

The Mutiny of the Albatross

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THE STORY

Floyd Unwin and Howard Bettington take dinner with an old college chum, Alfred Gibbons, financial magnate. Unwin produces a written pledge taken by the three at college to help each other in adversity, explaining that he needs financial assistance to educate his son Bob and daughter Mary. Gibbons agrees to make a place for the daughter in his organization. Mary Unwin is stenographer to a wealthy debauchee, Elgar Radway. Calling at Gibbons' office, as arranged, Mary is asked to betray her employer's secrets and refuses. Radway plans an ocean voyage to recover from the effects of dissipation. Mary is to go as secretary, her brother to accompany her. Bettington, painting on the Maine coast, is kidnapped, and taken aboard Radway's yacht. His clothes are found by Gibbons, a fugitive from justice, who dons them and goes to Bettington's studio, and there falls to his death. Bettington is questioned by a man known as the "Boss." He is shown an account of Gibbons' death, the body being identified as Bettington. The "Boss" intends to hold Radway for \$1,000,000 ransom. Bettington is told he will be forced to assist. Radway becomes desperately ill and dies. The captain shoots a drunken member of the crew and is himself killed by another member of the gang.

CHAPTER IX

Bettington States His Terms

Neither Metzger nor Sam were on deck. They had retired to the accommodation aft, which had so lately been taken by the captain. They knew that the joint authority they were to exercise would not be disturbed by rivalries. They were not yet assured of the course to be taken. On the table before them they put their revolvers. Not in anticipation of disagreement, but rather lest Hallett might come in armed and ready.

"I don't like this Andy Orme," said Metzger. "I don't like him any more than you do that young 'Sparks,' who trots around with the girl."

It was curious that in the moment when grave danger seemed to involve them, Metzger thought only of Mrs. Radway. Sam lacked the volatile spirit of his companion.

"You'll have time enough for that," Sam said heavily. "That ain't worrying me. What are we going to do now?"

"We can sell this boat," Metzger asserted. "I told the doctor that, but he made excuses. He shall forge her papers. I know where I can find a Portuguese trader who will buy her. He will not give much, but what he gives will only be cut two ways."

The treachery to the others was agreeable to Sam. It was the only way out. They continued to discuss the situation. There was Hallett to reckon with and his two adherents. They would be warned directly he left the room where he was hidden; there was no danger to apprehend.

Bettington found Clements had been placed on a wicker lounge. His faded blue eyes peered up into the bright sky; there was still the unfading smile on his face. Even death kept his secret. Perhaps none would ever know by what name in the world of crime he had been called.

A deckhand called Mike was at the wheel.

"Where's Sam?" Bettington asked.

"Went below with Metzger," Mike answered.

Bettington followed them. Metzger and Sam ceased their talk when he came in. They wondered if he had heard any of it. It was a discussion which should have interested any man concerned with the length of his days.

"Well," said Bettington, seating himself, "what's to be done now?"

Metzger elaborated on the simplicity of his scheme.

"The money would have to be split three ways and there'd be a nice little sum. I know men who will buy and ask no questions."

"You'll never sell the Albatross," Bettington asserted.

"Then I know where we can run her and live aboard. It's the Gulf of Nicoya in Costa Rica. There's nobody would ever find us. Metzger's face beamed at the thought.

"That's silly," Bettington answered. "Do you suppose we all want to pass our days in the Gulf of Nicoya? You've got the wrong idea. You are afraid to go back to New York, I suppose?"

"Not for me!" said Sam. "The Boss never lied to us. When he said he knew all about us he was speaking the truth. I'm not going to run my neck into a noose."

"Doesn't the same fate hang over me? You know it does. I look on it in a different light. Nobody could know of Clements' death for a month, at least. He said the paper wasn't to be opened for a year. I'm willing to take a chance. We all want money, and a lot of it. Mrs. Radway will pay us just the same as she would have paid Clements and we don't have to share with him. Why throw it away?"

We ought to take it and then go where we'd be safe for life."

Sam was obstinate. To go north meant for him to go to his death. Alive or dead, he feared the man he had followed. Rather a short life and a gay one in some tropic isle, than Dannemora. Also, he distrusted the doctor.

Metzger saw the scheme as a ruse to cheat him of the pleasures he had determined on. He had not forgotten those long hours when he had watched the doctor and Mrs. Radway walking up and down the deck. That he did not immediately counsel the doctor's death was due to the necessity of making him forge a new set of ship's papers.

"There are others on board besides ourselves," he reminded Bettington. "They will not run the risk you look for. We have enough coal to get us to Limon."

"Can you navigate?" Bettington asked. "Can you take us to Limon now Leary's dead?"

"Hallett shall," Sam said suddenly, with ferocity. "I've handled men sturdier than he is and I've broken 'em. He clenched his gigantic hands and the table groaned as he struck it. 'I'll break Hallett!'"

"You've killed him," Bettington said gravely. "We'll leave Hallett out of the question."

"Did I get him, after all?" Sam asked. He sat for a moment thinking of the excellence of his aim. He did not realize the extent of the disaster until Bettington spoke.

"That leaves us with the task of getting some one who can work out a reckoning and get us where we want to go. Otherwise we drift hither and yon till we are picked up by a passing vessel, or have to wirelessly for some one who can navigate."

"H—!" said Sam; he turned to the engineer. "Can't you?"

"I thought not," Bettington remarked. "Apparently Metzger doesn't know that Nicoya is on the Pacific side of Costa Rica and to get there we should have to go through the Panama canal and come under the jurisdiction of the United States. Find out who is capable of navigating."

A search revealed none capable. Sam and Metzger looked at one another doubtfully. Metzger feared that Sam was likely to favor the surgeon's plan and, for that reason, raised new difficulties.

"If we do run back to New York," he said plausibly, "how are we going to account for Hallett's murder?"

"It wasn't murder," Sam contradicted. "It was self-defense. Wasn't Hallett armed?"

"They'll call it murder in New York," Metzger assured him, "and you'd go to the chair for it. The Doc knows that as well as I do."

Sam was brought to a realization of the effect of his shots which, for the moment, he had considered unimportant. He looked angrily at Bettington.

"You want me to be put out of the way so you get the money?"

The surgeon shrugged his shoulders. "Anything the majority can enforce is best," he said cryptically, "from their point of view. I am looking further ahead than most of you. I see the Albatross drifting aimlessly around the seas, which will soon be a little too rough for a vessel of this sort. If she doesn't founder she'll be reported by passing vessels and a search will be instituted and we shall all be taken into an American port. What is Metzger going to say to a naval officer who may board us?"

"He's right," Metzger cried. He turned angrily to Sam. "What did you want to plug him for? You've put us all in the h— of a mess."

"I couldn't stop to think of that," Sam cried as angrily.

"There is a competent navigator aboard," Bettington announced.

"Who?" they asked.

"I can navigate, if I want to."

"If you want to!" Sam echoed. "Don't you want to get out of it with a whole skin? Ain't you in as deep as me?"

"We'll force you to it," Metzger shouted.

"You'll force me to do nothing," the doctor snapped. "I'm the one to make terms; you two have got to listen. Here they are: if the women are left absolutely unharmed and alone, I'll take the boat into Limon."

He sat still utterly unmoved at the blasphemous obscenity which poured from the lips of the two opposites.

"And when we get to port," Metzger cried. "What then?"

"Anything you like," Bettington told him. "A pistol, a knife or bare hands; but not cards with a man like you."

Sam turned on the fuming engineer with an oath.

"You'll get your chance in Limon," he said. "None of that knife stuff now. No quarrelling with Doc till then, or I'll take a hand in it."

Metzger was full of quick, passionate gestures; Bettington remained immobile. The doctor's composure could only mean that he was conscious of triumph. While the fore part of the ship would be barred to the engineer,

it was free to the surgeon. Madden-ing images chased themselves across Metzger's brain.

"You think you can amuse yourself with her while we are working for your safety. You think I shall permit it, eh?"

"I shall be on the bridge, you poor benighted ass, trying to take the ship to Limon. My bunk will be made up in the chartroom and I shall be working when you and Sam are drinking and gambling. You're a filthy-minded swine, Metzger, and I'm not so sure I want to wait till Limon comes in sight."

Sam's heavy frame sprang between the two men.

"Not yet," he commanded roughly. "It's Metzger's fault, Doc, and he's full of hooch."

Bettington turned his back on the engineer.

"Send Mike down to help me removed Hallett's body. It's got to be buried decently."

"Anything you say," Sam observed, almost with gratitude. "Radway'll have company now. I'll send Mike down right away," he added, as Bettington moved toward the door.

"He laughs at me," Metzger stormed when the surgeon was gone, "and he despises you. He thinks he is my



"He Laughs at Me," Stormed Metzger When the Surgeon Was Gone.

equal because he is taller and stronger. He looked at me as one looks at a child. He will be a child there in Limon when he sees my knife."

"I ain't sorry I got Hallett," Sam mused. "This bird will be easier."

He sighed when he thought of Clements. Had he lived Sam would have been certain of success. Clements had made only one mistake. He had not believed Captain Hallett would be capable of shooting him.

Bettington experienced a feeling of dread at the coming interview which would not be banished. He knew that even in so short a time as he had been absent a great deal had been said. Crosby Todd had a quiet obstinacy about him which would, by its very persistence, influence the two who looked to him for leadership.

He found that the unoccupied maid's quarters had been turned into a sitting room for common use. The two boys had berthed forward in Elgar Radway's staterooms. Alone of the four, Mrs. Radway gave him a friendly greeting. But there was a new look of anxiety on her face which he did not like to see.

"Doctor Walte," she began, "I have told them about the ransom."

"There were some things we all had to understand," Todd remarked.

"Just what did you tell?" Bettington demanded.

"Enough to make us want to ask a few leading questions." It seemed that Crosby Todd was constituted spokesman. "They're questions you've got to answer."

"Got to answer?" Bettington retorted. He knew it was absurd to take offence at this obstinate, well-meaning lady who detested him so honestly, but he flushed with annoyance nevertheless.

There was a certain air of triumph about Crosby Todd.

"I told you he wouldn't answer."

"I'm ready to answer anything you want to know," Bettington said quickly, addressing himself to Mrs. Radway.

"It's simply this," she began, with a little hesitation. "Mr. Todd has an idea that you knew of this plan to hold my husband to ransom long before Clements informed me of it. I assured him that I was absolutely certain you suspected nothing until I myself told you."

She looked at him with a sort of wistful eagerness. "Please tell him he is wrong."

Bettington groaned. If he answered he would be forced to admit a damning truth or embark once again on the hateful task of lying to the woman he loved. His philosophy of life was not a complex one. To him

falsehood was an evidence of fear, a confession that something was terrorizing him. He decided there had been enough of evasion.

"Todd is right," he said, not sparing himself. "I did know of it, but I dared not take anyone into my confidence. Consider the situation and you will agree with me. I was the only man who knew. There were at least three weeks to elapse before any danger threatened and by that time I should have worked out some scheme to save you."

"You might have trusted me," Mrs. Radway said. "I gave you my confidence."

"What plans do you mean?" Todd demanded. He had the air of one who sits on a magisterial bench.

Bettington paid no heed to him. He wanted more than anything else, to assure Evelyn Radway that he had been dealing fairly with her.

"I wanted to trust you," he said earnestly, "but there were so many better reasons against it. You did not know, for instance, that Clements had arranged dictagraphs in various parts of the yacht. I was beset with dangers. I was being spied upon. I could never be certain that they believed in me."

"Why should they believe you if you were against them?" This from the inexorable Todd.

Bettington experienced a sense of weariness and futility. Was it of any advantage, he wondered, to recount by what unbelievable ways he had been brought to the Albatross? Three of the four would think he lied; perhaps the fourth might wish she could believe.

"If I told you," he said, "you would hardly credit it. I have no time now for blustering and cross-examination. You will discover the truth later. For the moment I am concerned only with your safety. The unfortunate death of Clements has placed all in a terrible predicament."

"Have you the gall to be sorry my uncle killed him?" Todd said angrily. There was disloyalty in allowing such a remark to go unprotected.

"Yes," Bettington said. "That unlucky shot let h— loose. Clements controlled his men absolutely. If he were alive we could count on getting back to New York unharmed. The men are afraid of touching at any port now where our flag flies, because they know jail years for them. They propose to take the yacht to Limon in Costa Rica. There they'll try to sell her. You understand that if they get to Limon we shan't have a chance. We are four to ten. They are armed and we are cooped up here without food. It will take us almost two weeks to get to Limon."

Evelyn Radway shuddered at the image of Metzger impressed itself upon her. Now she knew why he had stared with such insolent triumph. She had no doubt in her mind that the doctor had put the matter as mildly as he could to avoid terrifying Mary.

"What must we do?" she asked.

"I have made terms with them," he answered. "They have nobody aboard who can work out a reckoning now the captain and first officer are gone. It happens I am the exception. I said I would take her into Limon if you were unopposed."

"What will happen to us at Limon?" she demanded. "I don't like the idea of that."

"Nor do I," Todd cried. "I'll tell you what will happen. We shall be at the mercy of men like that savage beast Sam who frightens Mary."

The three looked at him as though he had betrayed them.

Bettington tried to be patient with his explanations.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Information of Value in Old-Time Scrapbooks

Keeping a scrapbook is nothing like a common as it once was, but still a lot of folks cling to the old-time practice of preserving newspaper clippings, bits of poetry and other items of interest in this way. How the scrap book hobby started no one appears to know, but for generations it has been customary to save things for ready reference.

The time was when nearly everybody kept a scrapbook, and no doubt many filled volumes could be uncovered, hidden away among things seldom seen or used. The old-time scrapbook was called upon to settle many an argument, for often the scrapbook contained matter of a controversial nature. In the old days it

was nothing uncommon for a public speaker to run afoul of a chronic scrapbook keeper.

Often the keeper of a scrapbook specialized in preserving matter of a certain kind, and the practice still is kept up. Scrapbooks of that type may be filled with a lot of valuable information pertaining to a specific subject. Often a scrapbook kept for a lifetime is an index to the character of the keeper, and in that way descendants have learned more of their forebears.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Unchanging Time

Today the Arab woman cooks her bread outside the shelter of reed mats and mud, which is her "house," and boils her water over a fire lit in a hole which she scoops out in front of the door. The continuity in the essentials of life is unbroken; we know that as she cooks now, so did her forebears cook 3,500 years ago, and in all likelihood when we come to dig the pre-dread levels we shall find that the same customs and the same devices go back even further into the past.

Distinguishing Orchestra

An orchestra is distinguished from a band by the prominence of instruments of the viol class.

"I shall not take them to Limon. If I did I should most certainly be going to my own death, for they'd knock me on the head and pitch me overboard directly land came in sight. I'm going to take a chance that they will pass their days in gambling and drink. They won't come to take fresh air. They will drink, gamble, eat, sleep and fight."

"Where will you take us?" Mrs. Radway asked. Her spirits were rising and she looked about her in triumph. He had vindicated himself.

"Savannah, probably. I shall try to get there in the early morning when they are too far gone in liquor to see the landmarks."

"Won't they find you've changed your course?" Mary asked timidly.

"That's the only possible danger that I see. There's a deck hand named Mike at the wheel now. I shan't let him take any more tricks at it. I shall send him below to carouse with the rest. We ought to be able to make Savannah in forty-eight hours. If the men in the engine room do their share."

"You can't be at the wheel two days and two nights on end," Mrs. Radway exclaimed.

"I can, and will," he said cheerfully. "I think," he added deliberately, "that I can succeed if I meet no opposition here."

He looked across the table to Crosby Todd.

"Supposing they do find out you're double-crossing them?" Bob Unwin said, with feverish interest.

"More bloodshed," he answered gloomily; the thought oppressed him. He rose heavily to his feet. "I must impress on you to remain here and run no risks; here you are safe. Outside, I can't answer for your safety."

"There's nothing to eat," said Bob Unwin. He realized he was hungry.

"I'll get something," Bettington answered. "Don't open the door to anyone but me."

A few minutes later they heard a strange voice in the corridor. It was Mike adding him to remove the captain's body. Todd had been much attached to his uncle, who had brought him up since his father went down with his ship at sea, almost a score of years since. There was a certain boyish, passionate loyalty in his regard for the dead man, which increased his suspicion of the doctor into some harder quality of hatred.

"I don't believe a word of his lies," Todd cried. "Mrs. Radway, can't you see he's deceiving you? He knew about these men and yet he pretended it was all news. How can we tell it doesn't suit his purpose to hold us here and pretend he's taking us to Savannah?"

"What are we to do?" Mrs. Radway asked.

Todd had no answer. "I suppose we've got to wait till he's decided what to do with us."

"What dare they do?" Mary asked. She had sat silent all the while. When her question was unanswered she knew what was in their thoughts. "I knew something dreadful would happen on this trip," she said, with a quietness that amazed them. "I had a presentiment of evil. I have been afraid of that man they call Sam ever since I came on board. And now he is practically in command. How could you and Bob stand against him? He could kill you, easily, with his fists."

She buried her face in her hands. "And when you two are gone, what would become of me? I'm not afraid, dear. I shall not weaken when the moment comes."

Mrs. Radway put her arms about the girl's shoulder. Her eyes were moist.

"Oh, my dear," she said, "you mustn't give up hope. If only you were not so prejudiced against Doctor Walte you wouldn't feel so. I am certain he will protect us. None of you know him as I do. If you did, you would never condemn him. I know we are in danger, but he's standing between the crew and us."

She felt utterly unable to give reasons which would convince the group around her. Every action and word of the doctor's could be distorted into something sinister and threatening. She could not communicate to them the sense of security his protection afforded.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



MARS OBJECTS

Harry was certainly excited to think of all the strange new creatures he was meeting.

Certainly he was having his wish come true.

He was seeing what it was like up in the sky!

Mars motioned Harry to a comfortable seat and from where he sat he could see, in the distance, what appeared to be long, straight canals, and he thought he saw growing things too. It still amazed him to realize that these planets were not merely little bright objects in the sky!

He would have liked to have explored a bit by himself—but if he did so he might miss some of the plans Cosmo had made. They appeared to be most completely arranged.

"You're looking at those so-called canals," Mars observed. "They puzzle your earth people. Some think they were built by engineers, but I won't say. I like to keep the earth thinking. It's good for the earth to think. If I told them everything they might not be so much interested. They see the snow-caps on my peaks in the winter and they see that I have night and day here, and spring and winter, and that my sky is clear."

"But I have another reason for not telling you everything. I have heard that Venus kept some of her secrets from you, and you'll agree with me that we don't want ladies to be the only ones to keep secrets."

Harry quite agreed with Mars. It was difficult now to ask him to tell any of those secrets!

"Have you any moons?" he asked. None of them seemed to mind telling him this, and he did want to hear about all these extra moons which

he had never known so much as existed until he started this trip.

"Two of them," said Mars. "They're not very large and they find it easy to move around me very quickly."

"I hope you won't want to go bathing or boating, for I'll tell you this much. I haven't any ocean here. Then I'm much older than your earth and I'm 141,000,000 miles from the Sun. So I'm telling you some things!"

"Sometimes I'm brilliant. Sometimes I'm dull."

"You're human that way," Harry commented. He had a feeling that Mars wanted to go on talking so he would not be asked to much about his secrets.

"Red is my favorite color," Mars continued.

"I can see that."

"I really have something I very much want to tell you—something I've been wanting to tell you ever since I heard that you were coming to call on me."

"I'd certainly like to hear it," Harry replied.

"Long, long, long ago," began Mars, "I was named the god of war because I am so red in color. But I do not like that name, and I don't suppose there is anything I can do about it. Still I thought I'd tell you why and maybe you could tell a few others so that the word would spread around."

"We never have wars up here. There is something else, too, that puzzles me. Why is your earth so anxious to know if there is life here when your earth has so many wars and destroys life?"

"Why do you care about knowing if there is life on this or any other planet when you don't care enough about life to stop fighting?"

"Oh, it makes Mars sad," he went on. "Just because I love the bright, cheery color of red it doesn't seem fair to have given me that name."

"I am so very quiet, so very quiet. I never have any storms, tempests, hurricanes, cyclones. My rare atmosphere keeps the wind from getting up any great amount of energy."

"I had noticed it seemed very quiet—as though the wind had died quiet," Harry remarked.

"Yes, the wind takes a rest here. Perhaps I shouldn't scold the earth the way I'm doing. It's so much younger than I am. But please tell your earth that I do object to being called the god of war."

"I'll tell them that," Harry said.

"Oh, I am grateful to you, so grateful," said Mars, and he walked off, humming a little song to himself.

In School

Teacher—Key, give me a sentence containing the word "Ezekiel."

Key—Five times five ezeekiel twenty-five.

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