

ФРЕДЕРИК МАРРИЕТ

THE PRIVATEERSMAN

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Frederick Marryat

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Chapter One

**We cruise off Hispaniola—Capture
of a French Ship—Continue
our Cruise—Make a Nocturnal
Attack upon a Rich Planter's
Dwelling—Are repulsed with Loss**

To Mistress —.

Respected Madam,

In compliance with your request I shall now transcribe from the journal of my younger days some portions of my adventurous life. When I wrote, I painted the feelings of my heart without reserve, and I shall not alter one word, as I know you wish to learn what my feelings were then, and not what my thoughts may be now. They say that in every man's life, however obscure his position may be, there would be a moral found, were it truly told. I think, Madam, when you have perused what I am about to write, you will agree with me, that from my history both old

and young may gather profit, and I trust, if ever it should be made public, that, by Divine permission, such may be the result. Without further preface I shall commence with a narrative of my cruise off Hispaniola, in the *Revenge* privateer.

The *Revenge* mounted fourteen guns, and was commanded by Captain Weatherall, a very noted privateer's-man. One morning at daybreak we discovered a vessel from the masthead, and immediately made all sail in chase, crowding every stitch of canvass. As we neared, we made her out to be a large ship, deeply laden, and we imagined that she would be an easy prize; but as we saw her hull more out of the water, she proved to be well armed, having a full tier of guns fore and aft. As it afterwards proved, she was a vessel of 600 tons burden, and mounted twenty-four guns, having sailed from Saint Domingo, and being bound to France.

She had been chartered by a French gentleman (and a most gallant fellow we found him), who had acquired a large fortune in the West Indies, and was then going home, having embarked on board his whole property, as well as his wife and his only son, a youth of about seventeen. As soon as he discovered what we were, and the impossibility of escape from so fast a sailing vessel as the *Revenge*, he resolved to fight us to the last. Indeed he had everything to fight for; his whole property, his wife and his only child, his own liberty, and perhaps life, were all at stake, and he had every motive that could stimulate a man. As we subsequently learnt, he had great difficulty in inspiring the crew with an equal resolution, and it was not until he had engaged to pay them the

value of half the cargo, provided they succeeded in beating us off and forcing their way in safety to France, that he could rouse them to their duty.

Won by his example, for he told them that he did not desire any man to do more than he would do himself, and perhaps more induced by his generous offer, the French crew declared they would support him to the last, went cheerfully to their guns, and prepared for action. When we were pretty near to him, he shortened sail ready for the combat, having tenderly forced his wife down below to await in agony the issue of a battle on which depended everything so dear to her. The resolute bearing of the vessel, and the cool intrepidity with which they had hove-to to await us, made us also prepare on our side for a combat which we knew would be severe. Although she was superior to us in guns, yet, the *Revenge* being wholly fitted for war, we had many advantages, independent of our being very superior in men. Some few chase-guns were fired during our approach, when, having ranged up within a cable's length of her, we exchanged broadsides for half an hour, after which our captain determined upon boarding. We ran our vessel alongside, and attempted to throw our men on board, but met with a stout resistance. The French gentleman, who was at the head of his men, with his own hand killed two of our stoutest seamen, and mortally wounded a third, and, encouraged by his example, his people fought with such resolution that after a severe struggle we were obliged to retreat precipitately into our own vessel, leaving eight or ten of

our shipmates weltering in their blood.

Our captain, who had not boarded with us, was much enraged at our defeat, stigmatising us as cowards for allowing ourselves to be driven from a deck upon which we had obtained a footing; he called upon us to renew the combat, and leading the way he was the first on board of the vessel, and was engaged hand to hand with the brave French gentleman who had already made such slaughter among our men. Brave and expert with his weapon as Captain Weatherall undoubtedly was, he for once found rather more than a match in his antagonist; he was slightly wounded, and would, I suspect, have had the worst of this hand-to-hand conflict, had not the whole of our crew, who had now gained the deck, and were rushing forward, separated him from his opponent. Out-numbered and over-matched, the French crew fought most resolutely, but notwithstanding their exertions, and the gallant conduct of their leader, we succeeded in driving them back to the quarter-deck of the vessel. Here the combat was renewed with the greatest obstinacy, they striving to maintain this their last hold, and we exerting ourselves to complete our conquest. The Frenchmen could retreat no further, and our foremost men were impelled against them by those behind them crowding on to share in the combat. Retreat being cut off, the French struggled with all the animosity and rage of mingled hate and despair; while we, infuriated at the obstinate resistance, were filled with vengeance and a thirst for blood. Wedged into one mass, we grappled together, for there was no room for fair

fighting, seeking each other's hearts with shortened weapons, struggling and falling together on the deck, rolling among the dead and the dying, or trodden underfoot by the others who still maintained the combat with unabated fury.

Numbers at last prevailed; we had gained a dear-bought victory—we were masters of the deck, we had struck the colours, and were recovering our lost breaths after this very severe contest, and thought ourselves in full possession of the ship; but it proved otherwise. The first-lieutenant of the privateer and six of us had dashed down the companion, and were entering the cabin in search of plunder, when we found opposed to our entrance the gallant French gentleman, supported by his son, the captain of the vessel, and five of the French sailors; behind them was the French gentleman's wife, to whose protection they had devoted themselves. The lieutenant, who headed us, offered them quarter, but, stung to madness at the prospect of the ruin and of the captivity which awaited him, the gentleman treated the offer with contempt, and rushing forward attacked our lieutenant, beating down his guard, and was just about to pierce him with the lunge which he made, when I fired my pistol at him to save the life of my officer. The ball entered his heart, and thus died one of the bravest men I ever encountered. His son at the same time was felled to the deck with a pole-axe, when the remainder threw themselves down on the deck and cried for quarter. So enraged were our men at this renewal of the combat that it required all the efforts and authority of the lieutenant to prevent them

from completing the massacre by taking the lives of those who no longer resisted. But who could paint the condition of that unhappy lady who had stood a witness of the horrid scene—her eyes blasted with the sight of her husband slain before her face, her only son groaning on the deck and weltering in his blood; and she left alone, bereft of all that was dear to her; stripped of the wealth she was that morning mistress of, now a widow, perhaps childless, a prisoner, a beggar, and in the hands of lawless ruffians, whose hands were reeking with her husband's and offspring's blood, at their mercy, and exposed to every evil which must befall a beautiful and unprotected female from those who were devoid of all principle, all pity, and all fear! Well might the frantic creature rush as she did upon our weapons, and seek that death which would have been a mercy and a blessing. With difficulty we prevented her from injuring herself, and, after a violent struggle, nature yielded, and she sank down in a swoon on the body of her husband, dabbling her clothes and hair in the gore which floated on the cabin-deck. This scene of misery shocked even the actors in it. Our sailors, accustomed as they were to blood and rapine, remained silent and immoveable, resting upon their weapons, their eyes fixed upon the unconscious form of that unhappy lady.

The rage of battle was now over, our passions had subsided, and we felt ashamed of a conquest purchased with such unutterable anguish. The noise of this renewed combat had brought down the captain; he ordered the lady to be taken away

from this scene of horror, and to be carefully tended in his own cabin; the wound of the son, who was found still alive, was immediately dressed, and the prisoners were secured. I returned on deck, still oppressed with the scene I had witnessed, and when I looked round me, and beheld the deck strewed with the dead and dying—victors and vanquished indiscriminately mixed up together—the blood of both nations meeting on the deck and joining their streams, I could not help putting the question to myself, “Can this be right and lawful—all this carnage to obtain the property of others, and made legal by the quarrels of kings?” Reason, religion, and humanity answered, “No.”

I remained uneasy and dissatisfied, and felt as if I were a murderer; and then I reflected how this property, thus wrested from its former possessor, who might, if he had retained it, have done much good with it, would now be squandered away in riot and dissipation, in purchasing crime and administering to debauchery. I was young then, and felt so disgusted and so angry with myself and everybody else, that if I had been in England I probably should never again have put my foot on board of a privateer.

But employment prevented my thinking; the decks had to be cleaned, the bodies thrown overboard, the blood washed from the white planks, the wounded to be removed and their hurts dressed, the rigging and other damages to be repaired, and when all this had been done we made sail for Jamaica with our prize. Our captain, who was as kind and gentle to the vanquished as he

was brave and resolute in action, endeavoured by all the means he could think of to soften the captivity and sufferings of the lady. Her clothes, jewels, and everything belonging to her, were preserved untouched; he would not even allow her trunks to be searched, and would have secured for her even all her husband's personal effects, but the crew had seized upon them as plunder, and refused to deliver them up. I am almost ashamed to say that the sword and watch of her husband fell to my lot, and, whether from my wearing the sword, or from having seen me fire the pistol which had killed him, the lady always expressed her abhorrence of me whenever I entered her presence. Her son recovered slowly from his wound, and on our arrival at Port Royal was permitted by the admiral to be sent to the King's Hospital, and the lady, who was most tenderly attached to him, went on shore and remained at the Hospital to attend upon him. I was glad when she was gone, for I knew how much cause she had for her hatred of me, and I could not see her without remorse. As soon, as we had completed our repairs, filled up our provisions and water, we sailed upon another cruise, which was not so successful, as you will presently perceive.

For five or six weeks we cruised without success, and our people began to grumble, when one morning our boats in shore off Hispaniola surprised a small schooner. A negro who was among the prisoners offered to conduct us through the woods by night to the house of a very rich planter, which was situated about three miles from a small bay, and at some distance from the other

plantations. He asserted that we might there get very valuable plunder, and, moreover, obtain a large ransom for the planter and his family, besides bringing away as many of the negro slaves as we pleased.

Our captain, who was tired of his ill-success, and who hoped also to procure provisions, which we very much wanted, consented to the negro's proposal, and standing down abreast of the bay, which was in the Bight of Lugan, he ran in at dark, and anchoring close to the shore we landed with forty men, and, guided by the negro, we proceeded through the woods to the house. The negro was tied fast to one of our stoutest and best men, for fear he should give us the slip. It was a bright moonlight; we soon arrived, and surrounding the house forced our way in without opposition. Having secured the negroes in the out-houses, and placed guards over them, and videttes on the look-out to give timely notice of any surprise, we proceeded to our work of plunder. The family, consisting of the old planter and his wife and his three daughters, two of them very beautiful, was secured in one room. No words can express their terror at thus finding themselves so suddenly in the power of a set of ruffians, from whose brutality they anticipated every evil. Indeed, the horrid excesses committed by the privateersmen when they landed on the coast fully justified their fears; for as this system of marauding is considered the basest of all modern warfare, no quarter is ever given to those who are taken in the attempt. In return, the privateersmen hesitate at no barbarity

when engaged in such enterprises.

Dumb with astonishment and terror, the old couple sat in silent agony, while the poor girls, who had more evils than death to fear, drowned in their tears fell at the captain's feet and embraced his knees, conjuring him to spare and protect them from his men.

Captain Weatherall, who was, as I have before stated, a generous and humane man, raised them up, assuring them, on his word, that they should receive no insult; and as his presence was necessary to direct the motions of his people, he selected me, as younger and less brutal than most of his crew, as a guard over them, menacing me with death if I allowed any man to enter the room until he returned, and ordering me to defend them with my life from all insults. I was then young and full of enthusiasm; my heart was kind, and I was pure in comparison with the major portion of those with whom I was associated.

I was delighted with the office confided to me, and my heart leaped at having so honourable an employment. I endeavoured by every means in my power to dissipate their terrors and soothe their anxious minds; but while I was thus employed, an Irish seaman, distinguished even amongst our crew for his atrocities, came to the door, and would have forced his entrance. I instantly opposed him, urging the captain's most positive commands; but, having obtained a sight of the young females, he swore with a vile oath that he would soon find out whether a boy like me was able to oppose him, and finding that I would not give way he attacked me fiercely. Fortunately I had the advantage of position, and,

supported by the justice of my cause, I repelled him with success. But he renewed the attack, while the poor young women awaited the issue of the combat with trembling anxiety—a combat on which depended, in all probability, their honour and their lives. At last I found myself very hard pushed, for I had received a wound on my sword arm, and I drew a pistol from my belt with my left hand, and fired it, wounding him in the shoulder. Thus disabled, and fearing at the same time that the report would bring back the captain, who he well knew would not be trifled with, he retired from the door vowing vengeance. I then turned to the young women, who had witnessed the conflict in breathless suspense, encircled in the arms of the poor old couple, who had rushed towards them at the commencement of the fray, offering them their useless shelter. Privateersman as I was, I could not refrain from tears at the scene. I again attempted to re-assure them, pledged myself in the most solemn manner to forfeit my life if necessary for their protection, and they in some degree regained their confidence. They observed the blood trickling down my fingers from the wound which I had received, and the poor girls stained their handkerchiefs with it in the attempts to staunch the flow.

But this scene was soon interrupted by an alarm. It appeared that a negro had contrived to escape and to rouse the country. They had collected together from the other plantations, and our party being, as is usually the case when plunder is going on, very negligent, the videttes were surprised, and had hardly

time to escape and apprise us of our danger. There was not a moment to be lost; our safety depended upon an immediate retreat. The captain collected all hands; and while he was getting them together, that the retreat might be made in good order, the old planter, who, by the report of the fire-arms and the bustle and confusion without, guessed what had taken place, pressed me to remain with them, urging the certainty of our men being overpowered, and the merciless consequences which would ensue. He pledged himself, with his fingers crossed in the form of the crucifix, that he would procure me safe quarter, and that I should ever enjoy his protection and friendship. I refused him kindly but firmly, and he sighed and said no more. The old lady put a ring on my finger, which she took from her own hand, and kissing my forehead told me to look at that ring and continue to do good and act nobly as I had just done.

I waved my hand, for I had no time even to take the proffered hands of the young ones, and hastened to join my shipmates, already on the retreat, and exchanging shots with our pursuers. We were harassed by a multitude, but they were a mixed company of planters, mulattoes, and slaves, and not half of them armed, and we easily repelled their attacks whenever they came to close quarters. Their violent animosity, however, against us and our evil doings induced them to follow close at our heels, keeping up a galling irregular fire, and endeavouring to detain us until we might be overpowered by their numbers, every minute increasing, for the whole country had been raised, and were

flocking in. This our captain was well aware of, and therefore made all the haste that he could, without disturbing the regularity of his retreat, to where our boats were lying, as should they be surprised and cut off our escape would have been impossible. Notwithstanding all his care, several of our men were separated from us by the intricacies of the wood, or from wounds which they had received, and which prevented them from keeping up with us. At last, after repelling many attacks, each time more formidable than the preceding, we gained our boats, and embarking with the greatest precipitation we put off for the schooner. The enemy, emboldened by our flight, flocked down in great numbers to the water's edge, and we had the mortification to hear our stragglers who had been captured imploring for mercy; but groans and then silence too plainly informed us that mercy had been denied.

Captain Weatherall was so enraged at the loss of his men that he ordered us to pull back and attack the enemy on the beach, but we continued to pull for the schooner, regardless of his threats and entreaties. A panic had seized us all, as well it might. We even dreaded the ill-aimed and irregular fire which they poured upon us, which under other circumstances would have occasioned only laughter. The schooner had been anchored only two hundred yards from the beach, and we were soon on board. They continued to fire from the shore, and the balls passed over us. We put a spring upon our cable, warped our broadside to the beach, and loading every gun with grape and cannister we

poured a whole broadside upon our assailants. From the shrieks and cries, the carnage must have been very great. The men would have reloaded and fired again, but the captain forbade them, saying, "We have done too much already." I thought so too. He then ordered the anchor to be weighed, and with a fresh land breeze we were soon far away from this unlucky spot.

Chapter Two

We are pursued by two Schooner-Privateers, and failing to escape them a terrible Contest ensues—Three Acts of a Murderous Naval Drama—We are worsted—Captain Weatherall is killed—I am plundered and wounded

About six weeks after the unlucky affair before described we met with a still greater disaster. We had cruised off the Spanish main, and taken several prizes; shortly after we had manned the last and had parted company, the *Revenge* being then close in shore, a fresh gale sprung up, which compelled us to make all sail to clear the land. We beat off shore during the whole of the night, when the weather moderated, and at daybreak we found out that we had not gained much offing, in consequence of the current; but, what was more important, the man who went to the look-out at the masthead hailed the deck, saying there were two sails in the offing. The hands were turned up to make sail in chase, but we found that they were resolutely bearing down upon us; and as we neared each other fast we soon made them out to be vessels of force. One we knew well—she was the *Esperance*, a

French schooner-privateer, of sixteen guns and one hundred and twenty men; the other proved to be a Spanish schooner-privateer, cruising in company with her, of eighteen guns, and full manned.

Now our original complement of men had been something more than one hundred; but by deaths, severe wounds in action, and manning our prizes, our actual number on board was reduced to fifty-five effective men. Finding the force so very superior, we made every attempt with sails and sweeps to escape, but the land to leeward of us, and their position to windward, rendered it impossible. Making, therefore, a virtue of necessity, we put a good face upon it, and prepared to combat against such desperate odds.

Captain Weatherall, who was the life and soul of his crew, was not found wanting on such an emergency. With the greatest coolness and intrepidity he gave orders to take in all the small sails, and awaited the coming down of the enemy. When everything was ready for the unequal conflict, he ordered all hands aft, and endeavoured to inspire us with the same ardour which animated himself. He reminded us that we had often fought and triumphed over vessels of much greater force than our own; that we had already beaten off the French privateer on a former occasion; that the Spaniard was not worth talking about, except to swell the merits of the double victory, and that if once we came hand to hand our cutlasses would soon prove our superiority. He reminded us that our only safety depended upon our own manhood; for we had done such mischief on the

coast, and our recent descent upon the plantation was considered in such a light, that we must not expect to receive quarter if we were overcome. Exhorting us to behave well and to fight stoutly, he promised us the victory. The men had such confidence in the captain that we returned him three cheers, when, dismissing us to our quarters, he ordered Saint George's ensign to be hoisted at the main-masthead, and hove-to for the enemy.

The French schooner was the first which ranged up alongside; the wind was light and she came slowly down to us. The captain of her hailed, saying that his vessel was the *Esperance*, and our captain replied that he knew it, and that they also knew that his was the *Revenge*. The French captain, who had hove-to, replied very courteously that he was well aware what vessel it was, and also of the valour and distinguished reputation of Captain Weatherall, upon which Captain Weatherall, who stood on the gunnel, took off his hat in acknowledgment of the compliment.

Now Captain Weatherall was well-known, and it was also well-known that the two vessels would meet with a severe resistance, which it would be as well to avoid, as even if they gained the victory it would not be without great loss of men. The French captain therefore addressed Captain Weatherall again, and said he hoped, now that he was opposed to so very superior a force, he would not make a useless resistance, but, as it would be no disgrace to him, and would save the lives of many of his brave men, his well-known humanity would induce him to strike his colours.

To this request our commander gave a gallant and positive refusal. The vessels lay now close to each other, so that a biscuit might have been thrown on board of either. A generous expostulation ensued, which continued till the Spanish vessel was a short distance astern of us.

“You now see our force,” said the French captain. “Do not fight against impossible odds, but spare your brave and devoted men.”

“In return for your kind feeling towards me,” replied Captain Weatherall, “I offer you both quarter, and respect to private property, upon hauling down your colours.”

“You are mad, Captain Weatherall,” said the French captain.

“You allow that I have lived bravely,” replied Captain Weatherall; “you shall find that I will conquer you, and if necessary I will also die bravely. We will now fight. In courtesy, I offer you the first broadside.”

“Impossible,” said the French captain, taking off his hat.

Our captain returned the salute, and then, slipping down from the gunwale, ordered the sails to be filled, and after a minute, to give the Frenchman time to prepare, he fired off in the air the fusee which he held in his hand, as a signal for the action to begin. We instantly commenced the work of death by pouring in a broadside. It was returned with equal spirit, and a furious cannonading ensued for several minutes, when the Spaniard ranged up on our lee quarter with his rigging full of men to board us. Clapping our helm a-weather, and hauling

our fore-sheets to windward, we fell off athwart his hawse, and raked him with several broadsides fore and aft; our guns having been loaded with langridge and lead bullets, and his men being crowded together forward, ready to leap on board of us, her deck became a slaughter-house. The officers endeavoured in vain to animate their men, who, instead of gaining our decks, were so intimidated by the carnage that they forsook their own. The Frenchman, perceiving the consternation and distress of his consort, to give her an opportunity of extricating herself from her perilous condition, now put his helm a-weather, ran us on board, and poured in his men; but we were well prepared, and soon cleared our decks of the intruders. In the mean time the Spaniard, by cutting away our rigging, in which his bowsprit was entangled, swung clear of us, and fell away to leeward. The Frenchman perceiving this sheered off, and springing his luff, shot ahead clear of us. Such was the first act of this terrible drama. We had as yet sustained little damage, the enemy's want of skill, and our good fortune combined, having enabled us to take them at such a disadvantage.

But, although inspired by such a prosperous beginning, our inferiority in men was so great that our captain considered it his duty to make all sail in hopes of being able to avoid such an unequal combat. This our enemies attempted to prevent by a most furious cannonade, which we received and returned without flinching, making a running fight of it, till at last, our fore-yard and foretop-mast being shot away, we had no longer command of

the vessel. Finding that, although we were crippled and could not escape, our fire continued unabated, both the vessels again made preparations for boarding us, while we on our part prepared to give them a warm reception.

As we knew that the Frenchman, who was our most serious opponent, must board us on our weather-bow, we traversed over four of our guns, loaded to the muzzle with musket-balls, to receive him, and being all ready with our pateraroes and hand grenades we waited for the attack. As he bore down for our bows, with all his men clinging like bees, ready for the spring, our guns were discharged and the carnage was terrible. The men staggered back, falling down over those who had been killed or wounded, and it required all the bravery and example of the French captain, who was really a noble fellow, to rally the remainder of his men, which at last he succeeded in doing, and about forty of them gained our fore-castle, from which they forced our weak crew, and retained possession, not following up the success, but apparently waiting till they were seconded by the Spaniard's boarding us on our lee quarter, which would have placed us between two fires, and compelled us to divide our small force.

By this time the wind, which had been light, left us, and it was nearly a calm, with a swell on the sea which separated the two vessels; the Spaniard, who was ranging up under our lee, having but little way, and not luffing enough, could not fetch us, but fell off and drifted to leeward. The Frenchmen who had been thrown on board, and who retained possession of our fore-castle, being

thus left without support from their own vessel, which had been separated from us by the swell, or from the Spaniard, which had fallen to leeward, we gave three cheers, and throwing a number of hand grenades in among them we rushed forward with our half-pikes, and killed or drove every soul of them overboard, one only, and he wounded in the thigh, escaped by swimming back to his own vessel. Here, then, was a pause in the conflict, and thus ended, I may say, the second act.

Hitherto the battle had been fought with generous resolution; but after this hand-to-hand conflict, and the massacre with which it ended, both sides appeared to have been roused to ferocity. A most infernal cannonade was now renewed by both our antagonists, and returned by us with equal fury; but it was now a dead calm, and the vessels rolled so much with the swell that the shot were not so effective. By degrees we separated more and more from our enemies, and the firing was now reduced to single guns. During this partial cessation our antagonists had drawn near to each other, although at a considerable distance from us. We perceived that the Spaniard was sending two of his boats full of men to supply the heavy loss sustained by his comrade. Captain Weatherall ordered the sweeps out, and we swept our broadside to them, trying by single guns to sink the boats as they went from one vessel to the other. After two or three attempts, a gun was successful; the shot shattered the first of the boats, which instantly filled and went down. The second boat pulled up and endeavoured to save the men, but we now

poured our broadside upon them, and, daunted by the shot flying about them, they sought their own safety by pulling back to the vessel, leaving their sinking companions to their fate. Failing in this attempt, both vessels recommenced their fire upon us, but the distance and the swell of the sea prevented any execution, and at last they ceased firing, waiting till a breeze should spring up, which might enable them to renew the contest with better success.

At this time it was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and the combat had lasted about five hours. We refreshed ourselves after the fatigue and exertion which we had undergone, and made every preparation for a renewal of the fight. During the engagement we were so excited that we had no time to think; but now that we were cool again and unoccupied we had time to reflect upon our position, and we began to feel dejected and apprehensive. Fatigued with exertion, we were weak and dispirited. We knew that our best men were slain or groaning under their severe wounds, that the enemy were still numerous, and, as they persevered after so dreadful a slaughter, that they were of unquestionable bravery and resolution. Good fortune, and our captain's superior seamanship, had, up to the present, enabled us to make a good fight, but fortune might desert us, and our numbers were so reduced that if the enemy continued resolute we must be overpowered. Our gallant captain perceived the despondency that prevailed, and endeavoured to remove it by his own example and by persuasion. After praising us for the

resolution and courage we had already shown, he pointed out to us that, whatever might be the gallantry of the officers, it was clear that the men on board of the opposing vessels were awed by their heavy loss and want of success, and that if they made one more attempt to take us by the board and failed, which he trusted they would do, no persuasion would ever induce them to try it again, and the captains of the vessels would give over such an unprofitable combat. He solemnly averred that the colours should never be struck while he survived, and demanded who amongst us were base enough to refuse to stand by them. Again we gave him three cheers, but our numbers were few, and the cheers were faint compared with the first which had been given, but still we were resolute, and determined to support our captain and the honour of our flag. Captain Weatherall took care that this feeling should not subside—he distributed the grog plentifully; at our desire he nailed the colours to the mast, and we waited for a renewal of the combat with impatience. At four o'clock in the afternoon a breeze sprang up, and both vessels trimmed their sails and neared us fast—not quite in such gallant trim as in the morning, it is true—but they appeared now to have summoned up a determined resolution. Silently they came up, forcing their way slowly through the water; not a gun was fired, but the gaping mouths of the cannon, and their men motionless at their quarters, portended the severity of the struggle which was now to decide this hitherto well-contested trial for victory. When within half a cable's length, we saluted them with three cheers, they returned

our defiance, and running up on each side of us, the combat was renewed with bitterness.

The Frenchman would not this time lay us on board until he was certain that the Spaniard had boarded us to leeward; he continued luffing to windward and plying us with broadsides until we were grappled with the Spaniard, and then he bore down and laid his gunwale on our bow. The Spaniard had already boarded us on the quarter, and we were repelling this attack when the Frenchman laid us on the bow. We fought with desperation, and our pikes gave us such an advantage over the swords and knives of the Spaniards that they gave ground, and, appalled by the desperate resistance they encountered, quitted our decks, strewed with their dead and dying shipmates, and retreated in confusion to their own vessel. But before this repulse had been effected, the French had boarded us on the weather-bow, and driving before them the few men who had been sent forward to resist them, had gained our main deck, and forced their way to the rise of the quarter-deck, where all our remaining men were now collected. The combat was now desperate, but after a time our pikes, and the advantage of our position, appeared to prevail over numbers. We drove them before us—we had regained the main deck, when our brave commander, who was at our head, and who had infused spirit into us all, received a bullet through his right wrist; shifting his sword into his left hand, he still pressed forward encouraging us, when a ball entered his breast and he dropped dead. With his fall fell the courage and fortitude of his crew,

so long sustained—and to complete the mischief, the lieutenant and two remaining officers also fell a few seconds after him. Astonished and terrified, the men stopped short in their career of success, and wildly looked round for a leader. The French, who had retreated to the fore-castle, perceiving our confusion I renewed the attack, our few remaining men were seized with a panic, and throwing down our arms, we asked for quarter where a moment before victory was in our hands;—such was the finale of our bloody drama.

Out of fifty-five men twenty-two had been killed in this murderous conflict, and almost all the survivors desperately or severely wounded. Most of the remaining crew after we had cried for quarter jumped down the hatchway, to avoid the cutlasses of their enraged victors. I and about eight others, having been driven past the hatchway, threw down our arms and begged for quarter, which we had little reason to expect would be shown to us. At first no quarter was given by our savage enemies, who cut down several of our disarmed men and hacked them to pieces. Perceiving this, I got on the gunwale ready to jump overboard, in the hopes of being taken up after the slaughter had ceased, when a French lieutenant coming up protected us, and saved the poor remains of our crew from the fury of his men. Our lives, however, were all he counted upon preserving—we were instantly stripped and plundered without mercy. I lost everything I possessed; the watch, ring, and sword I had taken from the gallant Frenchman were soon forced from me, and, not stripping off my apparel fast

enough to please a Mulatto sailor, I received a blow with the butt-end of a pistol under the left ear, which precipitated me down the hatchway, near which I was standing, and I fell senseless into the hold.

Chapter Three

**We are sent in, on board the Revenge,
and treated with great cruelty
—Are afterwards recaptured by
the Hero privateer, and retaliate
on the French—I am taken to the
hospital at Port Royal, where I
meet the French lady—Her savage
exultation at my condition—She is
punished by one of my comrades**

On coming to my senses, I found myself stripped naked and suffering acute pain. I found that my right arm was broken, my shoulder severely injured by my fall; and, as I had received three severe cutlass-wounds during the action, I had lost so much blood that I had not strength to rise or do anything for myself. There I lay, groaning and naked, upon the ballast of the vessel, at times ruminating upon the events of the action, upon the death of our gallant commander, upon the loss of our vessel, of so many of our comrades, and of our liberty. After some time, the surgeon,

by order of the French commander, came down to dress my wounds. He treated me with the greatest barbarity. As he twisted about my broken limb I could not help crying at the anguish which he caused me. He compelled me to silence by blows and maledictions, wishing I had broken my rascally neck rather than he should have been put to the trouble of coming down to dress me. However, dress me he did, out of fear of his captain, who, he knew well, would send round to see if he had executed his orders, and then he left me, with a kick in the ribs by way of remembrance. Shortly afterwards the vessels separated. Fourteen of us, who were the most severely hurt, were left in the *Revenge*, which was manned by an officer and twenty Frenchmen, with orders to take her into Port-au-Paix. The rest of our men were put on board of the French privateer, who sailed away in search of a more profitable adventure.

About an hour after they had made sail on the vessel, the officer who had charge of her, looking down the hatchway, and perceiving my naked and forlorn condition, threw me a pair of trousers, which had been rejected by the French seamen as not worth having; and a check shirt, in an equally ragged condition, I picked up in the hold; this, with a piece of old rope to tie round my neck as a sling for my broken arm, was my whole wardrobe. In the evening I gained the deck, that I might be refreshed by the breeze, which cooled my feverish body and somewhat restored me.

We remained in this condition for several days, tortured with

pain, but more tortured, perhaps, by the insolence and bragging of the Frenchmen, who set no bounds to their triumph and self-applause. Among those who had charge of the prize were two, one of whom had my watch and the other my ring; the first would hold it to me grinning and asking if Monsieur would like to know what o'clock it was; and the other would display the ring, and tell me that his sweetheart would value it when she knew it was taken from a conquered Englishman. This was their practice every day, and I was compelled to receive their gibes without venturing a retort.

On the eleventh day after our capture, when close to Port-au-Paix, and expecting we should be at anchor before nightfall, we perceived a great hurry and confusion on deck; they were evidently making all the sail that they could upon the vessel; and then, hearing them fire off their stern-chasers, we knew for certain that they were pursued. Overjoyed at the prospect of being released, we gave three cheers. The French from the deck threatened to fire down upon us, but we knew that they dared not, for the *Revenge* was so crippled in the fight that they could not put sail upon her so as to escape, and their force on board was too small to enable them to resist if overtaken—we therefore continued our exulting clamours. At last we heard guns fired and the shot whizzing over the vessel—a shot or two struck our bull, and soon afterwards, a broadside being poured into us, the Frenchmen struck their colours, and we had the satisfaction of seeing all these Gasconaders driven down into the hold to take

our places. It was now their turn to be dejected and downcast, and for us to be merry; and now also the tables had to be turned, and we took the liberty of regaining possession of our clothes and other property which they carried on their backs and in their pockets. I must say we showed them no mercy.

“What o’clock is it, Monsieur?” said I to the fellow who had my watch.

“At your service, Sir,” he replied, humbly taking out my watch, and presenting it to me.

“Thank you,” said I, taking the watch, and saluting him with a kick in the stomach, which made him double up and turn round from me, upon which I gave him another kick in the rear to straighten him again. “That ring, Monsieur, that your sweetheart will prize.”

“Here it is,” replied the fellow, abjectly.

“Thank you, Sir,” I replied, saluting him with the double kick which I had given to the former. “Tell your sweetheart I sent her those,” cried I, “that is, when you get back to her.”

“Hark ye, brother,” cries one of our men, “I’ll trouble you for that jacket which you borrowed of me the other day, and in return here are a pair of iron garters (holding out the shackles), which you must wear for my sake—I think they will fit you well.”

“Mounseer,” cries another, “that wig of mine don’t suit your complexion, I’ll trouble you for it. It’s a pity such a face as yours should be disfigured in those curls. And while you are about it, I’ll thank you to strip altogether, as I think your clothes will fit

me, and are much too gay for a prisoner.”

“I was left naked through your kindness the other day,” said I to another, who was well and smartly dressed, “I’ll thank you to strip to your skin, or you shall have no skin left.” And I commenced with my knife cutting his ears as if I would skin them.

It was a lucky hit of mine, for in his sash I found about twenty doubloons. He would have saved them, and held them tight, but after my knife had entered his side about half an inch he surrendered the prize. After we had plundered and stripped them of everything, we set to to kick them, and we did it for half an hour so effectually that they were all left groaning in a heap on the ballast, and we then found our way on deck.

The privateer which had recaptured us proved to be the *Hero*, of New Providence; the Frenchmen were taken out, and some of her own men put in to take us to Port Royal; we, being wounded, and not willing to join her, remained on board. On our arrival at Port Royal, we obtained permission to go to the King’s Hospital to be cured. As I went up-stairs to the ward allotted to me, I met the French lady whose husband had been killed, and who was still nursing her son at the hospital, his wounds not having been yet cured. Notwithstanding my altered appearance, she knew me again immediately, and seeing me pale and emaciated, with my arm in a sling, she dropped down on her knees, and thanked God for returning upon our heads a portion of the miseries we had brought upon her. She was delighted when she heard how many

of us had been slain in the murderous conflict, and even rejoiced at the death of poor Captain Weatherall, which, considering how very kind and considerate he had been to her, I thought to be very unchristian.

It so happened that I was not only in the same ward, but in the cradle next to her son; and the excitement I had been under when we were recaptured, and my exertion in kicking the Frenchmen, had done me no good. A fever was the consequence, and I suffered dreadfully, and she would look at me, exulting in my agony, and mocking my groans; till at last the surgeon told her it was by extreme favour that her son had been admitted into the hospital instead of being sent to prison, and that if she did not behave herself in a proper manner he would order her to be denied admittance altogether; and that if she dared to torment suffering men in that way, on the first complaint on my part, her son should go to the gaol and finish his cure there. This brought her to her senses, and she begged pardon, and promised to offend no more; but she did not keep her word for more than a day or two, but laughed out loud when the surgeon was dressing my arm, for a piece of bone had to be taken out, and I shrieked with anguish. This exasperated one of my messmates so much that, not choosing to strike her, and knowing how to wound her still worse, he drove his fist into the head of her son as he lay in his cradle, and by so doing reopened the wound that had been nearly healed.

“There’s pain for you to laugh at, you French devil,” he cried.

And sure enough it cost the poor young man his life.

The surgeon was very angry with the man, but told the French lady, as she kneeled sobbing by the side of her son, that she had brought it upon herself and him by her own folly and cruelty. I know not whether she felt so, or whether she dreaded a repetition, but this is certain, she tormented me no more. On the contrary, I think she suffered very severely, as she perceived that I rapidly mended and that her poor son got on but slowly. At last my hurts were all healed, and I left the hospital, hoping never to see her more.

Chapter Four

Sail for Liverpool in the Sally and Kitty—Fall in with a Gale—Boy overboard—Nearly drowned in attempting to save him—See the owners at Liverpool—Embark in the Dalrymple for the Coast of Africa—Arrive off Senegal

A great deal of prize-money being due to us, I called upon the agent at Port Royal to obtain an advance. I found him in a puzzle. Owing to the death of Captain Weatherall and so many of the officers, he hardly knew whether those who applied to him were entitled to prize-money or not. Whether he thought I appeared more honest than the others, or from what cause I know not, he requested me, as I knew everything that had passed, to remain with him for a short time: and, finding that I could read and write well, he obtained from me correct lists of the privateer's crew, with those who were killed, and on what occasion. All this information I was able to give him, as well as the ratings of the parties; for on more than one occasion the privateer's-

men had come to him representing themselves as petty officers when they were only common seamen on board, and had in consequence received from him a larger advance than they were entitled to. As soon as his accounts were pretty well made up, he asked me whether I intended to go to England, as if so he would send me home with all the papers and documents to the owner at Liverpool, who would require my assistance to arrange the accounts; and, as I had had quite enough of privateering for a time, I consented to go. About two months after leaving the hospital, during which I had passed a very pleasant life, and quite recovered from my wounds and injuries, I sailed for Liverpool in the Sally and Kitty West-Indiaman, commanded by Captain Clarke, a very violent man.

We had not sailed twelve hours before we fell in with a gale, which lasted several days, and we kept under close-reef-topsails and storm-staysails. The gale lasting a week raised a mountainous swell, but it was very long and regular. On the seventh day the wind abated, but the swell continued, and at evening there was very little wind, when a circumstance occurred which had nearly cost me my life, as you will acknowledge, Madam, when I relate the story to you. During the dog-watch, between six and eight, some hands being employed in the foretop, the other watch below at supper, and the captain and all the officers in the cabin, I being at the helm heard a voice, apparently rising out of the sea, calling me by name. Surprised, I ran to the side of the ship, and saw a youth named Richard Pallant in the water going astern. He

had fallen out of the forechains, and, knowing that I was at the helm, had shouted to me for help. I immediately called all hands, crying, "A man overboard." The captain hastened on deck with all the others, and ordered the helm a-lee. The ship went about, and then fell round off, driving fast before the swell, till at last we brought her to.

The captain, although a resolute man, was much confused and perplexed at the boy's danger—for his friends were people of property at Ipswich, and had confided the boy to his particular care. He ran backwards and forwards, crying out that the boy must perish, as the swell was so high that he dared not send a boat, for the boat could not live in such a sea, and if the boat were lost with the crew there would not be hands enow left on board to take the vessel home. As the youth was not a hundred yards from the vessel, I stated the possibility of swimming to him with the deep-sea line, which would be strong enough to haul both him and the man who swam to him on board. Captain Clarke, in a great rage, swore that it was impossible, and asked me who the devil would go. Piqued at his answer, and anxious to preserve the life of the youth, I offered to try it myself. I stripped, and, making the line fast round my body, plunged from the ship's side into the sea. It was a new deep-sea line, and stiff in the coil, so that, not drawing close round me, it slipped, and I swam through it, but catching it as it slipped over my feet, I made it secure by putting my head and one arm through the noose. I swam direct for the boy, and found that I swam with ease, owing to the strength and

buoyant nature of the water in those latitudes. I had not swum more than half-way before the line got foul on the coil on board, and, checking me suddenly, it pulled me backwards and under water. I recovered myself and struck out again. During this time, to clear the line on board, they had cut some of the entangled parts, and in the confusion and hurry severed the wrong part, so that the end went overboard, and I had half the coil of line hanging to me, and at the same time was adrift from the ship. They immediately hailed me to return, but from the booming of the waves I could not hear what they said, and thought that they were encouraging me to proceed. I shouted in return to show the confidence which I had in myself. I easily mounted the waves as they breasted me, but still I made my way very slowly against such a swell, and saw the boy only at intervals when I was on the top of the wave. He could swim very little, and did not make for the ship, but, with his eyes fixed upon the sky, paddled like a dog to keep himself above water. I now began to feel the weight of the line upon me, and to fear that I should never hold out. I began to repent of my rashness, and thought I had only sacrificed myself without any chance of saving him. I persevered, nevertheless, and having, as I guessed, come to the spot where the boy was, I looked round, and not seeing him was afraid that he had gone down, but on mounting the next wave I saw him in the hollow, struggling hard to keep above water, and almost spent with his long exertion.

I swam down to him, and, hailing him, found he was still

sensible, but utterly exhausted. I desired him to hold on by my hand but not to touch my body, as we should both sink. He promised to obey me, and I held out my right hand to him, and made a signal for them to haul in on board, for I had no idea that the line had been cut. I was frightened when I perceived the distance that the ship was from me—at least a quarter of a mile. I knew that the deep-sea line was but a hundred fathoms in length, and therefore that I must be adrift, and my heart sunk within me. All the horrors of my situation came upon me, and I felt that I was lost; but although death appeared inevitable, I still struggled for life—but the rope now weighed me down more and more. While swimming forward it trailed behind, and although it impeded my way, I did not feel half its weight. Now, however, that I was stationary, it sank deep, and pulled me down with it. The waves, too, which, while I breasted them and saw them approach, I easily rose over, being now behind us, broke over our heads, burying us under them, or rolling us over by their force.

I tried to disengage myself from the line, but the noose being jammed, and having the boy in one hand, I could not possibly effect it. But what gave me courage in my difficulties was, that I perceived that the people on board were getting out the boat; for although the captain would not run the risk for one person, now that two were overboard, and one of them risking his life for the other, the men insisted that the boat should be hoisted out. It was an anxious time to me, but at last I had the satisfaction of seeing her clear of the ship, and pulling round her bow. The

danger was, however, considered so great, that when they came to man the boat only three men could be found who would go in her, and in the confusion they came away with but two oars and no rudder. Under these disadvantages they of course pulled very slowly against a mountainous sea, as they were obliged to steer with the oars to meet it, that the boat might not be swamped. But the sight of the boat was sufficient to keep me up. My exertions were certainly incredible; but what will not a man do when in fear of death! As it approached—slowly and slowly did my powers decrease. I was now often under water with the boy, and rose again to fresh exertion, when at last a crested wave broke over us, and down we went several feet under the water. The force of the sea drove the boy against me, and he seized me by the loins with my head downwards. I struggled to disengage myself! It was impossible. I gave myself up for lost—and what a crowd of thoughts and memories passed through my brain in a few moments, for it could not have been longer! At last, being head downwards, I dived deeper, although I was bursting from so long holding my breath under water.

This had the desired effect. Finding me sinking instead of rising with him, the boy let go his hold that he might gain the surface. I turned and followed him, and drew breath once more. Another moment had sealed our fates. I no longer thought of saving the boy, but struck out for the boat which was now near me. Perceiving this, the boy cried out to me for pity's sake not to leave him. I felt myself so far recovered from my exhaustion,

that I thought I could save him as well as myself, and compassion induced me to turn back. I again gave him my hand, charging him on his life not to attempt to grapple with me, and again resumed the arduous struggle of keeping him as well as myself above water. My strength was nearly gone, the boat approached but slowly, and we now sunk constantly under the water, rising every few seconds to draw breath. Merciful God! How slow appeared the approach of the boat. Struggle after struggle—fainter and fainter still—still I floated. At last my senses almost left me, I took in water in quantities. I felt I was in green fields, when I was seized by the men and thrown into the bottom of the boat, where I lay senseless alongside of the boy. There was great danger and difficulty in getting again to the ship. More than once the boat was half filled by the following seas, and when they gained the ship it was impossible to get us out, as, had they approached the side, the boat would have been dashed to atoms. They lowered the tackles from the yard-arms. The three men clambered up them, leaving us to take our chance of the boat being got in, or her being stove to pieces, in which latter case we should have been lost. They did get us in, with great damage to the boat, but we were saved. The line was still round me, and it was found that I had been supporting the weight of seventy yards. So sore was I with such exertion, that I kept my hammock for many days, during which I reviewed my past life, and vowed amendment.

We arrived at Liverpool without any further adventure worth recording, and I immediately called upon the owner with the

papers intrusted to me. I gave him all the information he required, and he asked me whether I should like to return to privateering, or to go as mate of a vessel bound to the coast of Africa. I inquired what her destination was to be, and, as I found that she was to go to Senegal for ivory, wax, gold-dust, and other articles, in exchange for English prints and cutlery, I consented. I mention this, as, had she been employed in the slave-trade, as were most of the vessels from Liverpool to the Coast, I would not have joined her. A few days afterwards I went on board of the Dalrymple, Captain Jones, as mate; we had a very quick passage to Senegal, and brought our vessel to an anchor off the bar.

Chapter Five

In crossing the Bar at Senegal the boat is upset by a Tornado—We escape being devoured by Sharks only to be captured by the Natives—Are taken into the interior of the country, and brought before the Negro King, from whose wrath we are saved by the intercession of his female attendants

A day or two after we had arrived, the master of another vessel that was at anchor near to us came on board and borrowed our long-boat and some hands that he might go in it to Senegal. The captain, who was an old friend of the party who made the request, agreed to lend it to him, and as accidents are very frequent with boats crossing the bar, on account of the heavy breakers, the best swimmers were selected for the purpose, and the charge of the boat was given to me. We set off, five men rowing and I at the helm. When we approached the bar, a tornado, which had been for some time threatening, came upon us. The impetuosity of these blasts is to be matched in no part of the world, and as it

came at once in its full force, we endeavoured, by putting the boat before it, to escape its fury. This compelled us to run to the southward along the coast. We managed to keep the boat up for a long while, and hoped to have weathered it, when, being on the bar, and in broken water, a large wave curled over us, filled the boat, and it went down in an instant.

Our only chance now was to reach the shore by swimming, but it was at a distance, with broken water the whole way; and our great terror was from the sharks, which abound on the coast and are extremely ravenous—nor were we without reason for our alarm. Scarcely had the boat gone down, and we were all stretching out for the shore, when one of our men shrieked, having been seized by the sharks, and instantly torn to pieces. His blood stained the water all around, and this attracting all the sharks proved the means of our escape. Never shall I forget the horrible sensation which I felt as I struggled through the broken water, expecting every minute a limb to be taken off by one of those voracious animals. If one foot touched the other, my heart sunk, thinking it was the nose of a shark, and that its bite would immediately follow. Agonised with these terrors, we struggled on—now a large wave curling over us and burying us under water, or now forced by the waves towards the beach, rolling us over and over. So battered were we by the surf, that we dived under the waves to escape the blows which we received, and then rose and struck out again. At last, worn out with exertion, we gained the shore, but our toil was not over.

The beach was of a sand so light that it crumbled beneath us, and at the return of the wave which threw us on shore we were dragged back again and buried in sand and water. We rose to renew our endeavours, but several times without success, for we could not obtain a firm footing. At last the Negroes, who had witnessed our accident, and who now came down in great numbers on the beach, laid hold of us as the sea threw us up, and dragged us beyond the reach of the waves. Worn out with fatigue we lay on the sand, waiting to ascertain what the savages would do with us; they were not long in letting us know, for they soon began to strip us of every article of clothing on our backs. One of our men attempted to resist, upon which a Negro drove a spear through his thigh.

Having divided our apparel, after some consultation, they tied our hands, and placing us in the midst of a large force, armed with spears and bows and arrows, they went off with us for the inland part of the country. We set off with heavy hearts; taking, as we thought, a last farewell of the ocean, and going forwards in great apprehension of the fate that awaited us. The sand was very deep, and the heat of the sun excessive, for it was then about noon. Without any garments, we were soon scorched and blistered all over, and in intolerable anguish, as well as fatigued; but the Negroes compelled us to move on, goading us with their spears if we slackened our pace, and threatening to run us through if we made a halt. We longed for the night, as it would afford a temporary relief to our sufferings. It came at last, and

the Negroes collected wood and lighted a fire to keep off the wild beasts, lying round it in a circle, and placing us in the midst of them. We hoped to have some rest after what we had gone through, but it was impossible—the night proved even worse than the day. The mosquitoes came down upon us in such swarms, and their bites were so intolerable, that we were almost frantic. Our hands being tied, we could not beat them off and we rolled over and over to get rid of them. This made matters worse, for our whole bodies being covered with raised blisters, from the rays of the sun, our rolling over and over broke the blisters, and the sand getting into the wounds, added to the bites of the mosquitoes, made our sufferings intolerable. We had before prayed for night, we now prayed for day. Some prayed for death.

When the sun rose, we set off again, our conductors utterly disregarding our anguish, and goading us on as before. In the forenoon we arrived at a village, where our guards refreshed themselves; a very small quantity of boiled corn was given to each of us, and we continued our journey, passing by several small towns, consisting, as they all do in that country, of huts built of reeds, round in form, and gathered to a point at top. This day was the same as the preceding. We were pricked with spears if we stumbled or lagged, threatened with death if we had not strength to go on. At last the evening arrived, and the fires were lighted. The fires were much larger than before, I presume because the wild beasts were more numerous, for we heard them howling in every direction round us, which we had not done on

the night before. The mosquitoes did not annoy us so much, and we obtained some intervals of broken rest. At daylight we resumed our journey, as near as we could judge by the sun, in a more easterly direction.

During the first two days we were badly received by the inhabitants of the towns, whose people had been kidnapped so often for the slave-trade; they hated the sight of our white faces, for they presumed that we had come for that purpose; but as we advanced in the interior, we were better treated, and the natives looked upon us with surprise and wonder, considering us as a new race of beings. Some of the women, seeing how utterly exhausted we were with fatigue and hunger, looked with compassion on us, and brought us plenty of boiled corn and goats' milk to drink. This refreshed us greatly, and we continued our journey in anxious expectation of the fate for which we were reserved.

On crossing a small river, which appeared to be the boundary of two different states, a multitude of Negroes approached, and seemed disposed to take us from our present masters, but after a conference, they agreed among themselves, and a party of them joined with those who had previously conducted us. We soon came to the edge of a desert, and there we halted till the Negroes had filled several calabashes and gourds full of water, and collected a quantity of boiled corn. As soon as this was done, we set off again, and entered the desert. We were astonished and terrified when we looked around us, not a single vestige of

herbage, not a blade of grass was to be seen—all was one wide waste of barren sand, so light as to rise in clouds at the least wind, and we sank so deep in walking through it that at last we could hardly drag one foot after the other. But we were repaid for our fatigue, for when we halted at night, no fires were lighted, and to our great delight we found that there were no mosquitoes to annoy us. We fell into a sound sleep, which lasted till morning, and were much refreshed; indeed, so much so as to enable us to pursue our journey with alacrity.

In our passage over the desert we saw numbers of elephants' teeth, but no animals. How the teeth came there, unless it were that the elephants were lost in attempting to cross the desert, I cannot pretend to say. Before we had crossed the desert, our water was expended, and we suffered dreadfully from thirst, walking as we did during the whole day under a vertical sun. The night was equally painful, as we were so tortured with the want of water; but on the following day, when our strength was nearly exhausted, and we were debating whether we should not lie down and allow the spears of our conductors to put an end to our miseries, we came to the banks of a river which the Negroes had evidently been anxiously looking for. Here we drank plentifully, and remained all the day to recruit ourselves, for the Negroes were almost as exhausted as we were. The next morning we crossed the river, and plunged into a deep wood: the ground being high, the mosquitoes did not annoy us so much as they did down on the low marshy land near the sea-coast. During our traverse

through the wood we subsisted solely upon the birds and animals which the Negroes killed with their bows and arrows.

When we had forced our way through the forest, we found the country, as before, interspersed with wicker villages or small hamlets at a few miles' distance from each other. Round each village there were small patches of Guinea corn, and we frequently came to clusters of huts which had been deserted. Between the sea-coast and the desert we had traversed we observed that many of the inhabitants had European fire-arms, but now the only weapons to be seen were spears and bows and arrows. As we advanced we were surrounded at every village by the natives, who looked upon us with surprise and astonishment, examining us, and evidently considering us a new species. One morning we arrived at a very large Negro town, and as we approached, our guards began to swell with pride and exultation, and drove us before them among the crowds of inhabitants, singing songs of triumph, and brandishing their weapons. Having been driven through a great part of the town, we arrived at a number of huts separated by a high palisade from the rest, and appropriated, as we afterwards found, to the use of the king of the country, his wives and attendants. Here we waited outside some time, while our guards went in and acquainted this royal personage with the present which they had brought for him.

We had reason to think that our captors were not his subjects, but had been at variance with him, and had brought us as a present, that they might make peace with an enemy too strong

for them. We were at last ordered to go inside the enclosure, and found ourselves in a large open building, constructed like the others, of reeds and boughs. In the centre was squatted a ferocious-looking old Negro, attended by four young Negro women. He was raw-boned and lean, and of a very large frame. A diabolical ferocity was imprinted on his grim countenance, and as he moved his arms and legs he showed that under his loose skin there was a muscle of extraordinary power. I never had before seen such a living type of brutal strength and barbarity. On a mat before him were provisions of different kinds. Behind him stood several grim savages who held his weapons, and on each side, at a greater distance, were rows of Negroes, with their heads bent down and their arms crossed, awaiting his orders. The chief or king, as well as the four women, had clothes of the blue cotton cloth of the country, that is, one piece wrapped round the loins and descending to the ankles, and another worn over their shoulders; but, with few exceptions, all the rest, as well as the inhabitants generally, were quite naked. So were we, as the reader may recollect. Round the necks of the women were rows of gold beads, longer by degrees, until the last of the rows hung lower than their bosoms, and both the king and they had large bracelets of gold round their arms, wrists, and legs. The women, who were young and well-looking, stared at us with eager astonishment, while the old king scowled upon us so as to freeze our blood. At last, rising from the ground, he took his sabre from the man who held it behind him, and walked up among us, who with our

heads bowed, and breathless with fear, awaited our impending fate. I happened to be standing the foremost, and grasping my arm with a gripe which made my heart sink, with his hand which held the sword he bent down my head still lower than it was. I made sure that he was about to cut off my head, when the women, who had risen from the ground, ran crowding round him, and with mingled entreaties and caresses strove to induce him not to put his intentions, if such he really had, into execution. They prevailed at last; the youngest took away his sword, and then they led him back to his seat, after which the women came to us to gratify their curiosity. They felt our arms and breasts, putting innumerable questions to those who brought us thither. They appeared very much amazed at the length of my hair, for I had worn it tied in a long cue. Taking hold of it, they gave it two or three severe pulls, to ascertain if it really grew to my head, and finding that it did so, they expressed much wonder. When their curiosity was satisfied, they then appeared to consider our condition, and having obtained the old king's permission, they brought us a calabash full of cush-cush, that is, Guinea corn boiled into a thick paste. Our hands being still tied, we could only by shaking our heads express our inability to profit by their kindness. Understanding what we meant, they immediately cut our thongs, and the youngest of the four perceiving that my arms were benumbed from having been confined so many days, and that I could not use them, showed the most lively commiseration for my sufferings. She gently chafed my wrists with her hands,

and showed every sign of pity in her countenance, as indeed did all the other three. But I was by far the youngest of the whole party who had been captured, and seemed most to excite their pity and good-will. Shortly afterwards we were all taken into an adjoining tent or hut, and our bodies were rubbed all over with an oil, which after a few days' application left us perfectly healed, and as smooth as silk. So altered was our condition, that those very people who had guarded us with their spears and threatened us with death, were now ordered to wait upon us, and as the king's wives frequently came to see how we were treated, we were served with the utmost humility and attention.

Chapter Six

I am given as a Slave to the old King's Favourite, Whyna—Assist my young Mistress to make her Toilet—Hold frequent Conversations with her, and become strongly attached to her—My Hatred and Dread of the old King increase—He shoots a Man with Bird-arrows

One morning, after we had been about three weeks in these comfortable quarters, I was summoned away from my companions into the presence of the king. When I came before him a small manacle was fixed round my left ankle, and another round my left wrist, with a light chain connecting the two. A circle of feathers was put round my head, and a loose cloth wrapped round my loins. I was then led forward to him with my arms crossed over my breast, and my head bowed. By his orders I was then placed behind the youngest of the four women, the one who had chafed my wrists, and I was given to understand that I was her slave, and was to attend upon her, to which, I must

say, I gave a joyful assent in my heart, although I did not at that time show any signs of gladness. There I remained, with my arms folded, and bowed as before, until dinner was brought in, and a calabash full of cush-cush was put into my hands to place before the king and his wives. My first attempt at service was not very adroit, for, in my eagerness to do my duty, I tripped over the corner of the mat which served them for a table, and tumbling headlong forward, emptied the calabash of cush-cush which I held in my hand upon the legs of the old king, who sat opposite to where I was advancing. He jumped up roaring out with anger, while I in my fear sprung on my legs, and rushed to the side of the apartment, expecting immediate death. Fortunately the victuals in this country are always served up cool, and my new mistress easily obtained my pardon, laughing heartily at the scene, and at my apprehension.

The repast being over, I was ordered to follow my mistress, who retired to another hut, according to their custom, to sleep during the heat of the day. I was placed before the door to prevent her being disturbed. My only duty now was to attend upon my young mistress. She was the king's favourite wife, and as she was uniformly kind and gentle, I should have almost ceased to lament my loss of liberty had it not been from the fear I had of the old monarch. I knew that my preservation depended entirely upon my mistress's favour, and I endeavoured all I could to conciliate her by the most sedulous attentions to please. Young and generous in disposition, she was easily satisfied by my ready

obedience and careful service. I do not think that she was more than seventeen years of age; but they are women at fourteen in that country, and even earlier. She was a Negress as to colour, but not a real Negress; for her hair, although short and very wavy, was not woolly, and her nose was straight. Her mouth was small, and her teeth beautiful. Her figure was perfect, her limbs being very elegantly formed. When she first rose in the morning, I attended her to the brow of a hill just without the palisades, where with devout but mistaken piety she adored the rising sun—at least it appeared to me that she did so. She then went down to the river to bathe, and as soon as her hair was dry she had it dressed. This office, after a short time, devolved upon me, and I became very expert, having to rub her hair with a sweet oil, and then roll it up in its natural curls with a quill, so as to dispose them to the most fanciful advantage as to form.

After her toilet was complete, she went to feed her poultry, and some antelopes and other beasts, and then she practised at a mark with her bow and arrows and javelin till about ten o'clock, when she went to the king's hut, and they all sat down to eat together. After the repast, which lasted some time, if she did not repose with the king, she retired to her own hut, where she usually refreshed herself till about four o'clock, when she returned to the king, or ranged the woods, or otherwise amused herself during the rest of the evening. I will say for the old savage that he did not confine his wives. Such was our general course of life, and wherever she went I attended her. The attachment I

showed and really felt for her secured her confidence, and she always treated me in a kind and familiar manner. Their language consists of few words compared to our own, and in a short time, by help of signs, we understood each other tolerably well. She appeared to have a most ardent curiosity to know who we were, and from whence we came, and all the time that we passed alone was employed in putting questions, and my endeavouring to find out her meaning and answer them. This, although very difficult at first, I was eventually enabled to accomplish indifferently well. She was most zealous in her mistaken religion, and one morning when I was following her to her devotions on the hill, she asked me where my God was? I pointed upwards, upon which she told me with great joy and innocency, that hers was there too, and that, therefore, they must be the same God, or if not they must be friends. Convinced that she was right, she made me worship with her, bowing my head down to the sand, and going through the same forms, which of course I did not understand the meaning of; but I prayed to my God, and therefore made no objection, as it was pleasing to her. This apparent conformity in religion recommended me more strongly to her, and we became more intimate, and I was certainly attached to her by every tie of gratitude. I was quite happy in the friendship and kindness she showed towards me; the only drawback was my fear of the proud old king, and the recollection of him often made me cheek myself, and suddenly assume a more distant and respectful demeanour towards her. I soon found out that she dreaded the

old savage as much as I did, and hated him even more. In his presence she treated me very sternly, and ordered me about in a very dictatorial manner; but when we were alone, and had no fear of being seen, she would then be very familiar, sometimes even locking her arm into mine, and laughing as she pointed out the contrast of the colours, and in the full gaiety of her young heart rejoicing that we were alone, and could converse freely together. As she was very intelligent, she soon perceived that I possessed much knowledge that she did not, and that she could not comprehend what I wanted to teach her. This induced her to look upon me with respect as well as kindness.

One day I purposely left her bow behind in the hut where my companions resided; and on her asking me for it, I told her that I had done so, but that I would make my companions send it without my going back. I tore off a piece of the bark of a tree, and with the point of an arrow I wrote to one of them, desiring him to send it by bearer; and calling a young Negro boy, told him in her presence to give that piece of bark to the white man, and come back again to the queen. Whyna, for such was the name of my mistress queen, stood in suspense, waiting the result; in a few minutes the boy returned, bringing the bow. Astonished at this, she made me write again and again for her arrows, her lance, and many other things. Finding by these being immediately sent that we had a method of communicating with each other at a distance, she earnestly insisted upon being taught so surprising an art. Going at a distance from me, she ordered me to talk to

her when out of hearing, and finding that I could not, or, as she seemed to suppose, that I would not, she became discontented and out of humour. I could by no means make her comprehend how it was performed, but I made her understand that as soon as I was fully acquainted with her language, I should be able to teach her. She was satisfied with this, but made me promise that I would teach nobody else.

By the canoes in the river, I easily made her comprehend that I came in a vast boat from a distant land, over a great expanse of water, and also how it was that we fell into the Negroes' power. I then found out from her that the Negroes had pretended that we had invaded their land to procure slaves, and that they had vanquished us in battle; hence their songs of triumph on bringing us to the king. I pointed out the heavenly bodies to her in the evenings, trying to make her comprehend something of their nature and motions, but in vain. This had, however, one good effect; she looked up to me with more respect, hoping that some day, when I could fully explain myself, she might be herself taught all these wonders. With these feelings towards me, added to my sedulous endeavours to please her, and obey her slightest wishes, it is not surprising that she treated me as a companion, and not as a slave, and gave me every innocent proof of her attachment. More I never wished, and almost dreaded that our intimacy would be too great. Happy when alone with her, I ever returned with reluctance to the presence of the old king, whose sight and company I dreaded.

The boundless cruelty of this monster was a continual check to all my happiness. Accustomed to blood from his childhood, he appeared wholly insensible to human feelings, and derided the agonies of the wretches who daily fell by his hands. One day he amused himself by shooting small bird-arrows at a man who was bound to a post before the tent, which was placed there for the punishment of those who were his victims. He continued for hours fixing the arrows in different parts of his body, mimicking and deriding his cries. At last, contrary to his intentions, one of the arrows hit the man in the throat, and his head drooped. As the old savage saw that the poor man was dying, he drew another arrow and sent it through his heart, very much annoyed at his disappointment in not prolonging the poor creature's sufferings. I was witness to this scene with silent horror, and many more of a similar nature. I hardly need say, that I felt what my punishment would be if I had by any means roused the jealousy of this monster; and I knew that, without giving him real cause, a moment of bare suspicion would be sufficient to sacrifice my mistress as well as me.

Chapter Seven

I attend the King on a hunting Expedition—Chase of wild Animals—Whyna and I in great danger from a Tiger—Barbarity of the King to my young Mistress—I try to soothe her—I and my Companions are ransomed—Sad parting with Whyna—After an Encounter with a hostile People, we reach Senegal—Return to England

I had been about three months in captivity, when the old king, with his four wives and a large party of Negroes, left the town, and went into the woods to hunt. My companions were left in the town, but I was ordered to attend my mistress, and I went with the hopes of being able by some means to make my escape, for my fear of the old monarch was much greater than my regard for my mistress. As I had not become a proficient with the bows and arrows, or in hurling the javelin, I was equipped with a strong spear. My mistress was skilful to admiration with the arrow and

javelin; she never missed her aim that I knew, and she certainly never appeared to such advantage as she did at this hunting-party. Her activity, her symmetry of limb, and her courage, her skill with her weapons, all won the heart of the old king; and I believe that his strong attachment to her arose more from her possession of the above qualities than from any other cause. Certain it is, that the old savage doted on her—she was the only being who could bend his stubborn will. As his age prevented him from joining in the chase, he always appeared to part with her with regret, and to caution her not to run into useless danger; and when we returned at night, the old man's eyes sparkled with the rapture of dotage as he welcomed her return.

The method of our chase was to beat the country, with a number of men, in a vast circle, until we had gathered all the game into one thicket; then the strongest warriors with their large spears went in and drove out the game, which was killed by the hunters who hovered about within the circle.

The animals which we had to encounter were large fierce black pigs, leopards, jackals, tigers, mountain cats, and others which I have no name for;—and in spite of the ferocity of many of these animals when they bounded out, they were met with such a shower of javelins, or transfixed by the strong stabbing-spears of the warriors, that few escaped, and they rarely did any mischief. One day, however, the beaters having just entered a thicket, Whyna, who was eager for the sport, and plied within the circle with the other hunters, hearing a rustling in the jungle,

went to the verge of it, to be the first to strike the animal which came out. As usual, I was close to her, when a large tiger burst out, and she pierced him with her javelin, but not sufficient to wound the animal so severely as to disable him. The tiger turned, and I drove my spear into his throat. This checked him, as it remained in, but in a spring which he gave the handle broke short off, and although the iron went further in, our danger was imminent. Whyna ran, and so did I, to escape from the beast's fury; for although, after I had wounded it with my spear, we had both retreated, we were not so far, but that in two or three bounds he would have been upon us. My mistress was as fleet as the wind, and soon passed me, but as she passed me she caught me by the hand, and dragged me along at a pace that with difficulty I could keep my legs. The surrounding hunters, alarmed at her danger, and knowing what they had to expect from the mercy of the old king if she was destroyed by the animal, closed in between us and the tiger, and after a fierce combat, in which some were killed and many wounded, they despatched him with their spears. The head of the animal, which was of unusual size, was cut off and carried home to the old king in triumph; and when he heard of the danger that Whyna had been in, he caressed her with tears, and I could not help saying that the old wretch had some heart after all. Whyna told the king that if I had not pierced the animal with my spear, and prevented his taking his first spring, she should have lost her life, and the monster grinned a ghastly smile at me, which I presume he meant for either approbation

or gratitude.

At other times the chase would be that of the multitude of birds which were to be found in the woods. The bow and arrow only were used, and all I had to do now was to pick up all my mistress had killed, and return her arrows—she would constantly kill on the wing with her arrow, which not many could do besides her. By degrees I imbibed a strong passion for the sport, attended as it was with considerable danger, and was never so happy as when engaged in it. We remained about two months in the woods, when the king was tired, and we returned to the town, where I continued for some time to pass the same kind of life as I had done before.

I should have been quite happy in my slavery, from my affection to my mistress, had not a fresh instance of the unbounded cruelty of the old monarch occurred a few days after our return from the chase, which filled us all with consternation and horror, for we discovered that not even my mistress, Whyna, could always prevail with the savage monster.

One morning I perceived that one of the king's guards, who had always treated me with great kindness, and with whom I was very intimate, was tied up to the executioner's post before the hut. Aware of the fate which awaited him, I ran to the hut of Whyna, and so great was my distress that I could not speak; all I could do was to clasp her knees and repeat the man's name, pointing to the post to which he was tied. She understood me, and eager to save the man, or to oblige me, she ran to the large hut, and attempted

to intercede with the old barbarian for the man's life but he was in an agony of rage and passion; he refused her, lifting up his sabre to despatch the man; Whyna was rash enough to seize the king's arm, and prevent the blow; at this his rage redoubled,—his eyes glowed like live coals, and turning to her with the look of a demon, he caught her by the hair, and dragging her across his feet, lifted up his scimitar in the act to strike off her head. I sickened with horror at the danger she was in, but I thought he would not strike. I had no weapon, but if he had done so, I would have revenged her death, even if I had lost my life. At last the old monster let go her hair, spurning her away with his foot, so that she rolled over on the sand, and then turning to the unhappy man, with an upward slanting blow of his sabre, he ripped him up from the flank to the chest, so that his bowels fell down at his feet; he then looked round at us all with an aspect which froze our blood, and turned away sulkily to his hut, leaving us to recover our spirits how we might.

Poor Whyna, terrified and enraged at the same time, as soon as I had led her to her hut, and we were by ourselves, gave way to the storm of passion which swelled her bosom, execrating her husband with the utmost loathing and abhorrence, and lamenting in the most passionate manner her having ever been connected with him. Trembling alike at the danger to which I had exposed her, and moved by her condition, I could not help mingling my tears with hers, and endeavoured by caresses and condoling with her to reduce her excitement. Had the old king seen me, I know

what both our fates would have been, but at that time I cared not. I was very young, very impetuous, and I was resolved that I would not permit either her or myself to die unavenged. At last she sobbed herself to sleep, and I took my usual station outside of the hut. It was well that I did so, for not five minutes afterwards the old wretch, having got over his temper, came out of his tent and bent his steps towards the hut, that he might make friends with her, for she was too necessary to his happiness, he soon treated her with his accustomed kindness, but I perceived that after the scene I have described her aversion for him was doubled.

There were some scores of women in the various huts within the palisade, all of whom I understood were wives to the old monarch, but none but the four we found with him when we were first brought into his presence were ever to be seen in his company. I had, by means of my kind mistress, the opportunity of constantly supplying my companions with fowls and venison, which was left from the king's table, and through her care, they always met with kind and gentle usage.

For another two months did I thus remain happy in the company of Whyna, and miserable when in the presence of the king, whose eye it was impossible to meet without quailing; when one morning we were all ordered out, and were surrounded by a large party armed with spears, javelins, and bird-arrows—I say bird-arrows, as those that they use in war are much larger. We soon discovered that we were to be sent to some other place, but where or why, we could not find out. Shortly afterwards the

crowd opened, and Whyna made her appearance. She took the feather circle off my head, and the manacles off my wrist and leg, and went and laid them at the king's feet. She then returned, and told me that I was free as well as my companions, but that I only, if I chose, had permission to remain with her.

I did not at first reply. She then, in the most earnest manner, begged me to remain with her as her slave; and as she did not dare to say what she felt, or use caresses to prevail upon me, she stamped her little feet with eagerness and impatience. The struggle in my own heart was excessive. I presumed that we were about to be made a present to some other king, and I felt that I never could expect so easy and so pleasant a servitude as I then enjoyed. I was sincerely attached, and indeed latterly I was more than attached, to Whyna; I felt that it was dangerous. Had the old king been dead, I would have been content to pass my life with her; and I was still hesitating, notwithstanding the remonstrances of my companions, when the crowd opened a little, and I beheld the old king looking at me, and I felt convinced that his jealousy was at last aroused, and that if I consented to remain, my life would not be worth a day's purchase.

Whyna also turned, and met the look of the old king. Whether she read in his countenance what I did, I know not; but this is certain, she made no more attempts to persuade me, but waving her hand for us to set off on our journey, she slowly retired, and when arrived at the hut turned round towards us. We all prostrated ourselves before her, and then set off on our journey.

She retired to the door of her own hut, and two or three times waved her hand to us, at which our guards made us every time again prostrate ourselves. She then walked out to the little hill where she always went up to pray, and for the last time waved her hand, and then I perceived her sink down on the ground, and turn her head in the direction which she always did when she prayed.

We now proceeded on our journey in a north-west direction, our guards treating us with the greatest kindness. We rested every day from ten till four o'clock in the afternoon, and then walked till late at night. Corn was supplied us from the scattered hamlets as we passed along, and our escort procured us flesh and fowl with their bows and arrows; but we were in a state of great anxiety to know where we were going, and nobody appeared able or willing to tell us. I often thought of Whyna, and at times repented that I had not remained with her, as I feared falling into a worse slavery, but the recollection of the old king's diabolical parting look was sufficient to make me think that it was best as it was. Now that I had left my mistress, I thought of her kindness and amiable qualities and her affection for me; and although it may appear strange that I should feel myself in love with a black woman, I will not deny but that I was so. I could not help being so, and that is all the excuse I can offer.

Our guards now informed us that we were about to pass for a few miles through the territory of another king, and that they were not sure what our reception might be; but this was soon made evident, for we observed a party behind us, which moved as

we moved, although they did not attack us; and soon afterwards a larger body in front were blocking up our passage, and we found that we were beset. The commander of our party, therefore, gave orders for battle, and he put into our hands strong spears, they being the only weapons we could use, and entreated us to fight. Our party was greatly out-numbered by the enemy, but ours were chosen warriors. As for us white men, we kept together, agreeing among ourselves, that we would defend ourselves if attacked, but would not offend either party by taking an unnecessary part in the fray, as it was immaterial to us to whom we belonged.

The battle, or rather skirmish, soon began. They dispersed, and shot their arrows from behind the trees, and this warfare continued some time without damage to either party, till at last they attacked us closely; then, our commander killing that of the enemy, they gave way, just as another party was coming forward to attack us white men; but finding us resolute in our defence, and our own warriors coming to our assistance, the rout was general. They could not, however, prevent some prisoners from being taken; most of them wounded with the bird-arrows, which, having their barbs twisted in the form of an S, gave great pain in their extraction. I observed that a particular herb chewed, and bound up with the bleeding wound, was their only remedy, and that when the bone was injured, they considered the wound mortal.

We now turned to the eastward to get back into our own territory; we left the prisoners and wounded at a village, and

receiving a reinforcement, we took a circuit to avoid this hostile people, and continued our route. On the eighth morning, just as we were stopping to repose, one of the warriors, who had mounted a hill before us, shouted and waved his hand. We ran up to him, and as soon as we gained the summit, were transported with the sight of the British flag flying on Senegal fort, on the other side of the river. We now understood that by some means or another we had been ransomed, and so it proved to be; for the governor hearing that we were prisoners up the country, had sent messengers offering the old king a handsome present for our liberation. I afterwards found out that the price paid in goods amounted to about fifty-six shillings a head. The governor received us kindly, clothed us, and sent us down to the ship, which was with a full cargo in the road, and intending to sail the next day, and we were received and welcomed by our messmates as men risen from the dead.

We sailed two days afterwards, and had a fortunate voyage home to Liverpool.

Chapter Eight

The Liverpool Ladies are very civil to me—I am admitted into good Society—Introduced to Captain Levee—Again sail to Senegal—Overhear a Conspiracy to seize the Ship by the Crew of a Slaver, but am enabled to defeat it—Am thanked and rewarded by the Owner—

Take a Trip to London with Captain Levee—Stopped by Highwaymen on the Road—Put up at a Tavern—

Dissipated Town Life—Remove to a genteel Boarding-House—Meet with a Government Spy—Return to Liverpool

As the captain reported me to be a very attentive and good officer, although I was then but twenty-three years of age, and

as I had been previously on good terms and useful to the owner, I was kindly received by him, and paid much more attention to than my situation on board might warrant. My captivity among the Negroes, and the narrative I gave of my adventures, were also a source of much interest. I was at first questioned by the gentlemen of Liverpool, and afterwards one of the merchant's ladies, who had heard something of my adventures, and found out that I was a young and personable man, with better manners than are usually to be found before the mast, invited me one evening to a tea-party, that I might amuse her friends with my adventures. They were most curious about the Negro queen, Whyna, inquiring into every particular as to her personal appearance and dress, and trying to find out, as women always do, if there was anything of an intrigue between us. They shook their little fingers at me, when I solemnly declared that there was not, and one or two of them cajoled me aside to obtain my acknowledgment of what they really believed to be the truth, although I would not confess it.

When they had tired themselves with asking questions about the Negro queen, they then began to ask about myself, and how it happened I was not such a bear, and coarse in my manners and address, as the other seamen. To this I could give no other reply but that I had been educated when a child. They would fain know who were my father and mother, and in what station of life it had pleased God to place them; but I hardly need say, my dear Madam, to you who are so well acquainted with my birth and

parentage, that I would not disgrace my family by acknowledging that one of their sons was in a situation so unworthy; not that I thought at that time, nor do I think now, that I was so much to blame in preferring independence in a humble position, to the life that induced me to take the step which I did; but as I could not state who my family were without also stating why I had quitted them, I preserved silence, as I did not think that I had any right to communicate family secrets to strangers. The consequences of my first introduction to genteel society were very agreeable; I received many more invitations from the company assembled, notwithstanding that my sailor's attire but ill corresponded with the powdered wigs and silk waistcoats of the gentlemen, or the hoops and furbelows of satin, which set off the charms of the ladies. At first I did not care so much, but as I grew more at my ease, I felt ashamed of my dress, and the more so as the young foplings would put their glasses to their eyes, and look at me as if I were a monster. But supported as I was by the fair sex, I cared little for them. The ladies vowed that I was charming, and paid me much courtesy; indeed my vanity more than once made me suspect that I was something more than a mere favourite with one or two of them, one especially, a buxom young person, and very coquettish, who told me, as we were looking out of the bay-window of the withdrawing-room, that since I could be so secret with respect to what took place between the Negress queen and myself, I must be sure to command the good-will and favour of the ladies, who always admired discretion in so young and so

handsome a man. But I was not to be seduced by this flattery, for somehow or another I had ever before me the French lady, and her conduct to me; and I had almost a dislike, or I should rather say I had imbibed an indifference, for the sex.

This admission into good society did, however, have one effect upon me; it made me more particular in my dress, and all my wages were employed in the decoration of my person. At that time you may recollect, Madam, there were but two styles of dress among the seamen; one was that worn by those who sailed in the northern seas, and the other by those who navigated in the tropical countries, both suitable to the climates. The first was the jacket, woollen frock, breeches, and petticoat of canvass over all, with worsted stockings, shoes, and buckles, and usually a cap of skin upon the head; the other a light short jacket, with hanging buttons, red sash, trowsers, and neat shoes and buckles, with a small embroidered cap with falling crown, or a hat and feather. It was this last which I had always worn, having been continually in warm climates, and my hair was dressed in its natural ringlets instead of a wig, which I was never partial to, although very common among seamen; my ears were pierced, and I wore long gold earrings, as well as gilt buckles in my shoes; and, by degrees, I not only improved my dress so as to make it very handsome in materials, but my manners were also very much altered for the better.

I had been at Liverpool about two months, waiting for the ship to unload and take in cargo for another voyage, when a privateer

belonging to the same owner came into port with four prizes of considerable value; and the day afterwards I was invited by the owner to meet the captain who commanded the privateer.

He was a very different looking person from Captain Weatherall, who was a stout, strong-limbed man, with a weather-beaten countenance. He, on the contrary, was a young man of about twenty-six, very slight in person, with a dark complexion, hair and eyes jet black. I should have called him a very handsome Jew—for he bore that cast of countenance, and I afterwards discovered that he was of that origin, although I cannot say that he ever followed the observances of that remarkable people. He was handsomely dressed, wearing his hair slightly powdered, a laced coat and waistcoat, blue sash and trowsers, with silver-mounted pistols and dagger in his belt, and a smart hanger by his side. He had several diamond rings on his finger, and carried a small clouded cane. Altogether, I had never fallen in with so smart and prepossessing a personage, and should have taken him for one of the gentlemen commanding the king's ships, rather than the captain of a Liverpool privateer. He talked well and fluently, and with an air of command and decision, taking the lead in the company, although it might have been considered that he was not by any means the principal person in it. The owner, during the evening, informed me that he was a first-rate officer, of great personal courage, and that he had made a great deal of money, which he had squandered away almost as fast as he received it.

With this person, whose name was Captain Levee, (an

alteration, I suspect, from Levi,) I was much pleased; and as I found that he did not appear to despise my acquaintance, I took much pains to please him, and we were becoming very intimate, when my ship was ready to sail. I now found that I was promoted to the office of first mate, which gave me great satisfaction.

We sailed with an assorted cargo, but very light, and nothing of consequence occurred during our passage out. We made good traffic on the coast as we ran down it, receiving ivory, gold-dust, and wax, in exchange for our printed cottons and hardware. After being six weeks on the coast, we put into Senegal to dispose of the remainder of our cargo; which we soon did to the governor, who gave us a fair exchange, although by no means so profitable a barter as what we had made on the coast; but that we did not expect for what might be called the refuse of our cargo. The captain was much pleased, as he knew the owner would be satisfied with him, and, moreover, he had himself a venture in the cargo; and we had just received the remainder of the ivory from the governor's stores, and had only to get on board a sufficiency of provisions and water for our homeward voyage, when a circumstance took place which I must now relate.

Our crew consisted of the captain, and myself, as first mate, the second mate, and twelve seamen, four of which were those who had been taken prisoners with me, and had been released, as I have related, in our previous voyage. These four men were very much attached to me, I believe chiefly from my kindness to them when I was a slave to the queen Whyna, as I always procured

for them everything which I could, and, through the exertions of my mistress, had them plentifully supplied with provisions from the king's table. The second mate and other eight men we had shipped at Liverpool. They were fine, stout fellows, but appeared to be loose characters, but that we did not discover till after we had sailed. There was anchored with us at Senegal a low black brig, employed in the slave-trade, which had made the bay at the same time that we did; and to their great surprise—for she was considered a very fast sailer—she was beaten at all points by our ship, which was considered the fastest vessel out of Liverpool. The crew of the slaver were numerous, and as bloodthirsty a set of looking fellows as ever I fell in with. Their boat was continually alongside of our vessel, and I perceived that their visits were made to the eight men whom we had shipped at Liverpool, and that they did not appear inclined to be at all intimate with the rest of the crew. This roused my suspicions, although I said nothing; but I watched them very closely. One forenoon, as I was standing at the foot of the companion-ladder, concealed by the booby-hatch from the sight of those on deck, I heard our men talking over the side, and at last, as I remained concealed, that I might overhear the conversation, one of the slaver's men from the boat said, "To-night, at eight o'clock, we will come to arrange the whole business." The boat then shoved off, and pulled for the brig.

Now, it was the custom of the captain to go on shore every evening to drink sangaree and smoke with the governor, and very

often I went with him, leaving the ship in charge of the second mate. It had been my intention, and I had stated as much to the second mate, to go this evening, as it was the last but one that we should remain at Senegal; but from what I overheard I made up my mind that I would not go. About an hour before sunset, I complained of headache and sickness, and sat down under the awning over the after part of the quarter-deck. When the captain came up to go on shore, he asked me if I was ready, but I made no answer, only put my hand to my head.

The captain, supposing that I was about to be attacked by the fever of the country, was much concerned, and desired the second mate to help him to take me down to the state-room, and then went on shore; the boat was, as usual, pulled by the four men who were prisoners with me, and whom the captain found he could trust on shore better than the others belonging to the crew, who would indulge in liquor whenever they had an opportunity. I remained in my bed-place till it was nearly eight o'clock, and then crept softly up the companion-hatch to ascertain who was on deck.

The men were all below in the fore-peak at their suppers, and as I had before observed that their conferences were held on the fore-castle, I went forward, and covered myself up with a part of the main-topsail, which the men had been repairing during the day. From this position I could hear all that passed, whether they went down into the fore-peak, or remained to converse on the fore-castle. About ten minutes afterwards I heard the boat grate

against the ship's side, and the men of the slaver mount on the deck.

"All right?" inquired one of the slavers.

"Yes," replied our second mate; "skipper and his men are on shore, and the first mate taken with the fever."

"All the better," replied another; "one less to handle. And now, my lads, let's to business, and have everything settled to-night, so that we may not be seen together any more till the work is done."

They then commenced a consultation, by which I found it was arranged that our ship was to be boarded and taken possession of as soon as she was a few miles out of the bay, for they dared not attack us while we were at anchor close to the fort; but the second mate and eight men belonging to us were to pretend to make resistance until beaten down below, and when the vessel was in their power, the captain, I, and the other four men who were ashore in the boat, were to be silenced for ever. After which there came on a discussion as to what was to be done with the cargo, which was very valuable, and how the money was to be shared out when the cargo was sold. Then they settled who were to be officers on board of the ship, which there is no doubt they intended to make a pirate vessel. I also discovered that, if they succeeded, it was their intention to kill their own captain and such men of the slaver who would not join them, and scuttle their own vessel, which was a very old one.

The consultation ended by a solemn and most villainous oath being administered to every man as to secrecy and fidelity, after

which the men of the slaver went into their boat, and pulled to their own vessel. The second mate and our men remained on deck about a quarter of an hour, and then all descended by the ladder to the fore-peak, and turned into their hammocks.

As soon as I thought I could do so with safety, I came out of my lurking-place, and retreated to the state-room. It was fortunate that I did, for a minute afterwards I heard a man on deck, and the second mate came down the companion-hatch, and inquired whether I wanted anything. I told him no; that I was very ill, and only hoped to be able to go to sleep, and asked him if the captain had returned. He replied that he had not, and then went away. As soon as I was left to myself, I began to consider what would be best to be done. I knew the captain to be a very timorous man, and I was afraid to trust him with the secret, as I thought he would be certain to let the men know by his conduct that they were discovered and their plans known. The four men who were prisoners with me I knew that I could confide in. This was the Tuesday night, and we proposed sailing on the Thursday. Now we had no means of defence on board, except one small gun, which was honey-combed and nearly useless. It did very well to make a signal with, but had it been loaded with ball, I believe it would have burst immediately. It is true that we had muskets and cutlasses, but what use would they have been against such a force as would be opposed, and two-thirds of our men mutineers. Of course we must have been immediately overpowered.

That the slavers intended to take possession of their own vessel

before they took ours, I had no doubt. It is true that we outsailed them when we had a breeze, but the bay was usually becalmed, and it was not till a vessel had got well into the offing that she obtained a breeze, and there was no doubt but that they would take the opportunity of boarding us when we were moving slowly through the water, and a boat might easily come up with us. The slaver had stated his intention of sailing immediately to procure her cargo elsewhere, and if she got under weigh at the same time that we did, no suspicion would be created. To apply for protection to the governor would be useless—he could not protect us after we were clear of the bay. Indeed, if it were known that we had so done, it would probably only precipitate the affair, and we should be taken possession of while at anchor, for the shot from the fort would hardly reach us. It was, therefore, only by stratagem that we could escape from the clutches of these miscreants. Again, allowing that we were to get clear of the slavers, we were still in an awkward position, for, supposing the captain to be of any use, we should still only be six men against nine, and we might be overpowered by our own crew, who were determined and powerful men.

All night I lay on my bed reflecting upon what ought to be done, and at last I made up my mind.

The next morning I went on deck, complaining very much, but stating that the fever had left me. The long-boat was sent on shore for more water, and I took care that the second mate and eight men should be those selected for the service. As soon as they had

shoved off I called the other four men on the forecastle, and told them what I had overheard. They were very much astonished, for they had had no idea that there was anything of the kind going forward. I imparted to them all my plans, and they agreed to support me in everything—indeed, they were all brave men, and would have, if I had acceded to it, attempted to master and overpower the second mate and the others, and make sail in the night; but this I would not permit, as there was a great risk. They perfectly agreed with me that, it was no use acquainting the captain, and that all we had to do was to get rid of these men, and carry the vessel borne how we could. How that was to be done was the point at issue. One thing was certain, that it was necessary to leave the bay that night, or it would be too late. Fortunately, there was always a light breeze during the night, and the nights were dark, for there was no moon till three o'clock in the morning, by which time we could have gained the offing, and then we might laugh at the slaver, as we were lighter in our heels. The boat came off with the water about noon, and the men went to dinner. The captain had agreed to dine with the governor, and I had been asked to accompany him. It was to be our farewell dinner, as we were to sail the next morning. I had been cogitating a long while to find out how to get rid of these fellows, when at last I determined that I would go on shore with the captain, and propose a plan to the governor. His knowledge of what was about to be attempted could do no harm, and I thought he would help us; so I went into the boat, and when we landed I told the

men what I intended to do. As soon as I arrived at the governor's, I took an opportunity, while the captain was reading a book, to request a few moments' conversation, and I then informed the governor of the conspiracy which was afloat, and when I had so done, I pointed out to him the propriety of saying nothing to the captain until all was safe, and proposed my plan to him, which he immediately acceded to. When he returned to where the captain was still reading, he told him that he had a quantity of gold-dust and other valuables, which he wished to send to England by his ship; but that he did not wish to do it openly, as it was supposed that he did not traffic, and that if the captain would send his long-boat on shore after dark, he would send all the articles on board, with instructions to whom they were to be consigned on our arrival. The captain of course consented. We bade the governor farewell about half an hour before dark, and returned on board. After I had been a few minutes on deck, I sent for the second mate, and told him as a secret what the governor proposed to do, and that he would be required to land after dark for the goods, telling him that there was a very large quantity of gold-dust, and that he must be very careful. I knew that this intelligence would please him, as it would add to their plunder when they seized the vessel; and I told him that as we sailed at daylight, he must lose no time, but be on board again as soon as he could, that we might hoist in the long-boat. About eight o'clock in the evening, the boat, with him and the eight men, went on shore. The governor had promised to detain them, and

ply them with liquor, till we had time to get safe off. As soon as they were out of sight and hearing, we prepared everything for getting under weigh. The captain had gone to his cabin, but was not in bed. I went down to him, and told him I should remain up till the boat returned, and see that all was right; and that in the mean time I would get everything ready for weighing the next morning, and that he might just as well go to bed now, and I would call him to relieve me at daylight. To this arrangement he consented; and in half an hour I perceived that his candle was out, and that he had retired. Being now so dark that we could not perceive the slaver, which lay about three cables' length from us, it was fairly to be argued that she could not see us; I therefore went forward and slipped the cable without noise, and sent men up aloft to loose the sails. There was a light breeze, sufficient to carry us about two knots through the water, and we knew that it would rather increase than diminish. In half an hour, weak-handed as we were, we were under sail, everything being done without a word being spoken, and with the utmost precaution. You may imagine how rejoiced we all were when we found that we had manoeuvred so well; notwithstanding, we kept a sharp look-out, to see if the slaver had perceived our motions, and had followed us; and the fear of such being the case kept us under alarm till near daylight, when the breeze blew strong, and we felt that we had nothing more to dread. As the day broke, we found that we were four or five leagues from the anchorage, and could not see the lower masts of the slaver, which still remained where

we had left her.

Satisfied that we were secure, I then went down to the captain, and, as he lay in bed, made him acquainted with all that had passed. He appeared as if awakened from a dream, rose without making any reply, and hastened on deck. When he found out that we were under weigh, and so far from the land, he exclaimed:

“It must all be true; but how shall we be able to take the ship home with so few hands?”

I replied, that I had no fears on that score, and that I would answer for bringing the vessel safe to Liverpool.

“But,” he said at last, “how is it that I was not informed of all this? I might have made some arrangements with the men.”

“Yes, Sir,” I replied, “but if you had attempted to do so, the vessel would have been taken immediately.”

“But why was I not acquainted with it, I want to know?” he said again.

I had by this time made up my mind to the answer I should give him; so I said, “Because it would have placed a serious responsibility on your shoulders, if, as captain of this vessel, you had sailed to England with such a valuable cargo and so few hands. The governor and I, therefore, thought it better that you should not be placed in such an awkward position, and therefore we considered it right not to say a word to you about it. Now, if anything goes wrong, it will be my fault, and not yours, and the owner cannot blame you.” When I had said this, the captain was silent for a minute or two, and then said:

“Well, I believe it is all for the best, and I thank you and the governor too.”

Having got over this little difficulty, I did not care. We made all sail, and steered homewards; and, after a rapid passage, during which we were on deck day and night, we arrived, very much fatigued, at Liverpool. Of course the captain communicated what had occurred to the owner, who immediately sent for me, and having heard my version of the story, expressed his acknowledgment for the preservation of the vessel; and to prove his sincerity, he presented me with fifty guineas for myself, and ten for each of the men. The cargo was soon landed, and I was again at liberty. I found Captain Levee in port; he had just returned from another cruise, and had taken a rich prize. He met me with the same cordiality as before; and having asked me for a recital of what had occurred at Senegal, of which he had heard something from the owner, as soon as I had finished, he said:

“You are a lad after my own heart, and I wish we were sailing together. I want a first-lieutenant like you, and if you will go with me, say the word, and it will be hard but I will have you.”

I replied that I was not very anxious to be in a privateer again; and this brought on a discourse upon what occurred when I was in the *Revenge* with Captain Weatherall.

“Well,” he said at last, “all this makes me more anxious to have you. I like fair fighting, and hate buccaneering like yourself; however, we will talk of it another time. I am about to start for London. What do you say, will you join me, and we will

have some sport? With plenty of money, you may do anything in London.”

“Yes,” I replied, “but I have not plenty of money.”

“That shall make no difference; money is of no use but to spend it, that I know of,” replied Captain Levee. “I have plenty for both of us, and my purse is at your service; help yourself as you please, without counting, for I shall be your enemy if you offer to return it. That’s settled; the horses are all ready, and we will start on Wednesday. How will you dress? I think it might be better to alter your costume, now you are going to London. You’ll make a pretty fellow, dress how you will.”

“Before I give you an answer to all your kind proposals, I must speak to the owner, Captain Levee.”

“Of course you must; shall we go there now?”

“Willingly,” I replied. And we accordingly set off. Captain Levee introduced the subject as soon as we arrived at the counting-house, stating that he wanted me to be first-lieutenant of the privateer, and that I was going to London with him, if he had no objection.

“As for going to London with you for five or six weeks, Captain Levee, there can be no objection to that,” replied the owner; “but as for being your first-lieutenant, that is another question. I have a vessel now fitting out, and intended to offer the command of it to Mr Elrington. I do so now at once, and he must decide whether he prefers being under your orders to commanding a vessel of his own.”

"I will decide that for him," replied Captain Levee. "He must command his own vessel; it would be no friendship on my part to stand in the way of his advancement. I only hope, if she is a privateer, that we may cruise together."

"I cannot reply to that latter question," replied the owner. "Her destination is uncertain; but the command of her is now offered to Mr Elrington, if he will accept of it before his trip to the metropolis."

I replied that I should with pleasure, and returned the owner many thanks for his kindness; and, after a few minutes' more conversation, we took our leave.

"Now I should advise you," said Captain Levee, as we walked towards his lodgings, "to dress as a captain of a vessel of war, much in the style that I do. You are a captain, and have a right so to do. Come with me, and let me fit you out."

I agreed with Captain Levee that I could not do better; so we went and ordered my suits of clothes, and purchased the other articles which I required. Captain Levee would have paid for them, but I had money sufficient, and would not permit him; indeed with my pay and present of fifty guineas I had upwards of seventy guineas in my purse, and did not disburse more than fifty in my accoutrements, although my pistols and hanger were very handsome.

We did not start until three days after the time proposed, when I found at daylight two stout well-bred horses at the door; one for Captain Levee, and the other for me. We were attended by two

serving-men belonging to the crew of the privateer commanded by Captain Levee—powerful, fierce-looking, and determined men, armed to the teeth, and mounted upon strong jades. One carried the valise of Captain Levee, which was heavy with gold. The other had charge of mine, which was much lighter, as you may suppose. We travelled for three days without any interruption, making about thirty miles a day, and stopping at the hostelries to sleep every night. On the fourth day we had a slight affair, for as we were mounting a hill towards the evening, we found our passage barred by five fellows with crape masks, who told us to stand and deliver.

“We will,” replied Captain Levee, firing his pistol, and reining up his horse at the same time. The ball struck the man, who fell back on the crupper, while the others rushed forward. My pistols were all ready, and I fired at the one who spurred his horse upon me, but the horse rearing up saved his master, the ball passing through the head of the animal, who fell dead, holding his rider a prisoner by the thigh, which was underneath his body. Our two men had come forward and ranged alongside of us at the first attack, but now that two had fallen, the others finding themselves in a minority, after exchanging shots, turned their horses’ heads and galloped away. We would have pursued them, but Captain Levee said it was better not, as there might be more of the gang near, and by pursuing them we might separate and be cut off in detail.

“What shall we do with these fellows?” asked our men of

Captain Levee.

“Leave them to get off how they can,” replied Captain Levee. “I will not be stopped on my journey by such a matter as this. I dare say they don’t deserve hanging more than half the people we meet. Let us push on and get into quarters for the night. After all, Mr Elrington,” said Captain Levee to me, as we were setting off, “it’s only a little land privateering, and we must not be too hard upon them.”

I confess, Madam, when I recalled all that I had witnessed on board of the *Revenge*, that I agreed with Captain Levee, that these highwaymen were not worse than ourselves.

No other adventure occurred during our journey, and when we arrived in London we directed our horses’ steps to a fashionable tavern in Saint Paul’s, and took possession of apartments, and as Captain Levee was well-known, we were cordially greeted and well attended. The tavern was in great repute, and resorted to by all the wits and gay men of the day, and I soon found myself on intimate terms with a numerous set of dashing blades full of life and jollity, and spending their money like princes; but it was a life of sad intemperance, and my head ached every morning from the excess of the night before, and in our excursions in the evenings we were continually in broils and disturbances, and many a broken head, nay, sometimes a severe wound, was given and received. After the first fortnight, I felt weary of this continual dissipation, and as I was dressing a sword-cut which Captain Levee had received in an affray, I one morning told him

so.

"I agree with you," he replied, "that it is all very foolish and discreditable, but if we live with the gay and pretty fellows, we must do as they do. Besides, how could I get rid of my money, which burns in my pocket, if I did not spend as much in one day as would suffice for three weeks?"

"Still I would rather dress a wound gained in an honourable contest with the enemy than one received in a night brawl, and I would rather see you commanding your men in action than reeling with other drunkards in search of a quarrel in the streets."

"I feel that it is beneath me, and I'm sure that it's beneath you. You are a Mentor without a beard," replied Captain Levee. "But still it requires no beard to discover that I have made an ass of myself. Now, what do you say, shall we take lodgings and live more reputably, for while in this tavern we never shall be able to do so?"

"I should prefer it, to tell you the honest truth," I replied, "for I have no pleasure in our present life."

"Be it so, then," he replied. "I will tell them that I take lodgings, that I may be near to a fair lady. That will be a good and sufficient excuse."

The next day we secured lodgings to our satisfaction, and removed into them, leaving our horses and men at the tavern. We boarded with the family, and as there were others who did the same, we had a very pleasant society, especially as there were many of the other sex among the boarders. The first day that we

sat down to dinner, I found myself by the side of a young man of pleasing manners, although with much of the coxcomb in his apparel. His dress was very gay and very expensive, and he wore a diamond-hilted sword and diamond buckles—at least so they appeared to me, as I was not sufficient connoisseur to distinguish the brilliant from the paste. He was very affable and talkative, and before dinner was over gave me the history of many of the people present.

“Who is the dame in the blue stomacher?” I inquired.

“You mean the prettiest of the two, I suppose,” he replied, “that one with the patches under the eye? She is a widow, having just buried an old man of sixty, to whom she was sacrificed by her mother. But although the old fellow was as rich as a Jew, he found such fault with the lady’s conduct that he left all his money away from her. This is not generally known, and she takes care to conceal it, for she is anxious to make another match, and she will succeed if her funds, which are not *very* great, enable her to carry on the game a little longer. I was nearly taken in myself, but an intimacy with her cousin, who hates her, gave me a knowledge of the truth. She still keeps her carriage, and appears to be rolling in wealth, but she has sold her diamonds and wears paste. And that plain young person on the other side of her has money, and knows the value of it. She requires rent-roll for rent-roll, and instead of referring you to her father and mother, the little minx refers you to her lawyer and man of business. Ugly as she is, I would have sacrificed myself; but she treated me in that way, and upon my

soul I was not very sorry for it, for she is dear at any price, and I have since rejoiced at my want of success.”

“Who is that elderly gentleman with such snow-white hair?” I inquired.

“That,” replied my companion, “nobody exactly knows, but I have my idea. I think,” said he, lowering his voice to a whisper, “that he is a Catholic priest, or a Jesuit, perhaps, and a partisan of the house of Stuart. I have my reasons for supposing so, and this I am sure of, which is, that he is closely watched by the emissaries of government.”

You may remember, Madam, how at that time the country was disturbed by the landing of the Pretender in the summer of the year before, and the great successes which he had met with, and that the Duke of Cumberland had returned from the army in the Low Countries, and had marched to Scotland.

“Has there been any intelligence from Scotland relative to the movements of the armies?” I inquired.

“We have heard that the Pretender had abandoned the siege of Fort William, but nothing more; and how far the report is true, it is hard to say. You military men must naturally have a war one way or the other,” said my companion, in a careless manner.

“As to the fighting part of the question,” I replied, “I should feel it a matter of great indifference which side I fought for, as the claim of both parties is a matter of mere opinion.”

“Indeed,” he said; “and what may be your opinion?”

“I have none. I think the claims of both parties equal. The

house of Stuart lost the throne of England on account of its religion—that of Hanover has been called to the throne for the same cause. The adherents of both are numerous at the present moment; and it does not follow, because the house of Hanover has the strongest party, that the house of Stuart should not uphold its cause while there is a chance of success.”

“That is true; but if you were to be obliged to take one side or the other, which would it be by preference?”

“Certainly I would support the Protestant religion in preference to the Catholic. I am a Protestant, and that is reason enough.”

“I agree with you,” replied my companion. “Is your brave friend of the same opinion?”

“I really never put the question to him, but I think I may safely answer that he is.”

It was fortunate, Madam, that I replied as I did, for I afterwards discovered that this precious gossiping young man, with his rings and ribbons, was no other than a government spy, on the look-out for malcontents. Certainly his disguise was good, for I never should have imagined it from his foppish exterior and mincing manners.

We passed our time much more to my satisfaction now than we did before, escorting the ladies to the theatre and to Ranelagh, and the freedom with which Captain Levee (and I may say I also) spent his money, soon gave us a passport to good society. About a fortnight afterwards, the news arrived of the battle of Culloden,

and great rejoicings were made. My foppish friend remarked to me:—

“Yes, now that the hopes of the Pretender are blasted, and the Hanoverian succession secured, there are plenty who pretend to rejoice, and be excessively loyal, who, if the truth were known, ought to be quartered as traitors.”

And I must observe, that the day before the news of the battle, the old gentleman with the snow-white hair was arrested and sent to the Tower, and he afterwards suffered for high treason.

But letters from the owner, saying that the presence of both of us was immediately required, broke off this pleasant London party. Indeed, the bag of gold was running very low, and this, combined with the owner's letter, occasioned our breaking up three days afterwards. We took leave of the company at the lodgings, and there was a tender parting with one or two buxom young women; after which we again mounted our steeds and set off for Liverpool, where we arrived without any adventure worthy of narration.

Chapter Nine

I am put in command of the Sparrow-Hawk—Am directed to take four Jacobite Gentlemen secretly on board—Run with them to Bordeaux—Land them in safety—Dine with the Governor—Meet with the Widow of the French Gentleman I had unfortunately killed—Am insulted by her second Husband—Agree to fight with him—Sail down the River and prepare for Action

On our arrival, Captain Levee and I, as soon as we had got rid of the dust of travel, called upon the owner, who informed us that all the alterations in Captain Levee's vessel, which was a large lugger of fourteen guns and a hundred and twenty men, were complete, and that my vessel was also ready for me, and manned; but that I had better go on board and see if anything

else was required, or if there was any alteration that I would propose. Captain Levee and I immediately went down to the wharf, alongside of which my vessel lay, that we might examine her now that she was fitted out as a vessel of war.

She had been a schooner in the Spanish trade, and had been captured by Captain Levee, who had taken her out from under a battery as she lay at anchor, having just made her port from a voyage from South America, being at that time laden with copper and cochineal,—a most valuable prize she had proved,—and as she was found to be a surprising fast sailer, the owner had resolved to fit her out as a privateer.

She was not a large vessel, being of about a hundred and sixty tons, but she was very beautifully built. She was now armed with eight brass guns, of a calibre of six pounds each, four howitzers aft, and two cohorns on the taffrail.

“You have a very sweet little craft here, Elrington,” said Captain Levee, after he had walked all over her, and examined her below and aloft. “She will sail better than before, I should think, for she then had a very full cargo, and now her top hamper is a mere nothing. Did the owner say how many men you had?”

“Fifty-four is, I believe, to be our full complement,” I replied, “and I should think quite enough.”

“Yes, if they are good men and true. You may do a great deal with this vessel, for you see she draws so little water, that you may run in where I dare not venture. Come, we will now return to our lodgings, pack up, and each go on board of our vessels. We

have had play enough, now to work again, and in good earnest."

"I was about to propose it myself;" I replied, "for with a new vessel, officers and men not known to me, the sooner I am on board and with them the better. It will take some time to get everything and everybody in their places."

"Spoken like a man who understands his business," replied Captain Levee. "I wonder whether we shall be sent out together?"

"I can only say that I hope so," I replied, "as I should profit much by your experience, and hope to prove to you that, if necessary, I shall not be a bad second."

And as I made this reply, we arrived at the house where we had lodged.

Captain Levee was a man who, when once he had decided, was as rapid as lightning in execution. He sent for a dealer in horses, concluded a bargain with him in five minutes, paid his lodgings and all demands upon him, and before noon we were both on board of our respective vessels. But, previous to the seamen coming up for our boxes, I observed to him, "I should wish, Levee, that you would let me know, if it is only at a rough guess, what sum I may be indebted to you; as I may be fortunate, and if so, it will be but fair to repay you the money, although your kindness I cannot so easily return."

"I'll tell you exactly," said Levee. "If I take no prizes this cruise, and you do make money, why then we will, on our return, have another frolic somewhere, and you shall stand treat. That will make us all square, if I am not fortunate; but if I am, I

consider your pleasant company to have more than repaid me for any little expense I may have incurred.”

“You are very kind to say that,” I replied; “but I hope you will be fortunate, and not have to depend upon me.”

“I hope so too,” he replied, laughing. “If we come back safe and sound, we will take a trip to Bath—I am anxious to see the place.”

I mention this conversation, Madam, that I may make you acquainted with the character of Captain Levee, and prove to you how worthy a man I had as a companion.

It required about ten days to complete my little schooner with everything that I considered requisite, and the politeness of the owner was extremely gratifying. We were, however, but just complete, when the owner sent for me in a great hurry, and having taken me into a back room next to the counting-house, he locked the door, and said—

“Captain Elrington, I have been offered a large sum to do a service to some unfortunate people; but it is an affair which, for our own sakes, will demand the utmost secrecy: indeed, you will risk more than I shall; but at the same time I trust you will not refuse to perform the service, as I shall lose a considerable advantage. If you will undertake it, I shall not be ungrateful.”

I replied that I was bound to him by many acts of kindness, and that he might confide in my gratitude.

“Well, then,” he replied, lowering his voice, “the fact is this; four of the Jacobite party, who are hotly pursued, and for whose

heads a large reward is offered, have contrived to escape to this port, and are here concealed by their friends, who have applied to me to land them at some port in France.”

“I understand,” I replied; “I will cheerfully execute the commission.”

“I thank you, Captain Elrington; I expected no other answer from you. I would not put them on board Captain Levee’s vessel for many reasons; but, at the same time, he knows that he is to sail to-morrow, and he shall wait for you and keep company with you till you have landed them; after which you may concert your own measures with him, and decide whether you cruise together or separate.”

“Captain Levee will of course know that I have them on board?”

“Certainly; but it is to conceal these people from others in his ship, and not from him, that they are put on board of your vessel. At the same time, I confess I have my private reasons as well, which I do not wish to make known. You can sail to-morrow?”

“I can sail to-night, if you wish,” I replied.

“No; to-morrow night will be the time that I have fixed.”

“At what time will they come on board?”

“I cannot reply to that till to-morrow. The fact is, that the government people are on a hot scent; and there is a vessel of war in the offing, I am told, ready to board anything and everything which comes out. Captain Levee will sail to-morrow morning, and will in all probability be examined by the government vessel,

which is, I understand, a most rapid sailer.”

“Will he submit to it?”

“Yes, he must; and I have given him positive orders not to make the least attempt to evade her or prevent a search. He will then run to Holyhead, and lay-to there for you to join him, and you will proceed together to the port which the people taken on board shall direct, for that is a part of the agreement they have made with me.”

“Then of course I am to evade the king’s vessel?”

“Certainly; and I have no doubt but that you will be able so to do. Your vessel is so fleet, that there will be little difficulty: at all events, you will do your best: but recollect, that although you must make every attempt to escape, you must not make any attempt at resistance—indeed, that would be useless against a vessel of such force. Should you be in a position which might enable them to board you, you must find some safe hiding-place for your passengers; for I hardly need say, that if taken with them on board, the vessel will be confiscated, and you will run some danger of your life. I have nothing more to say to you just now, except that you may give out that Captain Levee sails to-morrow, and that you are to follow him in ten days. Your powder is on board?”

“Yes; I got it on board as soon as we hauled out in the stream.”

“Well, then, you will call here to-morrow morning about eleven o’clock, not before, and (I hardly need repeat it), but I again say—secrecy,—as you value your life.”

As soon as I had left the owner, I went down to the wharf, stepped into the boat, and went on board Captain Levee's vessel, which, I have omitted to state, was named the Arrow. I found him on board, and very busy getting ready for sea.

"So you are off to-morrow, Levee?" said I, before all the people on the deck.

"Yes," he replied.

"I wish I was, too; but I am to remain ten days longer, I find."

"I was in hopes we should have cruised together," replied Captain Levee; "but we must do as our owner wishes. What detains you?—I thought you were ready."

"I thought so too," I replied; "but we find that the head of the mainmast is sprung, and we must have a new one. I have just come from the owner's, and must set to work at once, and get ready for shifting our mast. So, fare you well, if I do not see you before you sail."

"I am to see the owner to-night," replied Levee. "Shall we not meet then, and take a parting glass?"

"I fear not, but I will come if I can," I replied; "if not, success to the Arrow!"

"And success to the Sparrow-Hawk!" replied Levee, "and God bless you, my good fellow."

I shook hands with my kind friend, and went over the side of the lugger into my boat, and then pulled for my own vessel. As soon as I got on board, I sent for officers and men, and said to them—

“We are to shift our mainmast for one that is three feet longer, and must work hard, that we may be able to sail as soon as possible. I cannot allow any of you to go on shore till the work is finished; when it is done, you will have leave as before till we sail.”

That afternoon I sent down the topsail-yard and topmast, unbent the mainsail, main-topsail, and gaff—sent down the topmast and running-rigging on deck—cast loose the lanyards of the lower rigging, and quite dismantled the mainmast, so as to make it appear as if we were about to haul to the wharf and take it out. The men all remained on board, expecting that we should shift our berth the next day.

On the following morning I laid out a warp to the wharf; as if intending to haul in; and at the time appointed, I went on shore to the owner, and told him what I had done.

“But,” he said, “I find that you will have to sail this night as soon as it is dark. How will you get ready?”

I replied that at nightfall I would immediately replace everything, and in an hour would be ready for sea.

“If such be the case, you have done well, Mr Elrington, and I thank you for your zeal on my behalf, which I shall not forget. Everything has been arranged, and you must come up here with some of your seamen as soon as you are ready to sail. Your men, or rather four of them, must remain in the house. The four gentlemen who are to be embarked will be dressed in seamen’s attire, and will carry down their boxes and trunks as if they were

your men taking your things on board. You will then remain a little distance from the wharf in the boat till your own men come down, and if there is no discovery you will take them on board with you; if, on the contrary, there is any suspicion, and the officers of the government are on the watch, and stop your men, you will then push off with the passengers, slip your cable if it is necessary, and make all sail for Holyhead, where you will fall in with the Arrow, which will be waiting there for you. Is the Arrow still in sight?"

"No," I replied; "she was out of sight more than an hour ago, and from our masthead we could see the topgallant sails of the vessel of war bearing N.N.W."

"Keep a look-out upon her, and see how she bears at dark," replied the owner, "for you must not fall in with her if possible. I think you had better return on board now, that you may keep your people quiet."

When I arrived on board the schooner, I told my officers that I did not think that we should shift the mast as proposed, and that everything must be got ready for refitting. I did not choose to say more, but I added that I was to go on shore in the evening to smoke a pipe with the owner, and then I should know for certain. I employed the men during the whole of the day in doing everything in preparation which could be done without exciting suspicion; and as soon as it was dark I called the men aft, and told them that I thought it was very likely, from the Arrow not having made her appearance, that we might be sent to join her

immediately, and that I wished them to rig the mainmast, and make everything ready for an immediate start, promising them to serve out some liquor if they worked well. This was sufficient, and in little more than an hour the mast was secured, the rigging all complete, and the sails ready for bending. I then ordered the boat to be manned, and telling the officers that they were to bend the sails, and have everything ready for weighing on my return on board, which would be in an hour, or thereabouts, I pulled on shore, and went up to the owner's, taking four men with me, and leaving three men in the boat. I ordered these three men to remain till the others came down with my trunks and effects, and not, to leave the boat on any consideration.

When I arrived at the owner's, I told him what I had done, and he commended my arrangements. In the back room I found four gentlemen dressed in seamen's clothing, and as there was no time to be lost, they immediately shouldered the trunks and valises; desiring my own men to remain with the owner to bring down anything that he might wish to send on board, I left them in the counting-house. The gentlemen followed me with their loads down to the boat, and when I got there the men told me that some people had come down and asked whose boat it was, and why they were lying there, and that they had told the people that the captain had taken four men with him to bring down his things, and that they were waiting for him; so it was lucky that I said to my men what I did.

We hastened to put the trunks into the boat, and to get

in ourselves after we had received this intelligence, and then I shoved off from the wharf, and laid about a stone's throw distant for my other men. At last we heard them coming down, and shortly afterwards we perceived that they were stopped by other people, and in altercation with them. I knew then that the officers were on the alert, and would discover the stratagem, and therefore desired my men and the gentlemen, who had each taken an oar in readiness, to give way and pull for the schooner. As we did so, the king's officers on search who had stopped my four men came down to the wharf and ordered us to come back, but we made no reply. As soon as we were alongside, we hoisted the things out of the boat, veered her astern by a tow-rope, slipped the cable, and made sail. Fortunately it was very dark, and we were very alert in our movements. We could perceive lights at the wharf as we sailed out of the river, and it was clear that we had had a narrow escape; but I felt no alarm on account of the owner, as I knew that although they might suspect, they could prove nothing. When about three miles out we hove-to, hoisted in the boat, and shaped our course.

All I had now to fear was the falling in with the ship of war in the offing, and I placed men to keep a sharp look-out in every direction, and told the officers that it was necessary that we should avoid her. When last seen, about an hour before dark, she was well to windward, and as the wind was from the northward, she would probably sail faster than we could, as a schooner does not sail so well free as on a wind. We had run out about four

hours, and were steering our course for Holyhead, when suddenly we perceived the ship of war close to us, and to leeward. She had been lying with her mainsail to the mast, but she evidently had made us out, for she filled and set top-gallant sails.

I immediately hauled my wind, and as soon as she had way, she tacked and followed in pursuit, being then right astern of us, about half a mile off. It was very dark, and I knew that as our sails were set, and we bore from her, it would be difficult for her to keep us in sight, as we only presented what we call the feather-edge of our sails to her. I therefore steered on under all sail, and, finding that the schooner weathered on her, I kept her away a little, so as to retain the same bearings, and to leave her faster.

In an hour we could not make out the ship, and were therefore certain that she could not see us; so as I wanted to get clear of her, and be at Holyhead as soon as possible, I lowered down all the sails and put my helm up, so as to cross her and run to leeward under bare poles, while she continued her windward chase. This stratagem answered, and we saw no more of her; for, two hours afterwards, we fell in with the Arrow, and, hailing her, we both made sail down the Bristol Channel as fast as we could, and at daybreak there was no vessel in sight, and of course we had nothing more to fear from the Liverpool cruiser.

As we now sailed rapidly along in company, with the wind on our quarter, it was high time for me to look to my passengers, who had remained on deck in perfect silence from the time that they had come on board. I therefore went up to them, and

apologised for not having as yet paid them that attention that I should have wished to have done under other circumstances.

“Captain,” replied the oldest of them, with a courteous salute, “you have paid us every attention; you have been extremely active in saving our lives, and we return you our sincere thanks.”

“Yes, indeed,” replied a young and handsome man who stood next him, “Mr Elrington has saved us from the toils of our enemies; but now that we are in no fear from that quarter, I must tell him that we have hardly had a mouthful of food for twenty-four hours, and if he wishes to save our lives a second time, it will be by ordering a good breakfast to be prepared for us.”

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