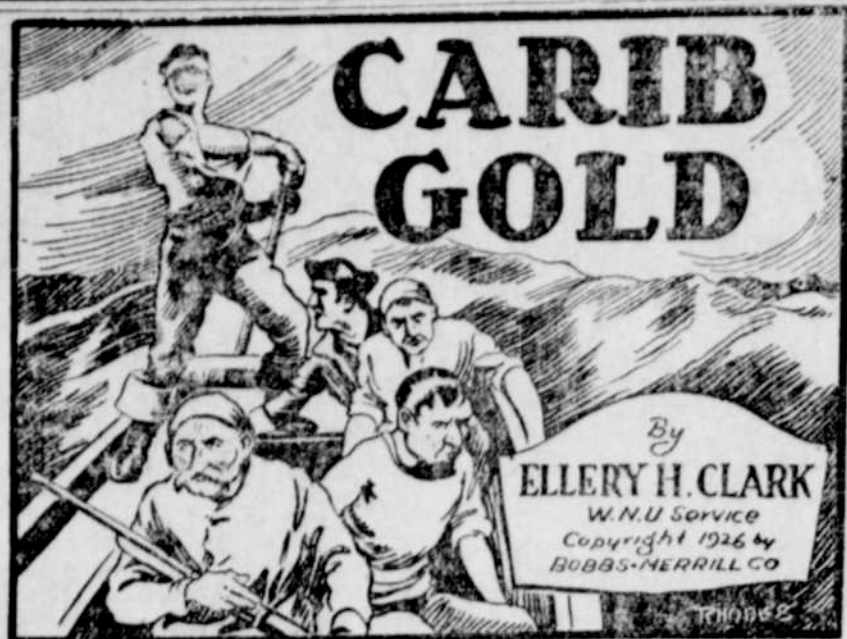




CHAPTER VI.—Barclay sets Lindsay ashore on Jamaica island, after telling him to seek out Shively, manager of McAllister's plantation, introduce himself as Robert, find out all he can about his "uncle's" house, and its defenses, and then to start on his way back. On his way to the town Lindsay is a witness to the kidnapping and tying up of a colored man, whom he frees. The man tells him he is Quashy, well known jockey, and the kidnapping was to keep him from riding in a match race the next day. Quashy sends Lindsay to his employer, Colonel Singleton, to explain the matter. He does so, and next day Singleton's horse, with Quashy up, wins the race.

CHAPTER VII.—Lindsay has made the acquaintance of a young man, George Lewis, whom he admires. While watching a card game in which Lewis is engaged, Lindsay detects a player cheating. He denounces the cheater, and a duel follows. Lindsay wounds his opponent, but grants him his life on his admitting the truth of Lindsay's accusation.

CHAPTER VIII.—Lindsay finds Shively, introduces himself, and is coldly received. Shively is a cowardly tyrant, brutal to the slaves under his control. He is torturing a young female slave when the woman's husband tries to kill him with a knife. Shively shoots the man, but in his death throes the slave declares he will come back to haunt his slayer.

CHAPTER IX.—Lindsay is accepted without question as the nephew of Lewis. He finds the embodiment of evil, and is convinced of the truth of Barclay's story of his villainy. Living with McAllister is his adopted daughter, Helen, with whom Lindsay is impressed. He finds the place strangely defended. His acquaintance with McAllister's ship, the Ashantee, with a cargo of slaves, is wrecked on the island, not a soul surviving.

CHAPTER X.—Investigating a disturbance among the cattle, Lindsay with two negroes, finds one of the animals fearfully mutilated, evidently by not the work of any known power. That night the two negroes, watching, are killed in much the same manner as had been the black man in day before. Dick sees a heller in a canoe, evidently escaping from the island, and, believing him the murderer, shoots and kills him. The tension is relieved, but that night Lindsay finds McAllister investigating a buried treasure. While he watches unseen, McAllister is threatened by what seems to be a black man. Lindsay shoots him and the figure vanishes for the house. While seeking entrance, Dick shoots and kills him. The brute proves to be an orang-utan.

CHAPTER XI.—The big ape had escaped from the wreck of the Ashantee. Lindsay tells Helen, whom he has learned to love, the whole truth of his deception. She believes Barclay's story is true. Dick goes to meet the pirate, as arranged. At the plantation he hears rumors of an uprising of the slaves. On his way to Barclay Dick passes a stranger, whose appearance is vaguely familiar. Meeting Quashy, the jockey, strongly urges Dick to return to the island at once. Barclay arranges to take Helen off the island to safety and then settle with McAllister.

ture, for me to slip down the hill to the river, strap my rifle on my back, and float down with the current, unobserved. Yet I had to confess that this, at best, could only be regarded in the light of a desperate and well-nigh foolhardy undertaking; for if they once caught a glimpse of me, they would launch a boat from the shore and overtake me in no time. No, galling as it was, there seemed nothing for me to do but to lie quiet and watch events below.

Nor had I long to wait, for the passions of the blacks, long pent up, now burst their barriers as a river in flood time surges beyond its banks. And I could not but reflect, as I sat there on the brow of that wooded hill on this November day, that there is nothing in the world more terrible than a just revenge. Surely these men, lying bound and helpless, were only encountering their just reward.

Yet, just though it might be, it was not less horrible to witness, for these blacks, following their native custom, did not kill at once, but first subjected their victims to every refinement of torture. The laying on of the whip was but the beginning, and indeed I cannot set down here the details of the butcher work that followed. Shively and Evans, as the ringleaders, were reserved until the last, and their passing furnished a frightful climax to this ghastly scene. And then, as I had feared, with these subordinate persecutors out of the way, the thoughts of the vengeful blacks turned toward the man who stood at the head of the hateful system which oppressed them—the man to whom they had appealed in vain against the despotism of the overseer. I saw them gather in groups, saw them point to the island with much talking and gesticulating, and then go to the landing where the boats were kept, evidently carefully investigating their means of transportation. After which they returned to their search of the houses and shops, and I saw them bring out a number of ladders, and, evidently dissatisfied with the supply, start at once, with axes and with the tools of the carpenter, to cut down saplings and manufacture more.

This was enough. Whether they meant to make an immediate attack, or intended to wait for darkness, I could not guess; in fact, any attempt to forestall the actions of these rebels, newly liberated from the oppressor's yoke, half-crazed with liquor, and with their fiercest passions roused by their

have been a hopeless task. And though it was a greater risk than I cared to take, I felt that the only course open to me was to try to gain the island at once. Accordingly I explained, in as few words as possible, that I should make the attempt, and although Quashy's expression showed grave fears for my safety, he saw, I think, that it would be useless to try to dissuade me, and therefore announced that he would come with me as far as he bank of the stream; whereupon, without further loss of time, we hastened down the steep and wooded hill-side toward the river.

Once arrived at our destination, I stopped and briefly surveyed our surroundings. To the south extended, for a short distance, a belt of trees; but beyond this the whole surface of the stream lay exposed to the view of the blacks; my chances, though none of the best, would at least not be so overwhelmingly against me.

To take to the water, then, I swam forth into midchannel while I was still sheltered by the woods, and then to make straight for the island—a poor enough expedient, but the best I could devise. If I only had a boat of some description, and could dash for the island at full speed, I might make it.

There have been times in my life when I have felt that things have gone exactly and precisely wrong, but on this occasion, at least, they were to go exactly and precisely right, for, as I took one last look, first down, then up the river, in the vain hope of discovering a craft of some kind, lo and behold! there to the north of me and not over fifty yards distant, I beheld a canoe.

It was not, however, a canoe unoccupied, apparently sprung into existence from nowhere simply because I had wished for it. Fate was not so kind as that. She was manned by two negroes, the one in the bow a stalwart specimen, his companion in the stern smaller and remarkably ugly, with lips of prodigious thickness and the low, retreating forehead of his race. Both men had paddles in their hands and were propelling the light craft downstream in a leisurely manner. Clearly enough, this rising of the slaves was general in its extent, and these blacks were doubtless coming from some plantation up the river to exchange news with their fellow rebels on the McAllister domain. That their rising had been successful I had no doubt, for the muzzle of a rifle protruded over the side of the canoe within easy reach of the paddler in the bow.

I was in a quandary. I hated the thought of taking human life, especially the lives of men with whom I had no quarrel, and with whom I sympathized for the heavy burden of their oppressive lot. Yet that canoe I must have, and my first thought was to step from the bushes as they neared my hiding place, level my rifle at them, and order them to bring their craft ashore. There were, however, obvious drawbacks to this scheme. In the first place, they were two to my one and might have pistols as well as their rifle, so that if both drew on me at once I could kill but one of them, at best, before being shot down myself. And in the second place, even if they obeyed me, it would be hard to get them ashore and to embark myself without their attacking me at close range, and the man in the bow was of such unusual stature and of such athletic build that I felt that in a grapple I would be no more than a child in his hands. And then, with a sudden inspiration, I remembered my companion. "Quashy," I whispered, "when I step out of the woods, shout to them—in their own tongue—to jump overboard for their lives. I'll attend to the rest."

He nodded understandingly, and without further parley, for the canoe was now close at hand, I left the shelter of the trees and leveled my rifle at the man in the bow. At the same instant I heard Quashy's guttural shout, and almost instantaneously the plunge of two dark bodies shivered the river's calm, and two black heads cut through the water heading upstream and taking a quartering course for the shore. Without the loss of a second, I waded out, finding the water unexpectedly shallow, and in an instant I had drawn the canoe to shore, and, leaping in, started in the direction of the island.

Progress in one of these light crafts is rapid, even with an unskilled hand at the paddle, and in a very few moments I had gained a position where I might turn and make straight down the river. For an instant I thought of continuing to the western shore and thus baffling the negroes on the plantation, but I remembered in time that there were other estates beyond the hills, and even now skirmishers might be lurking in the dense vegetation ahead of me. With the memory of my own

mind, I had no wish to meet a similar fate, and therefore suddenly shifted my course and headed the bow of the canoe for the south. Undoubtedly that sweep of the paddle saved me, for a second later, to the accompaniment of a sharp report, a bullet whizzed past me, and I bent to my work in earnest, praying that my assailant was scouting alone, and not with a body of companions. Apparently this was the case, for no more shots followed, but to balance matters I heard lusty yells from the plantation, and, casting a hasty glance in that direction, I could see them shoving off two boats to intercept me before I could gain the shelter of the island.

There was now necessity for speed and nothing else, and I plied my paddle for my very life. For a time the issue seemed doubtful. The leading boat, well manned and driven forward at rapid speed, presently reached a position where two negroes in the bow dropped their oars and commenced firing; but fortunately for me their aim was poor and their bullets went wild. Quite instinctively, and without stopping to weigh the advisability of my act, I stopped paddling just long enough to pick up my own rifle and take a flying shot at one of the marksmen, who was standing erect in the bow, in the act of ramming home a charge. The shot could not be called difficult, though I may say in my own behalf that my hand was unsteady from my exertions, and that the motion both of my own craft and that of my pursuers was not conducive to exactness of aim. Therefore I did not kill the man, but only wounded him; yet the result was probably in my favor, for with a loud cry of pain he staggered, lost his balance and fell at full length among the rowers, completely demoralizing the crew. At the same moment, moreover (for in their excitement they had taken no thought of their approach to the island), a volley from the house stretched the other rifleman dead. This, not unnaturally, completed their discomfiture, and both boats immediately abandoned the pursuit, and got out of range with all possible speed, leaving me free to continue on my way unmolested. A minute or two later I drove my frail craft high on the beach, and hurried toward the house. The door swung open to receive me, and an instant later, with a great feeling of thankfulness in my heart, I darted in and heard it swing to behind me with a crash. Come what might, now at least I could die fighting for the girl I loved.

CHAPTER XIII

"Port After Stormy Seas."

For a moment I was too spent to notice anything; then, to my mingled joy and relief, I saw that it was Helen who had opened the door, and I should have clasped her in my arms, but as she turned toward me, she lifted a restraining hand. "Dick," she whispered, "we're in danger. There's a man here—a lawyer—looking for Robert McAllister. They come from the same town; he's known McAllister all his life. What shall we do?"

I gazed at her, aghast, while a great resentment at the ways of fate filled my heart. I had striven hard for our safety, and had fought, in the face of odds, to reach the island—and now to be greeted like this! How could we escape? The room, with its single lamp, was in shadow; I could count on the resemblance and the scar across my cheek. Should I take the chance, and try to pass for McAllister? Or should we run for it, risking both the danger of pursuit and the peril of capture by the slaves. That, it seemed, would be almost certain death. And then suddenly, in a flash, no choice was left me; I heard the footsteps on the stairs, and a moment later Andrew McAllister stood before me, at his heels the stranger whom I had met, on horseback, on my way to the Port of the Devil.

"Here's an old friend of yours, Robert," said McAllister, "with news for you from your home."

At the words the man stepped forward, cordially enough and with outstretched hand, but, as our fingers touched and he looked me squarely in the face, I could read, to my horror first perplexity, then growing doubt, and at last certainty. His greeting died upon his lips, and he whirled sharply toward the Scotchman. "This isn't Bob McAllister," he cried.

Andrew McAllister stared, as well he might. Then, with an air of irritation, queried, "Not Robert McAllister? What do you mean by that?"

It seemed to me it was time for me to take a hand. "What madman have you here, uncle?" I exclaimed. "He'll be telling you next that you're not Andrew McAllister. Is he drunk or crazy?"

But the stranger, having, alas! right upon his side, was not so easily put down. And as I had a chance to take a closer look at him, I could see, to my dismay, that his wiry figure and keen-featured face, with bright eyes peering from under tufted eyebrows, betokened a man of action. And at once he answered me, readily enough, "I do not drink, young man, and my brains, I dare venture, are equal to your own." Then, turning to McAllister, he continued: "I mean precisely what I say. This youth bears a remarkable—nay, a startling resemblance to my client, but he is not the man. I have known Robert McAllister since he lay in his cradle. This man is shorter, broader in the shoulder, his voice is deeper; his eyes are lighter—in a score of ways he differs from the other. I give you my word—my oath, if you like—he is not your nephew."

At once I determined to hazard a bold stroke. "Uncle," I cried, "we

now time, whether I am your nephew or not makes no difference now. These slaves of yours have butchered Shively and his men. They'll attack the island next; perhaps at any moment. An hour from now we may all be dead. Let's defend ourselves first. If my life is spared, I'll prove this man to be a liar and a cheat."

My stratagem, however, was doomed to failure. With a braver man it would, I believe, have succeeded, but, as it was, McAllister's overmastering dread of Barclay and his morbid fears of treachery or surprise, were now thoroughly aroused. And thus he answered: "They won't attack us yet; I've been watching them. They're still at work on their ladders. And if they do attack," he added, with a still blacker glance at me, "I want no spleen among my troops." Then, after a moment's thought, he turned to the stranger. "Well," he challenged, "you lawyers are said to be artful as the devil himself. How can you prove to me this lad is not Robert McAllister?"

The lawyer reflected for an instant; then asked, "Have you any letters from your nephew?"

"I have," McAllister answered. "Half a dozen, at least. In my chest, up stairs."

I heard question and answer with a sinking heart. That the lawyer meant to compare my handwriting with McAllister's was evident; and it was obvious also, that I could not meet the test, for my fingers, though skillful with a rifle have never held the pen, and I have always written—when forced to write—in a most ill-formed and sprawling hand. That it would resemble the writing of Robert McAllister there was not one chance in a million. I felt that I was doomed.

And now the lawyer spoke again, remorselessly pursuing his plan. "Then get them," he ordered, "and in the meantime ask this gentleman to write for you on a sheet of paper the months of the year, and the words, 'Respected Uncle' and 'Your obedient nephew.'"

Now there is nothing more certain in the world than this: that truth, in the end, will prevail; and I could feel that the stranger's briskeness and his quiet air of being in the right were having their effect on McAllister. "Very well," he agreed; and as he motioned me to come forward I noted with a pang, that he made the gesture with his left hand, while his right held his pistol, aimed at my breast in a manner which strongly reminded me of Barclay. "Here are paper, ink and quill,"

he said. "I will get the letters." And then, to me, he added, in a manner which spoke volumes, "Place your pistol on that chair; then come hither and write as he suggests."

For one second I thought of drawing then and there, and of trying to drill McAllister with a bullet, but a moment's reflection showed me the folly

of such a course. A hundred to one he would kill me first, and even if he did not, and my shot went home, there would still be the stranger and the maroons to reckon with. And though there seemed, indeed, small chance between dying now or later, when my falsehood stood revealed, yet there remained the slender chance that some thing might intervene to save me, and on this hazard I determined to rely. Accordingly, I placed my pistol on the chair and strode over to the table with an air of confidence which I was far from feeling.

McAllister, meanwhile, had handed his weapon to the stranger, with a word which I could not catch; and I could see, by the manner in which the lawyer handled the pistol that he was a man who could shoot as well as argue. And thus McAllister ascended the stairs, while I pulled the inkhorn toward me, and, seating myself, made a show of preparing to write.

During all this time Helen had remained quietly in a corner of the room, without uttering a sound, but now she crept timidly forward and stood behind the lawyer, as though seeking his protection.

"Oh," she murmured, with such terror in her voice that I half thought she had deserted me, "a spy! How horrible! But you will protect us, won't you? You won't let him escape?"

Now few of us, in this world, are armed at all points, and the stranger, able man though he was, was not proof against the pleading of this frightened lass. "You may trust me," he answered grimly enough; and his gaze, indeed, was fixed so firmly on my face that I doubt, in the semi-darkness of the room, whether he even saw the slender cord which, in falling, flickered for an instant, before his eyes. But I saw and understood, and gathered, like a tiger, for my spring. For a second or two all was quiet; then suddenly, the lawyer uttered a queer throaty gasp, both hands flew to his neck, and the pistol, mercifully with out being discharged, fell to the floor. Instantly I was upon him, and almost in the same motion I had gagged him with my kerchief, caught him, as he reeled, and laid him on the floor, his face already purpling for lack of air. Then, still in less time than it takes to tell it, Helen released the grip of the strangling cord, and with "the trouble

(To Be Continued Next Week)

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