

His Heart's Desire

By SIR WALTER BESANT

CHAPTER III.

"Then you think," said the mate, looking about him with doubt, "that we shall do no business here?"

He was a young fellow of two-and-twenty or so, a frank and honest-looking sailor, though his business was that of a cunning kidnaper. He was armed with a revolver, ready to hand, and a cutlass hanging at his side. Behind him were four sailors, also armed, in readiness for an attack, for Polygiansians are treacherous. But there were no islanders in sight, only two Europeans—one a tall man, dressed in fantastic imitation of the natives; and the other, apparently, an ordinary beachcomber, quite out of luck, ragged, dejected and haggard. A little way off the land lay the schooner. His business was to enlist, kidnap, procure or secure, by any means in the power of the captain and the crew, as many natives as the ship would hold, and to bring them to North Queensland, where they would be hired out to plant ers.

"It is an unlucky voyage," said the mate, gazing earnestly at the two men before him, whose appearance and the contrast between them puzzled him. "Two months out and five weeks becalmed; no business done. Say, how did you come here?"

"For my part," said the German, "I am a naturalist. I make butterflies my special study. I have, I believe, enriched science with so many rare and previously unknown specimens, if I succeed in getting them to Europe, that my name will be certainly remembered in scientific history as one of those who have advanced knowledge. Can any man ask more?"

"How did you get such a rig, man?" "I am a linguist," the Baron Sergius von Holstein went on to explain, "as well as a naturalist. I therefore learned the language before landing here, having found a native or two of New Ireland in the mission of the Duke of York Island. It is a great thing to know how to talk with these black children. I am also a surgeon and a physician, so that I can heal their wounds and their diseases when they get any. You see, further, that I am bigger than most men. I am also thorough. I adopted their dress, at least some of it, and therefore being able to talk to them, I landed among them without fear. When they came round me with their spears I shouted to them down from the sun. And as I know a little prestidigitation and conjuring, and am a bit of a ventriloquist, I am from time to time able to work a few of the simpler miracles; so that they readily believe me."

"How long are you going to stay here?"

"I know not; New Ireland is rich in new species; but I shall have to stop as soon as my means of collection and description come to an end. When that day comes I shall be glad to see a ship. But it will not be yet."

"They may kill you."

"It is possible," the baron shrugged his tall shoulders.

"Have you no arms?"

"I have a revolver, and my reputation for magic and sorcery."

"And how do you live?"

"The people bring me food every day. If they did not, I should afflict them with horrible misfortunes, as they very well know. I should tell them that in three days such a one would be dead, and then it would be that man's duty to go away and die in fulfillment of prophecy. I suppose his friends would never speak to him again if he refused to fulfill the words of the prophet, so great is their faith. They bring me the unripe coconut for its milk; there are fish of every kind in the sea, which they net and spear for me; there are kangaroos and cassowary on the hills, which they snare and trap for me; there are birds which they shoot for me; there are mangoes, bread-fruit, bananas, yams, sweet potatoes. I assure you we feed very well. Don't we, David?" He laid his hand on the other man's shoulder. "We have also tobacco. There is, however—which you regret, David, don't you?—no rum on the island."

"Is your—your—chum also worshipped as the mate, regarding David with an obvious decrease of interest."

"No; David is recognized as of inferior clay. This poor fellow was wrecked upon the island; he came ashore on a plank, the rest of the ship's crew and passengers having given indigestion to the sharks. He is not happy here, and he would like you to take him off the island."

"Yes," said David, eagerly, but still in his slow way, "anywhere, so that I can only get on my way to England."

"He was just getting off his plank, and the people were preparing to receive him joyfully, warmly, and hospitably, after their fashion; that is to say, into their pots—they have a beautiful method of cooking, in a kind of sunken pot, which would greatly interest you if you were a captive and expecting your turn—when I fortunately arrived, and succeeded, by promising an eclipse if I was obeyed, in saving him. The eclipse came in good time; but I had forgiven the people for their momentary mutiny, and I averted its power for evil. So long as David sticks close to me now he is safe. If he leaves me, his end is certain. But he is no use to me, and for certain reasons I should very much prefer that he was gone. Will you take him?"

"The ship doesn't carry passengers,"

said the mate; "besides—"

"He is harmless, and you can trust him not to make mischief. I will pay for him if you like."

"What does he want to go home for?" asked the mate, doubtfully. Indeed, the appearance of the man did not warrant the belief that he would be welcomed by his friends.

"He has to pay a pilgrimage; he has to deliver a message before a magistrate, and to be subsequently elevated to a post of great distinction," said the baron.

"Humph!" said the mate. "He looks as if he'd done something. Better keep in these latitudes, stranger, where no one asks and no one cares. But about his fare; who's to pay his passage and his grub, if we take him?"

"You will return some time to Queensland. Take or send this note." He took his note book, tore off half a leaf, and wrote a few words upon it. "Send this note to Messrs. Hengstenberg & Company, Sydney. Tell them where you got it, and they will give you £20 for it, and will thank you into the bargain for letting them know that, so far, the Baron Sergius von Holstein is safe. If there is any money left after paying for your passenger, give it to this poor fellow. He is not such a bad fellow, though he looks so miserable, unless he begins to confide in you. When he does that, lock him up in a cabin. Perhaps he has done something, as you say; what do we know? As for doing things," he said, regarding his humble companion with the utmost severity, "a man who is tempted to commit a crime ought always to remember that he will some day, in all probability, be wrecked on a desert island, an island of cannibals, in the company of one, and only one, other European, and that man greatly his superior; and he ought truly to resolve that under no temptations will he do anything which may make him a nuisance and a bore to that companion through the vehemence of his repentance." David Leighan groaned. "Man," added the baron, sententiously, "does not live for himself alone; and he who rashly commits a crime may hereafter seriously interfere with the comfort of his brother man."

David hung his head. "I forgive you, David. I have protected you from the natives' spears and their pots and carrying knives for six months, though it has cost me many foolish threats and vain curses. I have fed you and sheltered you. I have been rewarded by penitential groans and by outward tokens of fervent contrition. These have saddened my days, and have disturbed my slumbers. Groan, henceforth into other ears. I forgive you, however, only on one condition, that you return no more. If you do, you shall be speared and potted without remorse. As for the document in my notebook—"

"I shall get to England before you," said David; "and when I get there I shall go at once to Challacombe and make a statement just like the one you have in your notebook. By the time you come to England I shall be—"

"Exactly," said the baron, smiling sweetly. "You will have been a public character. Well, to each man comes somehow his chance of greatness. I hope you may enjoy your reputation, David, though it may be short-lived."

CHAPTER IV.

The mate meantime was considering the note put into his hands. It was very short, and was a simple draft upon a merchant's house in Sydney—the shortest draft, I suppose, ever written, and on the smallest piece of paper.

"Messrs. Hengstenberg & Co., Sydney. Pay bearer £20. New Ireland, 1884. Baron Sergius von Holstein."

"I will take him," said the mate. "I expect to be out another three or four months. He can come aboard with me. But, stranger," he said, persuasively, "can no business be done? Are they open to reason?" He looked round at the forest and deserted huts. "Can we trade for a few natives, you and me, between us? If I could only see my way to persuade 'em to worship me, I'd be blessed. I wouldn't—I would ship the whole island. There would be a fortune in it."

"They are open to no reason at all. In fact, if they were at this moment to come down upon us unexpectedly, it would be a painful necessity for me—if I valued my reputation as a prophet—to order them to attack and spear both you and your crew; otherwise I should be considered a false prophet. They are wonderfully handy with their lances, and they move in large bodies. Those popguns of yours would knock over two or three, but would be of no avail to save your own lives. Therefore, I would advise that you get into your boat and aboard your ship with as little delay as possible."

The mate took his advice and departed with his passenger.

"And now," said the Baron Sergius, "I am alone at last, and can enjoy myself without any of that fellow's groans. I never knew before how extremely disagreeable one single murder may make a man."

That evening the rescued man, David Leighan, sat on the deck with his friend the mate. The island of New Ireland was now a black patch low down on the horizon, the night was clear, and the sky full of stars. David was off the island at last, and once more free to return to England; yet he did not look

happier; on the contrary, the gloom upon his face was blacker than ever.

It proved a most unlucky voyage. They lost two men in an encounter with the natives; they had no success in trading; the captain continued to drink. The end came unexpectedly.

One night the watch on deck were startled by a bright light in the captain's cabin. The light shot into a flame, and the flame leaped and ran along the sides of the cabin and caught in the deck and licked the timbers of the ship. The old schooner was as dry as tinder, and caught fire like a piece of paper. In five minutes it became apparent that they must take to their boats. As to the drunken man who had done the mischief, he came out of the burning cabin and danced and sung until the flames dragged him down.

In the fierce glare of the burning ship the mate looked at David reproachfully, implying that this misfortune was entirely due to his presence.

"Even now," he whispered, "I will not tell the men you have ruined the voyage, burned the ship, killed the captain, and may be will kill us as well. What have you done that we should be punished like this for taking you on board? Is it—is it murder?"

David nodded his head gloomily.

"Then," said the mate, "whatever happens to us, you'll get safe ashore. You won't be drowned, and you won't be starved."

Three weeks later there were only two survivors in that boat. The other men had all drunk sea water, and so gone mad one after the other, and leaped overboard in their delirium. Only David Leighan was left with the mate, and they were lying one in the bow and one in the stern, as far apart as the boat would allow, and they were black in the face, gaunt and hollow-eyed.

When they were picked up the signs of life were so faint in them that the skipper, a humane person, took counsel with his mate whether it would not save the poor men trouble to drop them into the water at once. But in the end he hoisted them aboard and laid them on the deck, with their heads propped up.

For the rest of the voyage the rescued mate kept aloof from the rescued passenger. He would not speak to him; he avoided that part of the ship where he happened to be. As for the latter he found a place abaft near the helm, where he could sit upon a coil of rope, his head upon his knees. And there he remained, gloomy and silent.

There was trouble, too. First, the ship sprung a leak, and the pumps had to be worked. Next, there was a bad storm, and the mizen mast went by the board. Thirdly, a fire broke out, and was subdued with difficulty. However, the ship at last sighted land, and arrived, battered and shattered, at the port of Sydney. When they landed, and not till then, the rescued mate spoke his mind.

First he went to the house of Hengstenberg & Co., where he presented the baron's draft, gave news of his safety and touched the money. He then led his passenger to a tavern and entered into a serious conversation with him.

"As for this money," he said, "you weren't a passenger more than a few days, and I can't rightly charge you much. Take fifteen, and I'll take five. With fifteen pounds you can get home, which I take to be your desire, and give yourself up, which I take to be your duty." It will be understood that the unfortunate David, in the extremity of his starvation and remorse, had been talking.

"A Providence it is," said the mate, "that where so many honest fellows were took, I was spared, else you would never have had this money, and you wouldn't, therefore, have been able to give yourself up, and you would never have been hung. A clear Providence it is, and you must regard it as such, and remember it when they take you out comfortably with the chaplain and the rope."

David took the money, rolled it up in a rag and placed it in his pocket, but said nothing.

(To be continued.)

Out of Stock

It takes a great deal to shatter the composure of a head waiter and to reduce him to the level of an ordinary, apologetic mortal, but the feat was accomplished in Washington, says the Post, and in a very simple way. A lawyer went to supper at a certain cafe after the theater, and ordered a cup of coffee.

"Please bring it in a cup with the handle on the left side," he said, confidentially, to the waiter. "I'm left-handed, and I don't like any other kind of a cup."

"Yes, sir," stammered the waiter; "I will, sir."

He was seen to hasten away and confer with the head waiter. Then the head waiter bore down on the party.

"What sort of a cup was that you wanted, sir?" he said.

"Cup with the handle on the left side. I'm left-handed," returned the lawyer.

The head waiter disappeared, to return a little later obviously perturbed.

"The cup you—" he began.

"What?" exclaimed the lawyer. "Do you mean to tell me that in a first-class cafe like this you haven't such a thing as a cup with a handle on the left side? Absurd! Why, how am I to use any other kind? You must have plenty of them."

"Well," said the head waiter, "we usually has, but I'm sorry, sir; de last we had was broke this morning."

Masculine View.

Mrs. Shopp—I see Cutt & Slashem are advertising some lovely house gowns at a bargain.

Shopp—Well, our house doesn't need a gown, but it ought to have a coat of paint.



Stewed Beef.

Cut the beef into inch square pieces; flour each; cut a small carrot, a small turnip, and a large onion into slices, put the fat you trimmed off into a deep spider or a saucepan, let it get very hot, lay in the vegetables, cover, and leave them to brown (not burn), stirring occasionally. When they are all nicely browned, pour on them a pint of boiling water, and lay in the meat; put with it a moderate teaspoonful of salt and one-half salt-spoonful of pepper, with two or three coarse stalks of celery, if you have them, cut fine. Let all stew very gently for two hours at least, or until the meat is quite tender, but remember, if it has boiled or stewed fast, it will never be that, nor would it if you made your stew of tenderloin. Skim free from fat and serve.

Chop Suey.

Scrape all the meat from the bones of half a chicken and cut into strips one and a half inches long and a half inch wide. Peel and slice one onion thin; soak a handful of dried mushrooms in water for ten minutes and cut off the stems; cut a stalk of celery into strips an inch long; wash and slice six Chinese potatoes. Fry the chicken until done; add the sliced onions and cook for five minutes, then put in the mushrooms and enough Chinese sauce to make the ingredients brown. Pour in a little water and stew for ten minutes. Add the celery, cook for one minute and put in the potatoes. Last of all, add enough flour water to make a good gravy. Serve hot with boiled rice.

Orient Pudding.

Quarter pound suet well chopped and mixed with half pound of flour and two ounces of breadcrumbs. Add one teaspoonful of baking powder and a pinch of salt. Well mix in half a pound sultanas. Beat up one egg in half-pint of milk, flavored with lemon or vanilla to taste. Mix together, adding one tablespoonful of sugar. Grease dish and bake one and a half hours until nicely brown. This pudding is inexpensive, wholesome and satisfying. The recipe is original.

A Delicious Cold Sauce.

Oranges sweetened, boiled, rubbed through a sieve and stiffened with a little gelatine provide a very delicious cold sauce. Four oranges (pulp only), four ounces of sugar, half pint of water, boiled together for ten to fifteen minutes, with two sheets of gelatine dissolved as boiling proceeds, make a very nice quantity, and may be flavored with brandy or liquor if so desired. The pulp must be rubbed through a sieve, and the flavoring added after that.

Blueberry Griddle Cakes.

For these cakes use one pint of sour milk, one pint and a half of flour, one teaspoonful of soda, one teaspoonful of salt, two tablespoonfuls of cold water, and one pint of blueberries. Dissolve the soda in the cold water. Stir this into the sour milk. Now add the flour and salt, and beat well. Stir the berries in very gently. Fry the same as any griddle cakes.

Peanut Brittle.

Boil together a cup of molasses and one of brown sugar, a tablespoonful of vinegar and two tablespoonfuls of butter. When a little put in ice water is brittle, add a cup of roasted and skinned peanuts. Take immediately from the fire, beat in hard a teaspoonful of baking soda and pour into buttered tins.

Cracker Jack.

One cup of molasses, two cups of sugar, one tablespoonful of butter, two tablespoonfuls of vinegar. Boil until a little dropped in cold water cracks, then take from the fire, add a half teaspoonful of baking soda, beat briskly and pour into a pan upon popped corn and chopped peanuts.

Sponge Cake Pudding.

Stir together till the palest straw color one and one-half cupfuls of powdered sugar and the yolks of five eggs beaten. Then add lightly one and one-fourth cupfuls of flour and the whites of five eggs beaten stiff. Bake and eat with sauce.

String Bean Salad.

Boil two quarts of white wax beans, strings removed, in boiling salted water until tender; drain and cool. Just before serving, mix them with salad dressing and place on ice for ten minutes.

Fried Cold Chicken.

Take good slices of good boiled or roasted chicken, dip them in beaten egg and then in bread crumbs. Fry brown in butter. To be eaten with meat sauce or without. It is very nice.

PROFITS OF THE SUEZ CANAL.

Rates to Be Lowered Again to Keep Dividends Below 25 Per Cent.

"Tis forty years since," and what a difference between then and now! At that time men were saying the Suez Canal never would or could pay operating expenses. At the present time its profits are so enormous that the company is compelled again and again to reduce the tolls in order to keep the dividends within legal bounds. Of a truth, Mr. Greenwood was prescient when, thirty years ago, he persuaded the British government to buy the Khedive's shares. Lord Derby, the foreign minister, did not like the scheme. Sir Stafford Northcote, chancellor of the exchequer, distinctly disapproved it. Disraeli himself, prime minister, was doubtful.

It did not seem a tempting thing to pay \$20,000,000 for shares, the interest on which had been mortgaged for nineteen years. But Mr. Greenwood was persistent. He pointed out that most of the shares, apart from the Khedive's, were held in France, while 86 per cent of the traffic through the canal was British. So British commerce must pay tolls into French pockets. The tolls were high and when England asked that they be reduced France answered that if England did not like the canal she might send her commerce by the old route around the cape. In the end Mr. Greenwood's pleas prevailed and the British government paid \$20,000,000 for shares that are now worth \$140,000,000.

A curious error was made in a dispatch the other day, which said this year's dividend was only 14.1 per cent. Not for a long time has it been so low. The dispatch should have said it was 141 francs a share, a far different thing. As the shares are of 500 francs each, the dividend is at the rate of 28.2 per cent, or just twice what was at first stated. Last year's dividend was 130 francs a share, or 26 per cent. Now the London agreement binds the company not to appropriate profits of more than 25 per cent, but to reduce the tolls as much and as often as may be necessary to keep them down to that figure. That is why the company proposes another reduction.

It did reduce tolls two years ago from 9 to 8 1/2 francs a ton, but still the profits kept on increasing and pushing the dividend above the 25 per cent limit. There are those who reckon that if tolls were now reduced to 6 francs the company would still be able to declare a yearly dividend of 25 per cent, and that a few years hence a still further reduction can be made without impairment of the legal dividend.—New York Tribune.

TALK WITH QUEEN ALEXANDRA.

Peace and Domestic Topics Favored by Her British Majesty.

I have been a diligent reader of newspapers for thirty years, but I have never known any sentiments expressed by the Queen of England, either during the time that she was the Princess of Wales or during the short term she has occupied the throne, find their way into the public press.

We are, therefore, indebted to the enterprise of a French journalist, who has published an interview with Queen Alexandra on board the royal yacht. He began by expressing his regret at not seeing the king, as he wanted to obtain from him some words which should reassure public opinion as to the Tangier incident, but the Queen cut him short, and said: "Do not let us talk politics. Queens have to train their children to occupy a high and difficult position, to relieve misfortunes and distress. This is the best and sweetest of roles. I do not want to play any other. If the social question can be settled some day, this will be by the virtues practiced by women and by mutual affection, by mutual respect and habits of justice and charity. You gentlemen say war, we women say peace in every nation, and peace between nations. I have always been afraid of warlike preparations at which the people never weary of working."

Turning from public questions, the Queen spoke of the artificiality of the surroundings of court life. "I am passionately fond of the sea," she said. "When I see it from the deck of the yacht or from the beach, stretching away to the horizon, it holds me spell-bound, and leaves me bewildered as I find myself on the threshold of the great new fatherland."

It is little wonder that her whole soul should be turned to thoughts of peace, when the land of her sister's adoption is wrapped in external war and inward evolution.

Queen Alexandra is right. When men talk of preparations for war and call them precautions to insure peace, they are, I think, perpetuating a fallacy.—Lady Henry Somerset.

Cheap Traveling in Belgium.

Season tickets available during a fortnight and allowing the holder to travel all over Belgium as often as he likes and in any direction he may choose, including, moreover, a passage each way between Dover and Ostend, are issued at the following rates: First class, \$15.75; second class, \$11. This is cheap traveling, as the ticket covers 2,500 miles.