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Paying less can only mean poor tea.

CAPTAIN BLOOD

by Rafael Sabatini

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BEGIN HERE TODAY.

Peter Blood is wrongly convicted of treason against the English king. He and Jeremy Pitt, among others become the slaves of Colonel Bishop, a Barbados planter and uncle of Arabella, between whom and Peter Blood an interesting friendship springs up. A Spanish ship conquers the island but is captured through the strategy of Blood, who heads a boarding party of slaves. Don Diego, commander of the vessel, who was given freedom of the ship, attempts to betray Captain Blood and his followers but fails. Blood sails for Tortuga, headquarters of buccaneers, where he joins with Levasseur, another adventurer.

GO ON WITH THE STORY.

CHAPTER XIV.

LEVASSEUR'S HEROIC'S.

It would be somewhere about ten o'clock on the following morning, a full hour before the time appointed for sailing, when a canoe brought up alongside La Foudre, and a half-caste Indian stepped out of her and went up the ladder. He was the bearer of a folded scrap of paper for Captain Levasseur.

Its contents may be roughly translated thus:

"My well beloved—I am in the Dutch brig Jongvrouw, which is about to sail. Resolved to separate us forever, my cruel father is sending me to Europe in my brother's charge. I implore you, come to my rescue. Deliver me, my well-beloved hero!—Your desolated Madeleine, who loves you."

The well-beloved hero was moved to the soul of him by that passionate appeal. His scowling glance swept the bay for the Dutch brig, which he knew had been due to sail for Amsterdam with a cargo of hides and tobacco.

She was nowhere to be seen among the shipping in that narrow, rock-bound harbor. He roared out the question in his mind.

In answer the half-caste pointed out beyond the frothing surf that marked the position of the reef constituting one of the stronghold's main defences. Away beyond it, a mile or so distant, a sail was standing out to sea.

Cursing in his soul the association into which he had entered, Levasseur was already studying ways of evasion. Blood would never suffer violence to be done in his presence to a Dutchman; but it might be done in his absence.

Within the hour the Arabella and La Foudre were beating out to sea together. Without understanding the change of plan involved, Captain Blood, nevertheless, accepted it, and weighed anchor before the appointed time upon perceiving his associate to do so.

All day the Dutch brig was in sight, though by evening she had dwindled to the merest speck on the northern horizon. The course prescribed for Blood and Levasseur lay eastward along the northern shores of Hispaniola. To that course the Arabella held steadily through the night, with the result that when day broke again, she was alone. La Foudre under cover of darkness had sruck away to the north-east with every rag of canvas on her yards.

Dawn found La Foudre close on the Dutchman's heels, not a mile astern, and the sight of her very evidently flustered the Jongvrouw. The Dutch ship veered, showed them her rudder, and opened fire with her stern chasers. The small shot went whistling through La Foudre's shrouds with some slight damage to her canvas. Followed a brief running fight in the course of which the Dutchman let fly a broadside.

Five minutes after they were held tight in the clutches of La Foudre's grapnels, and the buccaneers pouring noisily into her waist.

The Dutchman's master, purple in the face, stood forward to beard the pirate, closely followed by an elegant, pale-faced young gentleman in whom Levasseur recognized his brother-in-law elect.

From the quarter rail Mademoiselle d'Ogeron looked down with glowing eyes in breathless wonder upon her well-beloved hero. He saw her, and with a glad shout sprang toward her. The Dutch master got in his way with hands upheld to arrest his progress. Levasseur did not stay to argue with him; he was too impatient to reach his mistress. He swung the poleaxe that he carried, and the Dutchman

He crushed her to him brutally and kissed her whilst she writhed in his embrace.

went down with a cloven skull. The eager lover stepped across the body and came on, his countenance joyously alight.

But mademoiselle was shrinking now, in horror.

He laughed, as a hero should, with the tolerance of a god or the mortal to whom he condescends: "He stood between us. Let his death be a symbol, a warning. Let all who would stand between us mark it and beware."

It was so splendidly terrific, the gesture of it was so broad and fine and his magnetism so compelling, that she cast her silly tremors and yielded herself freely, intoxicated, to his fond embrace. Thereafter he swung her to his shoulder, and stepping with ease beneath that burden, bore her in a sort of triumph, lustily cheered by his men, to the cabin of his own ship, where mademoiselle was confronted by her angry brother.

"Don't you perceive your wicked folly in the harm it has brought already? Lives have been lost—men have died—that this monster might overtake you."

He might have said more but that Levasseur struck him across the mouth.

Mademoiselle suppressed a scream, as the youth staggered back under the blow. He came to rest against a bulkhead, and leaned there with bleeding mouth.

With blanched cheeks the girl stood by the cabin table, and cried out to Levasseur to stop. To obey her, he opened the door, and flung her brother through it.

Composing himself, he turned again with a deprecatory smile. But no smile answered him from her set face. She had seen her beloved hero's nature in curl-papers, as it were, and she found the spectacle disgusting and terrifying.

He crushed her to him brutally, deliberately hurtful because she resisted, and kissed her whilst she writhed in his embrace.

Some one knocked. Cursing the interruption, Levasseur strode off to open. Cahusac, his lieutenant, stood before him. He came to report that they had sprung a leak between wind and water, the consequence of damage sustained from one of the Dutchman's shots. In alarm Levasseur went off with him.

Ahead of them a low cloud showed on the horizon, which Cahusac pronounced one of the northernmost of the Virgin Islands.

"We must run for shelter there, and careen her," said Levasseur. "A storm may catch us before we make land."

"A storm or something else," said Cahusac grimly. "Have you noticed that?" He pointed away to starboard.

Levasseur looked, and caught his breath. Two ships that at the distance seemed of considerable burden were heading toward them some five miles away.

For the remainder of that day Levasseur's thoughts were of anything but love. He remained on deck, his eyes now upon the land, now upon those slowly gaining ships. And then, toward evening, when within three miles of shore, he almost fainted from relief when a voice from the crow's-nest above announced that the larger of the two ships was the Arabella. Her companion was presumably a prize.

Levasseur put off in a boat accompanied by Cahusac and two other officers, and went to visit Captain Blood aboard the Arabella.

"Our brief separation has been mighty profitable," was Captain Blood's greeting. "It's a busy morning we've both had." He was in high good-humor as he led the way to the great cabin for a rendering of accounts.

The tall ship that accompanied the Arabella was a Spanish vessel of twenty-six guns, the Santiago from Puerto Rico with a hundred and twenty thousand weight of cacao, forty thousand pieces of eight, and the value of ten thousand more in jewels. A rich capture of which two-fifths under the articles went to Levasseur and his crew. Of the money and jewels a division was made on the spot. The cacao it was agreed should be taken to Tortuga to be sold.

Then it was the turn of Levasseur, and black grew the brow of Captain Blood as the Frenchman's tale was unfolded. At the end he roundly expressed his disapproval. The Dutch were a friendly people whom it was a folly to alienate, particularly for so paltry a matter as these hides and tobacco, which at most would fetch a bare twenty thousand pieces.

But Levasseur answered him that a ship was a ship, and it was ships they needed. Perhaps because things had gone well with him that day, Blood ended by shrugging the matter aside. Thereupon Levasseur proposed that the Arabella and her prize should return to Tortuga and there to unload the cacao and enlist further adventurers that could now be shipped. Levasseur meanwhile would effect certain necessary repairs, and then proceeding south, await his admiral at Saltatudos, an island conveniently situated.

To Levasseur's relief, Captain Blood not only agreed, but pronounced himself ready to sail at once.

At sunset that evening the wind freshened; it grew to a gale, and from that to such a hurricane that Levasseur was thankful to find himself ashore and his ships in safe shelter.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RANSOM.

In the glory of the following morning, sparkling and clear after the storm, a curious scene was played on the beach of the Virgen Magra.

Enthroned upon an empty cask sat the French filibuster to transact the business of making himself safe with the Governor of Tortuga.

A guard of honor of about a half-dozen officers hung about him. Before him, guarded by two half-naked negroes, stood young d'Ogeron, in frilled shirt and satin small-clothes and fine shoes of Cordovan leather. Near at hand, and also under guard, mademoiselle, his sister, sat hunched upon a hillock of sand.

Levasseur addressed himself to M. d'Ogeron. He spoke at long length. In the end—

"I trust, monsieur," said he, "that I make myself quite clear."

(To be continued.)

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If a small boy refuses a second piece of cake, it's a sign that there's something wrong with him—or the cake.

Golf in the United States and Great Britain seems to be a case of trying to "Keep up with the Joneses."

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Interesting Finds Made On Seashore

"London streets are paved with gold," runs the optimistic old ballad, but the possibilities of the seashore are a much more hopeful proposition. Valuables are often picked up between the high and low tide-marks at seaside resorts, and a search in caves where the waves wash daily in and out, or along rock crevices and shelves where flotsam and jetsam lodge, may well bring its own reward, writes J. V. in the London Daily Express.

Year after year, rings, watches, brooches, bracelets, cigarette cases, purses and money are lost in the beach by holiday-makers, and either buried in the sand or washed out to sea. Their owners rarely see or hear of them again, but the professional beachcombers know where to hunt for such treasure-trove.

It is astonishing how beach loot can travel. There was a queer case, last year, for instance, when a midlander dropped a wallet, containing £500 in notes, on a North Wales beach, and had it returned a fortnight later. It had been washed up at Formby, in Lancashire, twenty miles distant from Prestatyn, where it was lost.

All sorts of interesting finds have been made along the shores of Selsey Bill, where the sea is encroaching more and more upon the soft crumbling flats, disturbing the mud and sand, wherein lie buried relics of the past, such as Roman coins, tiles, ornaments, and once—only a few years ago—the skeleton of a mammoth..

At Selsey, and at East and West Wittering, close by it, the seeker may find agates. Cromer, too, is an agate ground, as are some other East Coast resorts; cornelians are quite common in Wales, and have been found on the Suffock shores. Scarborough is famous for its jet, and both Suffolk and the north-east coast sometimes yield amber.

The longshore hunter cherishes always the faint hope that he may light upon ambergis, the precious secretion of the sperm whale, though it is rarely washed up in our home waters. Southern seas are more likely hunting grounds and good finds are occasionally made off India, Africa, and Brazil.

Some Norwegian seamen, whaling in Australian seas a few years ago, caught a whale which proved to be worth £27,000, as it contained about 900 pounds of ambergris! That kind of luck is rare, but any one who notices a lump of opaque, blackishgrey, soapy substance on the beach when holiday-making this year would be well advised to make inquiries before using it as a cricket ball, or throwing it back into the sea for the amusement of the dog, as scent manufacturers pay upwards of £2 an ounce for it, so much is ambergris in demand as an ingredient in the making of certain perfumes.

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