

# RIFT AND SPRAY,

OR,

## LOVE AND VENGEANCE AMONG THE SMUGGLERS.

THE MOST FASCINATING OCEAN ROMANCE SINCE THE DAYS OF COOPER AND MARYATT.

### CHAPTER XIV.

#### THE GHOST THAT PARALYZED THE PIRATE.

Gerald had not known how the catastrophe of the boat of the Spray had been brought about—or, perhaps, he would have shrunk from it. He would not have been able to enter into Ben's views and ideas as to how far you may carry a principle of self defense.

But it was an immense relief to Gerald to be able to leave the deck.

Ben had released him from the gag and put the handkerchief in his own pocket, and when Gerald reached the state-cabin of the Rift, as it was called, he was at once received in the arms of Captain Mocquet, who, while he rubbed the region of his stomach, exclaimed:

"Sacre, mon ami! I shall call one mortal—what you say—duel that Monsieur Jackson. I do not like de box."

"What box?" said Gerald.

"Dis box," replied Mocquet, as he dealt Gerald a feeble blow in the stomach.

"Oh! I understand. Marie—how is poor dear Marie?"

"She sleep like one mouton; that is, small—what you call him?—lamb."

"Where is he? I will have him up!—I will have him!" roared the voice of Captain Dolan at this moment, and there was a scuffling noise at the hatchway.

"Dolan?" said Gerald.

"Sacre!" said Captain Mocquet.

"He shall yet come on deck. He shall yet fire on the schooner! I have sworn it!"

"He comes!" said Gerald, faintly. "Another struggle with that man! Oh, heaven, direct me. Is he, indeed, or is he not, my father?"

"Hold, Captain Dolan!" was now heard in the voice of Ben Bowline. "We don't believe it!"

"You—don't—believe—it! And pray, Ben Bowline, what is it that you don't believe?"

"That Gerald wrote to the port admiral."

"In-deed!"

"Oh, that's all very well. Captain Dolan, but Martin and I don't believe."

"Martin and you are two notorious rascals and I will speak to both of you another time. I suppose, though, I may be permitted to go into my own cabin?"

"Will, as to that—"

"Oh, much obliged to you—ha! ha!—much obliged!"

The rapid sound of Captain Dolan's descending footsteps came plainly upon the ears of Gerald and of Captain Mocquet.

The latter seized upon Gerald; and, flinging open the sliding-door of the little berth where Marie slept, he dragged him in with him and abruptly closed it.

It was at that moment Captain Dolan reached the cabin.

All was darkness.

Coming out of the faint night-light—

which, after all, is ever a sort of light in the open air, and gleaming from the surface of the sea—the darkness of the cabin of the Rift was something very impenetrable and profound to Captain Dolan; and he paused on the threshold as a man might pause on the brink of a well.

He had been very much bruised by his fall down the fore-cabin hatch. As no bones were broken, he had managed to crawl up, with such an accession of savageness and rage about his heart and brain that he was capable of any act of cruelty and oppression.

The crew of the Rift he dared not, he felt, know, raise a finger against; so his first idea was to make Gerald feel the weight of his vengeance.

"Hilloa!" he said; "hilloa!"

There was no reply.

"Gerald, I say!"

No answer.

"Skulking, eh? Oh, we will soon put an end to that—oh, very soon! Stop a bit, Mocquet, hilloa! Captain Mocquet, hilloa!"

His receipts were all well.

"No you won't speak, either! No doubt we are both agreed on that. But who knows won't find a way to make you both speak?"

"Ha! ha! who knows? Come, now—I know well enough that you are both here, so you may as well speak—eh?—eh?"

All the sound in the cabin was the hoarse cough of his own words.

"Oh, very well, very well. Please yourselves, only don't think you will do any good in her dreams; and she muttered some few inarticulate words and her eyelashes had become drenched with tears.

But the noise had ceased and Marie had slept on as before.

She slept still.

Captain Mocquet and Gerald were close to the panel that opened into the cabin, but they had no notion that Dolan was presenting a pistol to that panel, which, at the caprice of a moment, he might discharge, possibly to the injury of Marie.

Had such a thought as that passed over their minds, they would not have hesitated a moment to sally out and confront him.

As it was, Gerald whispered to Captain Mocquet:

"I had better go to him and speak to him."

"Non—non. I shall."

"Not you, sir! Have you not heard that his threats are directed against you. Me he reserves for some future fate, which will give him more satisfaction; so for the present, I am safe."

Dolan spoke again.

"Now I give you fair notice—both of you. I will have you out—out at once. As for you, Gerald, I will—ha! ha!—I will think of you; but you, Captain Mocquet, I may as well settle with at once. Come, now—about that little girl of yours—what will you give? How much—eh? If I tell you where she is, how much will you give?"

The stillness was now unbroken for a few moments and then Dolan cried out in a voice of rage:

"I tell you, Mocquet, if you don't come out at once and speak I will shoot you through the panel!"

"Ah!" said Mocquet, and he made a step forward; but Gerald took him by the arm and drew him back.

"No—no. I will go!"

"Non—non!"

That will do, that will do. I wonder

now who invented brandy? Some great genius, I should say; but whoever he was good luck to him say I. But he's past wishing good luck to, of course, for brandy has been invented ever so long ago; so, of course, the worthy individual is dead—dead. Well, we shall all be dead some day, when our time comes; but I don't want my time to come. Oh, no, no! I have made too good a thing of smuggling and of the Rift altogether to want that. I shall be a great gentleman yet, if I look sharp and don't run on any rocks. That's the thing to do. It's decidedly good."

These last words applied to another draught of the brandy.

Dolan, then holding by the table in his cabin, glared about him with a ferocity of expression peculiarly his own and thoughts of murder came into his mind.

"I don't see," he muttered, "why I should be troubled with Mocquet, as I shall be troubled. The sooner he is out of my way the better for me. He will go on shore else, and there will be no end of bother. I am here with him—here alone, except the boy, and I don't care what he says or what he sees. I will have him hung; and Sir Thomas Clifford, the admiral of the port, shall see that even-handed justice is done; and then I will write him a letter—oh, such a letter! Ha! ha!—such a letter! Oh, what a letter that will be! Ha! ha! Oh! ha! ha! Good gracious!"

Dolan very near choked himself with the strained laughter that came over him at the idea of what a letter he would send to Admiral Sir Thomas Clifford. It took him some time to recover, and then he looked at the panel that would slide back and open a way to the berth leading from the cabin, and the deadly hyena-like glare flashed from his eyes again and he plunged his hand in the breast of his apparel as he said:

"Captain Mocquet! Captain Mocquet! I want you, if you please. I know perfectly well where you are and I want you, Captain Mocquet!"

There was no reply.

"Oh, you won't speak. You won't come out and see your old friend, who has transacted business with you for so long. Well, perhaps we will find some way of making you, Captain Mocquet."

The silence was still unbroken.

"Ah, you pretend to be asleep—you and Gerald. You are perhaps thinking that you will resist me—that both of you have got into a sort of citadel, where you are hid, you will find yourselves mistaken. Captain Mocquet, I say!"

Dolan thought he heard a slight movement on the other side of the panel and he dropped on his knees by the table and took a pistol with a long, bright barrel from his breast and leveled it over the table, shutting one eye, as he thought, very slowly, so as to take good aim at Captain Mocquet when he should make his appearance.

"Are you coming? Are you coming, my dear Captain Mocquet? I am waiting for you. There is no danger—not a bit—not a bit. Yet, stop; I want to say something to you. I was nearly forgetting—very nearly forgetting. Will you give me that order for the twenty thousand francs? Eh? Will you give me that and then I will tell you where your little daughter is? Good, that! I will tell him where his little daughter is and then he can have no complaint against me. Ha, ha!"

Dolan was just under the influence of the ardent spirits he had taken sufficiently to have lost his discretion, and to utter aloud his secret thoughts, as well as those which he wished to keep to himself; so that Captain Mocquet and Gerald, by both listening attentively, heard much that otherwise they could only have faintly guessed at.

They did both listen most silently.

Marie slept.

It was strange what a deep slumber had come over the young girl; but it was, perhaps, to be accounted for by the fatigue consequent upon the brief cessation of the ordinary current of life, when she was all but drowned, after the sinking of the Coquette.

Certainly it is that she slept soundly—neither the confusion upon the deck of the Rift, nor the firing—both from it and from the Spray—nor the struggle that had taken place with Gerald, when he was forced upon the deck, had sufficed to awaken her.

But in her sleep she had a sort of consciousness of that latter tumult.

The young girl had moaned sadly when the faint echoes of Gerald's voice came to her in her dreams; and she muttered some few inarticulate words and her eyelashes had become drenched with tears.

But the noise had ceased and Marie had slept on as before.

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"No—no. I will go!"

"Non—non!"

That will do, that will do. I wonder

It was either her father's voice or Gerald's which at this moment broke through the protracted slumbers of poor Marie. With a sigh she opened her eyes, and her idea was that she was in her own little cot on board the Coquette. It is astonishing how the mind will, without consulting the conceptions, revive what it has concluded exists, without dispute. She forgot, for the moment all that had happened to separate her from the French lugger; or if it directly floated over her half-wakened recollection, it was but like the faint remembrance of a dream.

With precisely a similar action to that she had used while on board the Coquette, Marie stretched forth her hand and touched the brass handle of the sliding door; she drew it open, and glancing from the berth in which she lay, she said:

"Bon jour, mon cher pere. On sommes-nous?"

Now these were the precise words she had uttered when Captain Dolan first saw her in the cabin of the Coquette, while bent upon his plundering expedition among poor Captain Mocquet's lockers.

The attitude, too, of the young girl was the same; and around her waist hung the same bit of edging to her night-dress, which he had noticed when her arm was outstretched to open the similar little sliding door on board the lugger.

The lantern—by which Captain Dolan could see now well about him in the cabin—sent a full ray through a hole in the side, upon the face and form—partially rising from the berth—of Marie. The resemblance to the last occasion on which he had seen her was very complete.

If death itself had breathed with its icy sighs upon the heart of Dolan he could not have been more completely paralyzed than he was at the moment.

The confusion of his intellect was rapid and complete; and he could do nothing but still kneel by the table, and glare at what he could consider to be nothing else than the apparition before him.

How was it possible to be other than a supernatural being who now met his eyes?

There was the girl whom he had met in the cabin of the Coquette—whom he could have sworn he saw go down with the French lugger. There she was, looking just as she did; she uttered the same words, too; and there was the little fluttering lace that hung by her waist. He had happened particularly to notice that.

You might have counted twenty slowly, while Dolan, with parted lips and staring eyes, regarded the fair image before him; and then the agony of his fear, which else would have killed him, found vent in a howl of fright that echoed through the ship.

He fell completely over on his back. He yelled again, and shrieked fearfully. He rolled to his knees again. He struggled half way so his feet.

"Help—help! Have mercy upon me! Ben, Martin! Oh, save me!"

He reached the hatchway on his hands and knees; still yelling for aid or mercy he reached the deck and fell into the arms of the terrified crew, who, hearing such yells and shouts from the cabin, had made a rush to the hatchway to ascertain the cause.

### CHAPTER XV.

#### THE AMERICAN CAPTAIN CATCHES A GLIMPSE OF HIS LOST DAUGHTER.

Once more we take our way to that little bit of beach, on which now the advancing tide was surging, and listen to the words—few now and faint—which were falling from the lips of the dying smuggler. Captain Morton was so deeply interested in everything that had been uttered by Hutchins, in relation to the child that had been saved from the wreck of the Sarah Ann, that the knock at the door of the hut had to be repeated before he paid attention to it.

The dying man heard it, however.

It had all the effect upon him of a summons to the grave.

With a loud cry, he sprang up to a sitting posture in his bed; and holding out his arms before him, as though he would ward something off, he shrieked out:

"No, no; not yet—not yet—oh, not yet! I cannot go; I know you! Oh, spare me yet—for the love of Heaven, and of Heaven's mercy, spare me yet! Let me have time to repent. Oh, not yet! I know you—I know you too well!"

"Who is it?" said Captain Morton.

"Death—death!"

"Nay—you are deceiving yourself."

"No; it is death—death!"

"Death does not come in a material form. Compose yourself and hope for the best. You may still seek for mercy where mercy is infinite."

With a deep sigh the smuggler fell back upon his miserable bed and said faintly:

"Yes—yes."

Captain Morton went to the door, which at the request of the dying man had been closed, although it could easily have been opened from without. The captain flung it open, saying, as he did so:

"Who is there?"

There was no reply from the person seeking admission to the boat-house; but by the dim, very dim light, Captain Morton could see that it was a young girl with a shawl placed over her head and pinned or tied beneath her chin, while the long ends hung down over her shoulders.

"Who are you?" he said again. "Whom seek you here, my girl?"

"Jabez."

"Who is Jabez?"

"Hutchins, sir."

"He is very ill—dying, I think—and cannot see any one. You come from some of the cottages, I suppose?"

"Oh, no—no! I have brought him this."

She produced a little basket over which was a clean, white cloth; and it was just at that moment, while the captain had his hand on one of the handles of the little basket and the young girl still retained her hold of the other that the sullen echo of a gun and then of another came from over the sea, apparently far off.

"Ah!" said the girl, "I fear—"

"What do you fear?"

"Poor Gerald—my poor Gerald! O, God, be good to him!"

The young girl started from the open door of the little boat-house, and then, suddenly pausing, she looked up into the night sky.

A beautiful rocket rose high among the clouds and then bursting, sent down a rain of emerald-colored sparks. It seemed as if some faint reflection from that green rain of light found its way to the fair face of the young girl, for as Captain Morton looked at it he could hardly persuade himself that it was not something more than mortal in its beauty that met his eyes.

A deep and strange feeling came over his heart and he knew not why or wherefore,

but the tears rolled up in his eyes and he stepped toward the girl with his arms outstretched, with an impulse to clasp her to his breast which could not be withstood.

"The Rift!" she said, as she clasped her hands. "It is the Rift!"

Another moment and, fleet as a chamois, she was gone. A light flutter of drapery in the darkness and he could see no more of her.

Captain Morton stood on the threshold of the boat-house like a man entranced.

"What is this?" he gasped. "Why am I thus full of agitation? Why does my heart beat so rapidly and strangely and why are my eyes filled with tears?"

He leaned against the side of the old boat. The tide, with a surging hiss, was laying the beach, and he could hear the wind, with a melancholy, dirge-like howl, battling with the waves in the Channel. He strove to pierce the darkness with his eyes, but all in vain; no trace of the young girl could he discover.

With a deep sigh Captain Morton re-entered the hut.

"I am very weak," he said, "and little trifles move me. It is because I have suffered so much."

The basket that the young girl had brought with her she left in the hands of the Captain, who now placed it on the side of the bed, as he said in a low voice, betraying great exhaustion with feeling:

"Hutchins, here is a basket, I suppose containing some delicacies for you, sent by some compassionate friend or neighbor. Do you hear me?"

Hutchins did not move.

"Try to rouse yourself a little. Here is a basket, I say, which has been brought by a young girl."

The light had got very dim in the hut and Captain Morton could not very well see that awful look of another world which was now on the face of the dying man. It was only in a faint whisper that he could speak.

"Come—come—come!"

"Where? What?"

"Nearer—nearer. Come!"

"Yes."

"I am—going now! I see the light. God! It is lured and fearful! and yet—yet—"

"Yet what?"

"I hear soft voices praying, and they utter my name—even my sinful name!"

"Be comforted."

"Hush! hush! hush!"

Captain Morton was silent; and as the light slowly waned away, and got dimmer and dimmer, he could hear the breathings of the smuggler grow fainter. When the dying man spoke again, it was in a low, faint whisper:

"Did you say a basket—a girl?"

"Yes."

"With fair hair, and so sweet a look—"

"I saw that she was fair, and very lovely."

"God! God!"

"Some neighbor's child?"

With a writhing movement, the smuggler approached close to Captain Morton; and in a strange, spasmodic way, he whispered to him:

"That was the child that was saved from the wreck of the Sarah Ann. Her clothes were marked with the name of Grace Morton!"

Captain Morton cried out aloud:

"My child—my own—my little one! O Heaven! My darling—my Grace!"

"You—you—the father—"

"I am—I am! I have come from afar over the sea to seek for news of this little one. I am Captain Morton, and you speak of my child!"

"Thank—thank God!"

Boom! came the thunder of a gun at sea; and the spirit of the smuggler fled.

"Speak again—oh, speak again!" cried Captain Morton. "Where is she? Where has she fled? Oh, tell me! One word—only one word!"

All was still. The frantic appeals of the father were put to an insensible clod. Then, with a wild rush, Captain Morton flew from the hut, and cried aloud:

"Grace—Grace! my child! my own darling! It is your own father calls you—your poor suffering father! Grace—my own dear one! my own little one!—do you not hear me? Grace! Grace! Whither have you fled? Your father calls you, to hold you to his heart forever and forever!"

With such shouts and cries Captain Morton fled along the beach and up the narrow pathway that led to the town, and the fishermen and their wives, who had retired to rest, muttered prayers as they heard the frantic cries and the rapid footsteps.

It is long now since we have set foot within the precincts of that sea-girt house, where first we described the young girl in conversation with the old sailor, who had charge of the beacon on the cliff, as described in the first chapter of this veritable history.

We now return to that mysterious place. Joseph and the young girl are no longer on the top of the cliff. They occupy a position on a sort of plateau, about halfway down the face of it, and they are both looking out to the sea.

"Come, come, Miss Grace," said Joseph, "I advise you for the best. You will have Mrs. Wagner coming after you soon, and you know her."

"I do know her, Joseph; but I know that I am no longer a little child."

"Well, no more you are, miss, if it comes to that; but you know that your father—"

"I will not call him father, Joseph."

"Well, well, miss, don't then; and I can't say he's much of a father to you. What makes you shake so, Miss Grace, tonight? You don't seem like yourself."

"I hardly know, Joseph."

"Why, now you are crying."

"I know I am. I don't mind telling you. I went, as you know, in the boat to Hutchins' cottage a little time ago."

"Yes, miss; and Tom rowed you along the little bit of coast, didn't he?"

"He did. I went to take him the little basket of things that I always take him once a week."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

#### Empty.

Tramp—Are you the proprietor of this hotel, sir?

Proprietor—Yes.

Tramp—Will you please punch me under the ribs as hard as you can?

Proprietor—Certainly—there, how's that?

Tramp—That'll do. Now, what I'm getting at is, don't yer want to hire me for a perambulating dinner-gong? That roller sound would fetch people down from the town square.

#### VARIETIES.

The Welsh title of the aspen is "the leaf of the maiden's tongue."

The standard of education in Spain is very low, but little more than twenty-four per cent of the population being able to read and write.

Belgian farmers, without any special advantages, have found the production of flax profitable enough to induce them to grow it in increasing quantities for English markets. Russia is the chief source of the flax supply of England, and the British East Indies of the linseed we import.

Prussian state railways have for some time past employed women as guards at crossings. The work consists chiefly of the closing and opening of the bars and the lighting and sweeping of crossings, and the women in most cases are either the wives or widows of guards. Their daily wages are from sixpence to ninepence.

The cock partridge takes a share of sitting on the nest, but when the brood it hatched he feeds some yards ahead of it, and takes care of number one, and leaves his mate to cater for the young ones. Young partridges newly hatched live almost entirely on insects, which the old hen finds for them.

When a bee has filled a cell either with pure honey or a mixture of pollen-dough and honey, and has completed the lid, a drop of formic acid, obtained from the poison-bag connected with the sting, is added to the honey by perforating the lid with the sting. Numerous experiments show that this formic acid preserves honey and every other sugar solution from fermentation.

This pretty story is told with regard to the origin of the Corinthian capital. It is said that a loving nurse had placed a basket of toys, covered with a tile, upon the grave of a Corinthian girl, and that in the spring