Red Heart and Black Arrow

A Tale of the Rolling Wave

CHAPTER VII.

The next morning every one was glad to hear that Zavertal's prediction had been verified, and that Lord Darranmore was not much the worse for his faint at the dinner-table. It got to be generally known throughout the ship that the boy's heart was affected ; and when he came on deck during the morning, looking pale and seedy, he became the victim of a universal sympathy which didn't best please him.

"It's all rot," was his indignant reply when I met him and remarked that he would have to "go easy" and take care of himself. "There's nothing the matter with me—at least, I never had anything the matter before. I expect I had too much of that meringue cream."

The weather continued fine and sunny, with just enough breeze to revive the jaded among the passengers without making them uncomfortable. Being now clear of the Channel, my presence on the bridge was seldom required, and I contrived to have several delightful chats with Aline, Mrs. Brinkworth discreetly making opportunities for a portion of them to be tete-a-tete. At the same time I did not allow my love affair to obscure my duties to the other passengers, and I worked hard to add to the general yacht-like life on board. All sorts of amusements in the musical and theatrical line were being projected, the doctor showing untiring energy in discovering amateur talent where it might least have been expected. He even laid an embargo on General Waldo to give a character recitation, from Rip Van Winkle at a variety entertainment that he was planning for the succeeding night. The Yankee veteran was discussing Zavertal's enterprise in a constitutional we took together before tiffin.

"Wonderful pushing fellow, this doctor of yours, Captain," he said, as we paced the deck. "You and he are just cut out for running a marine hydropathic show like this. He's an old partner of yours, I reckon."

"On the contrary, I've only known him a week," I replied. "This is my first voyage in the Queen, you must remember."

"Ah, but friend Zavertal hasn't always been at this game, I opine," returned Waldo, with an impatient gesture and one of his quizzical glances. "You can bet he qualified in a wider school than this. I guessed you might have pulled together previously."

"No, General," I said, wondering a little at his persistence after my first denial. "The doctor and I are quite new acquaintances, though I must say that I hope we shall one day be old ones. He is a pleasant companion to sail with, and about the best man for the berth of ship's-surgeon I ever came across."

"A responsible position—that of ship's doctor," remarked Waldo, more thoughtfully than as yet I had heard him speak. "It entails the power of life and death—the perfectly unchecked power of life and death."

On the top of this conversation I was rather amused when Zavertal on the same afternoon took an opportunity of mentioning Waldo to me from much the same point of view.

"Fine specimen of the globe-trotting American, that neighbor of yours at the saloon table," he said. "You and he seem to hit it off together uncommonly well, sir."

"Oh, he is all right—up to date," I replied. "Perhaps one might get bored in time with his everlasting yarns of Western life."

"I thought you might have met him before—you seemed so friendly," Zavertal said in the careless tone of one who really wants to know.

"No, I never saw the General before on sea or land," I said. "He is not the sort of man one would forget either. He has a peculiarity. He strikes me as being a little more 'twangy' than most Americans of his class nowadays."

"You are right," replied the doctor, "and it is bound to be genuine. That is about the only thing an American wouldn't exaggerate purposely."

I had got pretty intimate with Zavertal during the four or five days we spent together before the ship sailed. I had told him of the American, Kennard, who had called at Nathan's office while I was waiting to be engaged, and I had since discussed with him his strange forfeiture of his passage, Zavertal remarking playfully that perhaps the gentleman with the pistol had met him again and had not been so forbearing. I was now on the point of mentioning casually how for half a second on the previous night Waldo's expression had reminded me of the absent passenger, but some one hailed me from the bridge and the subject dropped.

A little later on the afternoon of that third day out Zavertal proposed a game of "hide-and-seek," and was soon surrounded by a number of younger passengers eager to join. Several of them hid in turn, and were found in more or less probable hiding-places—under the companion stairs, behind the piano in the music room, while one adventurous maiden gave a longer chase than usual by stowing herself in the flag-locker behind the aft wheel-house. Then it was Lord Darranmore's turn to hide, and the searchers all retired to the dome over the saloon-stairs while he concealed himself.

Aline and Mrs. Brinkworth, in common with a number of other non-players, were sitting under the awning watching the game when it chanced on to the upper deck, and chatting to myself and to General Waldo, who by this time was on speaking terms with every living soul on the ship. Thus we four were together when Lord Darrenmore came out of the deck-house to hide. The best places on the upper deck having already been exhausted by other players, the ladies expressed the opinion that he would have to go below if he was to show good sport.

"With due submission, I guess not, " remarked Waldo. "The young'un has got a best bower to play, to judge by his manoeuvres."

It seemed to me that the General was right. The boy did not hesitate for an instant, as if doubtful where to go, but turned and went forward on the port side till he came nearly abreast of the doctor's cabin, opposite which our steam-launch was slung. The davits supporting it were turned inwards over the deck to prevent any risk of losing the launch in heavy weather, so that it was accessible without danger of falling overboard. It was covered with a tarpaulin, and to reach it would be necessary to swarm up the davit, but these difficulties were not going to deter an agile Eton boy from availing himself of a hiding-place so likely to be overlooked. Zavertal was standing in the door of the companion-way ready to give the word to the searchers, and he smiled and winked at us as the young Earl began to shin up the davit hand-over-hand.

Darranmore soon got a grip on the bulwarks of the launch, and we watched him raise the edge of the tarpaulin, duck his head beneath it, and slowly wriggle out of sight. As soon as he had disappeared Zavertal gave the word to the seekers, and they came trooping out of the companion-way to commence the search. The quest had hardly begun in earnest when Lord Darranmore's head reappeared from under the tarpaulin, and it was seen that his face wore a comic expression of alarm and excitement.

"I say, this game's off," he cried, clambering out of the launch. "There's a chap hiding in there already."

"Nonsense," said Zavertal, going up to him as he reached the deck. "You must be mistaken, Lord Darranmore. There can't by any one there."

"I tell you I'm not mistaken," retorted the lad hotly. "There's a man lying huddled up in the bows. I heard him breathing first, and then I put my hand out and felt him."

"We'll soon settle it," I said, joining the group with Waldo and a number of other passengers. "Here, Smith," I added to a quartermaaster who was passing, "just take a look under that tarpaulin, and see if you can catch a stowaway."

But before the order could be executed the boy's statement was verified in a different way. The tarpaulin over the bows of the launch was raised, and a head covered with touzled black hair appeared, presenting such a woebegone figure of fun that some of the passengers laughed. The apparition looked like a foreigner, and certainly did not belong to the ship. As for myself, I felt considerable annoyance, for a stowaway was a pest against which I had taken no precautions, it not occurring to me that any one would try to sneak a passage on a ship not known as a regular "liner."

"Come down out of that," I said. "We will see if we canjt find you better quarters in the hold with a brace of anklets to steady you."

But the threat fell flat. "No spik Ingleese. Angry," moaned the stowaway.

"Poor fellow, he means that he is hungry. Don't be hard on him," pleaded Aline, who had come up with the rest, and to that sweet intervention the stranger owed the treatment that was meted out to him. By signs he was at length induced to leave the launch, and on reaching the deck he stood revealed as a tall, finely-built fellow with features that, despite their extreme swarthiness, were by no means ill-looking. Zavertal, who was a master of many languages, tried him with several, and at last pronounced him to be a Spaniard and a ship's steward by calling, who, failing to find a berth on a ship going to Spain, had taken this way of getting home.

"Very well," I said ; "we will allow him to work his way, but he shall not get off too easy. He must go the round trip with us, and we will leave him at Gibraltar or Lisbon on the homeward voyage. Off with him forward and give him some food."

My verdict having been translated to him, he was taken in charge by the quartermaster, bowing and scraping his thanks. The excitement lasted the passengers the rest of the afternoon, Lord Darranmore creating much amusement by taking all the credit of the capture. I heard Waldo drawing him on the subject of his discovery.

"I guess you were never smart enough to think of the launch to hide in yourself ?" said the General.

"Well, not quite," admitted the boy reluctantly.

And who might have been responsible for that bright idea ?" asked the old gentleman.

"It was the doctor who put me up to it," said Darranmore.

Waldo did not pursue the matter further, but walked away with a queer shrug of his shoulders.

That night at dinner the swarthy Spaniard, washed and brushed up, took his place among the assistant stewards who waited at Zavertal's table.

CHAPTER VIII.

The run across the Bay of Biscay was accomplished in fine weather, and on the morning of the fifth day out, when the passengers came on deck, Gibraltar was in sight right ahead. By the time breakfast was over we had threaded our way through the coal-hulks, and the Queen of Night lay at anchor a quarter of a mile from the New Mole. In a twinkling she was surrounded by the usual medley of shore-boats, manned by the jabbering hucksters of water-melons and grapes. Away on the Rock the bugles were sounding merrily for morning parade, and even from our anchorage the great grey mass, with the straggling town at foot, was seen to be as gay as a geranium bed with the blaze of British scarlet.

My instructions from the owners were to allow a clear twenty-four hours at this port, to enable the passengers to go ashore and explore it thoroughly. Numerous parties had already been formed for the purpose, and our boats were soon busily engaged in transporting sightseers to the landing-place. Among the first to start was a boat-load personally conducted by Zavertal, comprising Lord Darranmore and his tutor, Mr. Orlebar being also with the party. The latter had been drinking heavily ever since he came on board, and I heard the doctor trying to induce him to remain quietly on the ship under the pretext that the excitement of a day's outing would be injurious to him. But this representation only had the effect of increasing his determination to go, and Zavertal yielded—somewhat too readily, I thought.

Aline and Mrs. Brinkworth had arranged to join a party which was going under the escort of General Waldo, and at the last moment, finding that there was nothing to keep me on board, I decided to accompany them. On landing we strolled through the main gate and up the steep street to the post office for letters and telegrams. On entering the building we were met by the doctor's party just leaving after making a similar call. His convoy were mostly busy with their correspondence, but Zavertal himself crammed a cablegram he was reading into his pocket, and came up to me, looking worried and anxious.

"That infernal fellow, Orlebar, has given us the slip," he said. "Perhaps I ought to have been more careful, but as he gets all he wants on the ship and I didn't think that he would seize upon the chance of a shore racket. I expect he's soaking himself in some wine-shop by this time."

"I shouldn't trouble about it," I replied. "The man is a free agent, and so long as he doesn't make himself personally offensive to others we can't very well control him."

But, as it turned out, the contingency I mentioned was just what we had to reckon with. Zavertal's party and mine separated again, his to go through the galleries and mount to the flagstaff ; while we preferred to loiter away the day in the Spanish shops and among the quaint byways of the old town. We lunched at the hotel, and later on we were sitting in the public gardens, having what Waldo called "a high old time," when that worthy veteran, who was next me, touched me on the arm and whispered—

"Here comes the black sheep. Look out for squalls, Captain ; he appears to be on a thundering out-West tear."

Following the direction of his eyes, I saw Orlebar coming toward us, and his demeanor certainly warranted the General's warning. His bloodshot eyes glared with drunken ferocity, and his wild gesticulations as he made straight for us were already causing alarm to the half-dozen ladies of our party. Mrs. Brinkworth especially, who was sitting on the other side of the General, went as white as a sheet, and I remembered the recognition of her by Orlebar which I had noticed on the first day out.

(To Be Continued.)

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The whole mixture may be used in the ordinary bath, but a little of it in the water used for the face, neck and hands will soften and whiten the skin wonderfully.

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—THE—

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Insurance in force . .	3,535,859.00	Increase for year, .	31 per cent.
Decrease in p.c. of ratio of death claims to Insurance in force,			49 per cent.
Decrease in per cent. of ratio of expenses to Insurance in force,			14 per cent.
Decrease in per cent. of ratio of expenses to Income, . .			14 per cent.

RECORD OF FIVE YEARS' PROGRESS:

1898—Cash Income .	$ 29,673.78	Insurance in force .	$ 921,509.00
1899—Cash Income .	68,425.85	Insurance in force .	1,707 807.00
1900—Cash Income .	95,410.47	Insurance in force .	2,116 880.00
1901—Cash Income .	104,406.87	Insurance in force .	2,702,455.00
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