that they had evidently been dining not wisely, but too well. After awhile their glasses were so continually brought to bear on our box that I began to feel myself, foolishly enough, becoming excessively annoyed. The face of one of them struck me as familiar and during the next interval, seeing that they had left their box, I made an excuse and went out to endeavor to discover who he was and where I had seen his face before.

The blow had fallen. My little shrieking of an unpleasant duty had ruined the woman I loved. Oh, how bitterly I reproached myself for my delay in reporting my discovery! But if I had hesitated then I did not do so now. A moment or two later I had let myself out again and was off as fast as I could go on my way back to South Kensington.

CHAPTER XIII. NEVER shall I forget the misery of that walk back from Cavendish square to South Kensington. I rang the bell, and the peal had not died away before poor, heavy-eyed Janet had opened the door to let me in. She led me into her morning room, the room where I had first told her of my love for Alie, and having made me sit down would not let me speak until I had partaken of some refreshment. I filled my glass, but pushed my plate away from me. I could drink, but I was far too miserable to eat.

"Janet," I cried, "for heaven's sake tell me, as quickly as you can, all that has happened!" "My poor George," she said, "as I told you in my note, Alie has been arrested. You had not left the house more than a quarter of an hour before two men called and asked to be allowed to see me on most important business. They were shown in here and when we were alone requested permission to see Alie. I went to fetch her and brought her down with me. Then one of the men advanced toward her with a paper in his hand and said, 'Alie Dunbar, in the queen's name I arrest you on a charge of piracy upon the high seas.' Oh, it was horrible, and I can see it all now."

"And what did my poor girl say?" "Nothing. She was just as calm and collected as she always is. She simply took the paper from the man's hand and looked at it, after which she said: 'There must be some mistake. However, you are only doing your duty, I suppose. Where do you wish to take me?' 'To Scotland Yard first, madam,' the man said, 'then on to Bow street.' Hearing that, Alie turned to me and, putting her arms round my neck, said, 'You will soften this blow as much as you can for George, won't you, Janet? and had changed her dress and procured her hat and cloak she would be ready to accompany them. These changes in her costume she was permitted to make, and when they were accomplished we set off, but not before I had written that note to you. We expected you would follow us at once and be able to arrange the matter of bail."

"I did not get your letter until after 3 o'clock. I was in such a strange state of mind last night that I went for a long walk after leaving you. Janet, it is all my fault. Did you notice those men in the box opposite us at Drury Lane? If so, you may have observed that they continually stared at Alie through their glasses."

"I did notice them, and very ill bred fellows I thought them. I think Alie must have thought so too. But what have they to do with this matter?" "Why, the man at the back of the box was none other than the person mentioned in that last newspaper paragraph about the Beautiful White Devil. He was the man Barkmansworth, in fact, whom the Beautiful White Devil was seen from the mailboat and flogged in midocean."

"But what has this to do with Alie?" "Why, simply that—no, there can be no shirking it now, it must come out, and I know it is perfectly safe for me to tell you—simply, Janet, because Alie is the Beautiful White Devil."

"Oh, George, my dear old brother, is this terrible thing true?" "Perfectly true, Janet."

"And you of all men were going to marry the Beautiful White Devil?" "Don't say 'were,' say 'are,' Janet, it is only half past 5 now. An hour and a half must elapse before I can do any good at the police station. If you will listen, I will tell you the story of Alie's singular life and how I became mixed up with her. Then, remembering what you have seen of her yourself, you will be able to judge what sort of woman the Beautiful White Devil really is."

him last night and should have spoken to you about it today. It is too late now, as you say."

"Can nothing be done, Alie?" "I cannot say yet. I have been too much upset since my arrival here to think. But you must find me a lawyer as soon as possible, who will defend me at the preliminary examination, and if it looks as if the case will go against me you must find some means by which I can escape."

"Escape? Alie, you do not realize how impossible that is."

"Nothing is impossible when one has brains enough to devise a plot and sufficient money to work it out."

"I could only wish it as you do about it. But have you any scheme to suggest?" "Not yet, but I shall devote my whole attention to it, and it will go hard with me if I cannot hit on something. Would you have the courage to dare very much for my sake, George?"

"I would dare anything under the sun for you, Alie, and though you asked me such a question I do not think you feel any doubt as to what answer I would give."

"I had no doubt. Do not think that. And now, George, tell me what your sister says, now that she knows who I am?" "Janet is more your friend than ever. I told her your story this morning, and she bade me give you her love and tell you we would save you yet."

"Again the tears rose in Alie's eyes. 'What will the east say when it hears that the Beautiful White Devil is caught at last?'"

"I don't know, and I don't care. One thing I'm certain of, however, and that is that I should like to have five minutes with Mr. Barkmansworth alone. I think then he'd know that."

What is CASTORIA Castoria is Dr. Samuel Pitcher's prescription for Infants and Children. It contains neither Opium, Morphine nor other Narcotic substance. It is a harmless substitute for Paregoric, Drops, Soothing Syrups and Castor Oil. It is Pleasant. Its guarantee is thirty years' use by Millions of Mothers. Castoria destroys Worms and allays Feverishness. Castoria prevents vomiting Sour Curd, cures Diarrhoea and Wind Colic. Castoria relieves Teething troubles, cures Constipation and Flatulency. Castoria assimilates the Food, regulates the Stomach and Bowels, giving healthy and natural sleep. Castoria is the Children's Panacea—the Mother's Friend.

THE FAC-SIMILE SIGNATURE OF CHAS. H. FLETCHER APPEARS ON EVERY WRAPPER. To Draw Your ATTENTION TO THE Ready Made Clothing Department We are placing the Stock down stairs and with New Goods just received are showing a large range of MEN'S TWEED SUITS, BOYS' TWEED and WORSTED SUITS, MEN'S TWEED and WORSTED PANTS, BOYS' PANTS, OVERCOATS and ULSTERS, WATERPROOF COATS.

HOGG BROS., OAKWOOD VICTORIA PLANING MILL I have just completed a DRY KILN, and am now prepared to furnish everything for house finishing in my line cheap as the cheapest. Everything guaranteed right or no pay. Call and inspect work and get prices.

J. P. BYLEY, Telephone 122. FOR Cheap FURNITURE GO TO ANDERSON, NUGENT, & Co. KENT STREET, LINDSAY.

Undertakers and Cabinet Makers Call and see our stock. No trouble to show it. ANDERSON, NUGENT & CO. JOB WORK of all descriptions neatly and promptly done at "The Warder" office.



Janet kissed Alie and cried over her. Have you poisoned a patient and find yourself in need of me to square matters, or have you been jilted and hope to bring an action for the damage done by your broken heart? Out with it. But forgive my chaff if it's anything more serious."

(To be Continued)