

The Pirate of Alastair

By
**RUPERT SARGENT
HOLLAND**

Author of "The Count at Harvard," etc.

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CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

She walked away and leaned on the bulwark on the other side. "The water's getting quite deep."

I followed. "There's quite a rise of tide. It's nearly full, and then it will turn—in about an hour, I should say."

She looked at the little chateleine watch she wore, and gave a cry of dismay.

"But that will be 7 o'clock, and then dine at the club at that time, and my aunt will be worried half out of her poor old head."

"They dine too early; they miss the best part of the day."

She turned a trifle imperiously towards me. "Still, that is the hour, and I must be getting back. What answers to the problem have your frequent studies brought?"

"The first is to wait until the causeway is dry," I answered, avoiding her eyes and looking out to sea.

"But that is out of the question," she said, with the faint hint of a tapping foot upon the deck. The touch of authority made me stubborn.

"There's a fine view of the sunset from here, though not so fine as from the cliff beyond my house. You should see that some evening when you're not afraid of missing dinner."

She looked me over while I kept my face away, and I could feel the struggle whether resentment or amusement should have the upper hand. The latter finally won. "Please help me to get home, Mr. —" she began.

"Felix Selden," I supplied her, "though I'd much rather you stayed here, Miss —" and I in my turn hung questioning.

"Barbara Graham," she answered quite frankly. Then suddenly she laughed, and I was forced to join her. "Come, Mr. Pirate, now that are properly known to each other, and I have thanked you for your compliment, will you think of a way to save my poor aunt from nervous prostration? If you will, I promise some day to go without dinner and come to see the sunset from your cliff."

"It's a bargain," I said, and strode resolutely across the deck to the side where the causeway ran.

"But how? What are you doing to do?" came in surprised accents from Miss Graham.

I stopped and turned. "You will not wait for the tide, and you must not wet the slippers, so there's only one way left."

"And what is that?" she asked.

"For me to carry you ashore."

I happened to be looking at her, and her face went pink of a second, pink over the brown of the sun.

"But," she stammered, "I don't think that would do."

"It's the only alternative," I said, positively.

"Are you sure," she said, "that you are strong enough?"

I looked at her slender figure and laughed. "I have not lived out of doors for nothing," I answered. "I could carry you from here to the Shifting Shoal yonder without tiring."

Again came the infectious laugh, apparently at the thrill of the adventure, and I found it impossible to keep from joining her.

"But it's time I made the boast good," I answered, and, leaning towards her, picked her up in my arms, careful to keep the little slippers and her skirts clear of the waves.

"You must put your arms about my neck to keep the balance," I said, "or I'll not guarantee the consequences."

"Must I?" she said quite demurely, and did as I commanded.

Feeling my way cautiously, I started to cross the causeway. A false step and I should have slipped into the deeper water, so I went slowly, feeling for safe footing as I took each step. Once I glanced momentarily at the face which was so close to mine, but Miss Graham's eyes were fixed on the shore ahead, and would not look at me.

We reached the sand at the foot of the cliff and I put the girl down. She looked a her slippers.

"Splendidly done," she said. "Not a drop of water touched me. You're quite as strong as you said."

"Remember the cause," I answered.

"But you're frightfully wet," she objected, looking at my heavy riding breeches and leggings, which were soaked through. "You must run back to the cottage as fast as you can, to save yourself a cold."

"I must see you to the club first," I answered. "I know a short cut back of the cliff and through the woods."

"Hurry, then," she said. "I'll not have you catching cold on my account."

We scrambled up the headland, and struck into the pine woods, I leading, she following close behind. We went along at a dog trot, and, although I often stopped to insure against her tripping, I found that she was a strong runner and wanted no rest. At last we came to a clearing just this side of the club entrance.

"I'll say good-by here," she said, "and spare you the sight of a civilization that

you dislike." She held out her hand.

Then I remembered our bargain. "You said that if I set you ashore you would come to see the sunset from my cliff. You haven't forgotten that?"

"No; but I must think out a way. They dine here at such a stupid hour. But I promise you that some afternoon you'll see me strolling down the beach, and then if there's a sunset I'll let you show it to me. You deserve that much, at least, for coming to my rescue."

She gave me her hand a second time, and turned into the grounds of the Penguin Club. I looked at my watch; she would be just in time for dinner.

I walked back through the woods and up the beach. The western sky was fairly ablaze with color. It seemed that a beacon flamed through the pines upon my cliff.

"Have you ever known such a beautiful afternoon, Charles?" I asked my man at supper.

"Never, Mr. Felix, never."

I was sitting so that I could look out of the window at the sea.

"It was unusually glorious, even for Alastair, wasn't it?" I pursued.

"Yes, sir, it certainly was, sir, even for Alastair, sir."

After supper I had my coffee on the balcony and sat there and smoked and wondered how long it had been since a petticoat had boarded the ship.

CHAPTER III.

The weather next morning was just right for a ride, and sending for my horse, I made a great circuit of the woods, coming back by the marshes about noon. As I galloped past the upper end of the lowlands I heard a voice calling to me, and, drawing rein, waited until the voice's owner appeared. This proved to be an extremely unbored young man dressed in very loud tweeds. He carried a fishing-rod over his arm, and a fish-basket dangled from his shoulder.

"I say, do you know the country hereabouts?" he inquired. "I've lost my way, and I'm infernally hot and tired."

He looked it; his lips were almost as mutinous as those of a spoiled child, and even the tilt of his soft felt had had a dejected air.

"Where do you want to go?" I asked in return. "The Penguin club lies about three miles off to the east."

"Yes, that's it," he said. "I'm a Penguinite, worse luck." He dropped the fishing-rod and tried to kick some of the mud from his boots. "I came out to get some fishing at 5 this morning, and not a bite have I had, nor a morsel of food tasted since. My legs ache at the thought of that three miles yet to go. Isn't there a farm-house somewhere near where I could get something to eat?"

The appeal in his eyes was so plaintive that I could not help smiling. Thereat he smiled back.

"It's a beastly pickle, isn't it?" he said. "The next time I'll arrange to have a man follow me with lunch."

It was only a quarter of a mile to my cottage. "Come along with me," I said. "I'll fix you up."

He grinned gratefully, and trudged along beside me until we came to the cottage. I called for Charles and sent him off with the horse. By the time he returned, my guest was feeling considerably better, having postponed famine by the aid of whisky and soda. He sat down to dinner with the air of a king come into his own. For a time he ate silently but strenuously, then he looked up at me.

"They don't give us such food at the club, no, sir-ee, and as for the wines, they can't compare with your claret. Funny to think of finding such things down here in the country, away at the end of an empty beach. I didn't know there was a civilized man within fifty miles of here. Do you happen to come from New York?"

"Originally," I made answer. "But it was some time ago."

"Funny thing, New York," said my guest. "When I'm back there I think I'd like to be out in the open country, but as soon as I have my wish I'm crazy for the old burg. I've been down at the Penguin now for more than two weeks, and I don't suppose an hour of the day passes when I don't long for the scenery of Broadway. The worst time is at night. I can sit on the club porch and fairly hear the Elevated sizzle by. Sometimes it seems as if I really couldn't stand it any longer."

"Why do you?" I asked.

"There are reasons, good and sufficient reasons," he answered, with a slow smile. "Reasons for which I might be living in Kamchatka as well as anywhere else."

He looked at me intently for a few seconds, then lighted a cigarette.

"You're not inquisitive, are you? First rule to success in any business affair. However, there are certain facts you are entitled to have: my name is Rodney Islip, and I'm a broker, offices at 57 Wall Street, where I'd be glad to execute any orders for you at any time of year—though between you and me the present is a particularly bad time to invest in

anything, not even including British consols or government bonds. This recent French smash put lots of people out of business. You've heard of it, I suppose—the most outrageous swindle since Whitaker Wright."

"I read of it in the papers. It seems this man Etienne induced half the poor of Paris to trust their savings to him, and then played one company into the hands of another until the bubble burst—isn't that about it?"

The man in tweeds nodded. He threw back his head and blew a cloud of smoke in an upward spiral. "So little difference," said he, "between absolute triumph and absolute defeat. A jerk of the tinker may convert the greatest benefactor into the deepest villain. For Etienne—though I think that's only a pseudonym of his—is undoubtedly a villain when you think of the numberless lifetime savings he has swept away. Why will people trust a promoter? Haven't they all of history to judge by?"

"History teaches that people are always ready to be fooled," I answered.

"However, I don't blame them. In a man's nerve was only big enough I'd follow him myself."

Islip looked at me with a merry twinkle.

"The solitary life makes you a philosopher," he said. "I envy you. I'm as restless as a hawk."

I smiled. "An uneasy conscience?"

"No; I'm no Etienne. I believe the only place for such men is under lock and key. But I hate to sit still and think—in my present condition."

He did not seem disposed to explain that position, and I would not press him.

After a time we adjourned to my balcony and sat there enjoying the day, carrying on a somewhat desultory conversation. I found that I liked this man; there was a frank camaraderie about him, an openness of face and spirit, that irresistibly appealed. He seemed the better sort of young New Yorker, thoroughly optimistic, always at his ease. I could see he had the knack of knowing how to dress; even his loose, baggy outing clothes set well upon him.

"Do you ever shoot at gulls?" he asked, noting the birds that wheeled continually in from sea and over the cliffs.

"No; it's bad luck to shoot them. In stormy weather, when sailors can't see their hands before their faces, they can hear the beating of gulls' wings and look out for hidden rocks. One comes to think a great deal of seafarers down this way."

"I dare say. It must be beastly work in a storm at sea."

"I often think that when I'm in bed on a bad night. The Shoal Light yonder keeps most of the ships away."

We smoked for a time in silence.

"What a contrast," Islip said at length, "between this quiet beach and the folks at the club! I think I like this the better of the two, but I should want company."

"Many people over there now?" I asked.

"A goodish number."

"Who are they?" I inquired idly.

"Oh, the usual crowd of city mag nates with their wives and families. James G. Purviance of Oil, with the Mrs. and two marriageable daughters. The Mrs. has her eyes on Colonel Fellowes, the man who judges the hackneys at all the shows. I think he'd rather stay single, but the nets are tightening, and Mrs. Purviance isn't going to let him slip. Then there's the Gregory family. The old man sits at the telephone most of the day, giving orders how to run his railroad, though he thinks he is off on a summer holiday; and the three girls and the boy cut capers on the golf-links, and get up theatricals in the evening. Then there are two very decent unattached bachelors, Philip Leroy and Arthur Savage—well, I suppose I might say three, because I'm a bachelor."

"Yes?" I asked in a tone that asked delicately for more.

"Oh, there's Mr. Divine of Rock Bottom Lead, and—let me see—there's a Miss Elizabeth Corey and her niece, Miss Graham, of New York."

I watched him out of the corner of my eye, but his tanned face was placidity itself.

"What are they like?" I asked.

"Very nice. Miss Corey is quite the grande dame, in a gentle way."

"And the niece?"

Now I detected a shift in Islip's position.

"Well, she's very nice, too, very nice. I knew her quite well in town." He broke off definitely.

I changed the subject. I didn't care very much about the rest of the guests at the club.

A little later Islip took up his fishing-rod and his empty basket, and we walked up the beach together. At the farther end I pointed him out his road home.

"May I drop in on you again if I'm in the neighborhood?" he asked as we said good-by.

"I wish you would. Next time I'll put you on to a place where you'll get all the fish your basket will hold. I've a little place of my own."

"Thanks. I know you don't care for the club, or I'd ask you up to dinner. If I got word of a sudden break in the market, I'll let you hear."

It was plain that he couldn't keep his thoughts long from Wall Street. I smiled at the apparent incongruity of his words there on the beach, then I watched him climb the rocks and disappear. It was pleasant to have company, I considered, but for some reason I found the ship, when I climbed on board to try my paints, rather lonely. I was not used to having two visitors in as many days.

(To be continued.)

The Proper Thing.

Myer—In writing to the secretary of the navy, would it be proper to address him as "your excellency?"

Guyer—No. "Your warship" would be more appropriate.



Sour Milk Gingerbread.

Put into a bowl a half-cup of sugar, a half-cup of molasses and a half-cup of sour milk, add a level teaspoonful of baking powder dissolved in a little hot water. Mix together one and one-half cups of flour, one-half teaspoonful each of cloves, salt, ginger and cinnamon and add this to the liquid mixture. Mix well, add a half-cup of beef drippings, melted, and if desired, one beaten egg. The egg makes the bread more delicate, but it is good without it. Bake in a shallow pan for twenty or twenty-five minutes in a moderate oven.

Sweet Dill Pickles.

Soak four-inch long cucumbers in brine for twenty-four hours. Have on the stove two kettles—one containing three parts water and one part vinegar, with a teaspoonful of alum, the other holding cider vinegar sweetened to taste. Cut the cucumbers in half, place them in the first kettle and let them boil up; put them into the second kettle and boil until nearly tender. Pack the cucumbers in fruit jars and put over each jar about a half inch of dill stalk, leaves and seed, and pour in the vinegar and seal.

Brown Bread.

One cupful Indian meal, one cupful rye meal, one cupful flour, mixed together. Add one-half cupful sour milk, one-fourth cupful molasses, pinch of salt, heaping teaspoonful soda, dissolved in warm water; mix thoroughly. Our grandmothers used their hands to mix brown bread. Add warm water to make a thin batter and bake one hour in tin cans. Be sure to bake in small cans; the little round slices look appetizing and taste like the brown bread of brick oven fame.

Devilled Eggs.

Boil a sufficient quantity of eggs hard; when cold, peel and dip first into beaten raw egg, next into oil, and roll them in salt and a small quantity of cayenne. Make a little tray by twisting up the corners of half a sheet of oiled writing paper, place the eggs in it, put on a gridiron over a clear fire and shake it about until the eggs are quite hot. Meanwhile prepare equal quantities of olive oil and chutney sauce around them, garnish with parsley and serve.

Daffodil Pudding.

One cupful of butter, one-half cupful of granulated sugar, a cupful of milk, three level cupfuls of flour, in which is thoroughly mixed three teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one-half cupful of finely chopped citron and the same of small, seedless raisins and a teaspoonful of cinnamon. Whip the mixture until as light as possible, pour into individual pudding dishes and steam for one-half hour. Serve with a rich lemon sauce.

Coffee Cake.

One cupful of sugar sifted with one and one-fourth cupfuls of flour, one-half teaspoonful of soda, and one teaspoonful of cream of tartar. Sift all together. In a cup put one-fourth cupful of butter; place on stove till melted. When it boils up break into it two eggs. Quickly remove from fire and fill cup with milk. Stir into flour, etc. Flavor with almond or vanilla and bake in quick oven.

Hamburg Sandwiches.

Run round steak through a meat grinder and add salt and pepper to taste. A little grated onion may be added if liked. Make into very thin cakes and fry a good brown in butter and drippings. Very lightly butter thin slices of bread and put the cakes between them. If liked, the cakes may be made at home and fried on the grounds.

Griddle Frying.

For some kinds of frying the griddle is better and has less tendency to grease than the frying pan. Among other things, potato cakes browned on a hot greased griddle are specially crisp and delicious.

Sour Milk Biscuit.

One quart flour, two heaping teaspoons baking powder, one-half teaspoon salt, scant teaspoon soda, two spoonfuls of melted lard, sour milk to make a soft dough.

Short Suggestions.

Buying olive oil by the gallon is one case of economy.

To cover the pan in which fish is cooking will make the flesh soft.

Cheap cuts of meat can be served palatably in stews and croquettes.

Serving but two vegetables at dinner is as fashionable as it is economical.

After trimming, turn the wick of a lamp below the burner or the oil will ooze.

ARE FAT PEOPLE STUPID?

Many Great Men Have Been of More than Average Weight.

Both the willow people of the world and those of average weight associate fatness with stupidity, whereas often such is not the case. They have been to the shows at country fairs and have seen the obese ladies and the fat men there displaying their superabundant collection of adipose tissue, and have gone away with the idea that fat people, merely because they are fat, are stupider and more deficient in intelligence than people of average avoirdupois, and this, in their opinion on the subject, has extended outside of the shows to apply to fat people generally, says Tit Bits.

At the present moment William Howard Taft is the second fat man sitting in the presidential chair and the first republican of more than average weight to occupy that position, the first fat man being Stephen Grover Cleveland of democratic persuasion.

These are only two men of the present time, though Cleveland is dead, having a fine intellect in a body of supernormal weight. Looking into history we find that some of the finest intelligences the world has ever known have been incased in fleshy casquets plump even to obesity. Napoleon Bonaparte, notwithstanding his active career, was decidedly stout. Dr. Johnson was inclined to flabbiness, while Boswell, his biographer was in the same condition.

Honore de Balzac, the great French novelist, was so large that to-day he might be nicknamed "Jumbo" Balzac; Dunas pere was stout, while Sainte-Beuve had a Falstaffian stomach. In spite of his great corpulency, which he tried to keep down by drinking vinegar, Eugene Sue wrote "The Wandering Jew."

Possini, the composer, was so fat that for six years he never saw his knees, and Jules Janin, the prince of critics, broke down all ordinary sofas he sat upon, his cheeks and chin protruding beyond his beard and whiskers. Lablache, the Italian singer, was charged three fares when he traveled.

NOW IT'S DUTCH CAPS.

In honor of Wilhelmina's baby, mothers are making starched and flaring headgear for their children and here's how to make one: The Dutch cap is fashioned of strips of linen spun and embroidered by the thrifty mothers and joined with exquisite lace knitted or crocheted by the same loving hands. Before it is worn it is starched very stiff and the corners are bent back as you see them



In the illustration. It is the sweetest frame you ever saw for the little faces. The strips of linen and insertion are 18 inches long, with 20 inches of lace to edge the front. When the strips are joined they must measure 8 inches at the narrowest and 11 inches at widest point. Join at the curved seam of the back, place a nine-inch draw-string across the center back and your little cap is complete.

Where Shark Meat Is Eaten.

In Italy is regularly served a fish food which Americans discard through ignorance and prejudice. In Rome the shark finds a ready sale at the price of 8 cents a pound. The color of the meat resembles that of the shad, but is of firmer consistency and has comparatively few bones. The shark is plentifully distributed up and down our coasts from Maine to Panama throughout the year, and is as palatable as the sturgeon or halibut. But it is systematically cast away at every haul of the net by the dory man of the deep water fishing smack.

Almost Got It.

"Is there any difference in the meaning of the words 'nautical' and 'marine?'" asked Mr. Malaprop.

"Not much," replied Mrs. Malaprop. "One is a cinnamon of the other."—Chicago Record-Herald.

The men always enjoy hearing of some woman who was told she must undergo a surgical operation or die, and who got well without it.