

# **QUIRE JOHN** A TALE OF THE CUBAN WAR BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE

## CHAPTER VII—Continued.

Senor Roblado has no longer his hand upon the throttle valve controlling his emotions, which, up to this moment, have been kept in wonderful control, considering his fiery nationality. The barrier is swept down by that fierce rush of the tide, and as he hisses across the table, his usually suave countenance takes on the expression of a fiend.

The crisis is at hand.

Thanks to his long training, Jack knows just how to meet such an emergency. He has one elbow resting on the table, and supports his head carelessly with his hand.

"What might that be, senor?" he smiles.

"Revenge. A Spaniard never forgets an injury. I have lost a fortune, it may be, but in return I mean to have—your life."

With these words the fiery Castilian suddenly produces a revolver, and presents it at the head of his companion. It is so close that Jack can look into the chambers and see the leaden messengers snugly ensconced, and awaiting the signal to go forth. He sees something more.

"Aha! you do not flinch. You are a man of nerve; but that shall not save you. See, the clock yonder is about to strike the half-hour. When it sounds I shall fire. This day which has seen the charming Jessie a wife shall also see her a widow," and his manner declares that regardless of consequences Roblado is bent on revenge.

"Ah, senor, you have been in America, in Cuba, and learned of their ways; but there is one thing you seem to have forgotten which no cowboy in Texas ever omits—that is, to pull back the hammer of your gun before you shoot."

The Spaniard gives a cry of bitter chagrin, and draws back his arm to remedy the fault, when Jack's foot flies up from the side of the table, and the pointed toe of his boot coming in contact with Roblado's wrist, the instantaneous result is a revolver whirling across the apartment.

A snarl of rage from the senor.

"Sit you down, sir," says Jack, calmly, and there is a terrible emphasis in



Jack's foot flies up from the side of the table.

his voice that has an effect on Roblado, though in all probability he is influenced more by the sight of a little shining weapon which Jack has taken from the drawer of the table, and the hammer of which is drawn back.

Roblado is not a madman, therefore he refrains from rushing on certain death.

Fuming with rage, he drops back

into his chair, a picture of unutterable fury.

"Now, sir, let us have an understanding. I shall put my weapon away again, since I believe you will come to your senses and realize there are better ways of getting even than by murder."

A sparkle of cunning flashes into the eyes of the don; he has suddenly remembered that, after all, when the game appears lost, he has a winning card up his sleeve.

The girl!

She is in his power—she believes in his affection for her, and will do what he says.

"You seem to run this game as you see fit, Senor Jack. Tell me what you propose doing in the way of terms," he says sullenly.

"Of course you realize that I hold the fort. My identity has been proven, and I am now in a position to claim the whole estate. A portion will eventually fall to the lady in the case, but some time must elapse before this can be done. In the meantime, senor, I would like to contribute to the support of—my wife."

The Spaniard smiles coldly. As he realizes the power of his one trump card, his old cunning returns, though now reinforced by a desperate hatred for this man, who has played with him as a cat does with a mouse. He can never forgive such humiliation.

"To what extent does the senor mean to go?"

"Anything reasonable until she comes into her own. As I am forbidden to see her by the terms of our agreement, I shall have to deal through you, as her agent."

"Will you draw me a check for ten thousand pounds now?"

"I will—not. That sort of game don't work, my dear senor. A thousand would see you through in good shape until matters can be arranged. This is no blackmailing game."

"Did I say ten thousand? I meant twenty, or it might be thirty," pursues Roblado, vindictively.

"You jest, surely?"

"Ah, you refuse. She shall know how much you care for her comfort. Ten thousand—a mere pittance, sir—a crumb from your abundance. But I do not depend upon your generosity to live. Por Dios! I have other means. We can wait until she comes into her own—yes, wait in the sun-kissed isle beyond the sea, where the cold winds never freeze the warm blood of a Spanish gentleman."

Jack hardly hears the last of his chatter.

One sentence has riveted his attention, and caused him considerable alarm.

"You speak of quitting Great Britain—of going to the isle across the sea. Surely you do not mean Cuba, senor?" he asks.

"Why not? My interests lie there, and my first wife is buried in Havana. Yes, I surely mean Cuba," retorts Roblado, glad to see he has given his opponent a thrust.

"That fever-racked, war-tossed country! Take her there at this time! You must not."

"Senor, I smile. Am I your vassal that you should use such language to me? I go where I please, and when I please. A Spanish gentleman does not take his orders from a Yankee."

"But Jessie; I will not permit—"

"You cannot prevent her accompanying me of her own free will."

"She is my wife."

"In name only. You yourself have agreed never to exercise any of the rights of a husband unless she so wills. You dare not deny it. There is no law that can prevent her traveling with her father and her legal guardian. We sail from this country and she disappears from your sight

forever. Aha! Senor Jack, who laughs now? It is perhaps my turn. Thus am I revenged. I was a fool to think of violence since there is a better way through the heart. See, with your permission I pick up my discarded firearm and return it to my pocket. I would not injure a hair of your head—here; but if you dare to follow me to the land beyond the sea, the hour may come when the insult you have offered me to-day will be wiped out in blood, sir. Now, I am going, and if we never meet again, you can occasionally remember, as in a dream, the charming Scotch lassie who, on your wedding night, came into and went out of your life forever. Adios, Senor Jack;" and with his mocking laughter floating into Travers' ears, Roblado bows himself out, leaving the American still seated at the table.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Left in the Lurch at Glasgow.

The Spaniard has had his revenge. Jack never moves for some minutes after being left alone in his room. His gaze is still fixed at the bold picture



"Aha! Senor Jack, who laughs now?"

of Edinburgh Castle as outlined against the soft southern sky; but his thoughts are hardly connected with that glorious masterpiece.

To Cuba!

This fair Scotch lassie whom a strange freak of Fate has thrown in his way in such a manner that their life-lines have crossed will soon have gone over the broad Atlantic to the Gem of the Antilles, where the terrible Yellow Jack lurks and revolution is in the air.

His cigar, which he has smoked mechanically, though vigorously, at times, becomes exhausted, and as he tosses the stump out of the window, Jack springs to his feet.

To Cuba!

Yes, around the world, if necessary will he follow. The greater the difficulties that arise in his path the more resolved he becomes to accomplish his honorable purpose.

If it lies in the power of mortal man, Jessie Cameron must be his. The law has given her to him already, but that counts for nothing without her heart, her love.

It is long after five when he leaves the hotel, and, accompanied by the ever-faithful Celestial, walks along Princes street.

An interview with the head of the police force is what Jack seeks. He desires to have the elements of law and order on his side in this struggle against the schemer.

When he has acquainted this shrewd gentleman with the facts, and explained what he desires, he soon secures the services of a private detective of great repute.

The orders given are to keep posted on all Senor Roblado does, and report often to Jack.

The night comes on slowly.

Jack has dined and feels that, like

the famous philosopher of old, no fate can harm him.

News from his agent is what he awaits, and meanwhile rides round the city on the top of tram cars. About nine he enters the hotel and finds a message awaiting him. Of course, it is from his agent—written in pencil and in a hurry.

"They are just leaving for Glasgow. Will go by same train. Follow me and put up at St. Enoch's Station hotel, where I will report."

Half a minute to reach his room, a full sixty seconds in which to toss his things into a traveling bag with the help of Ah Sin, and back to the office on time.

He has his tickets purchased, and enters a carriage with Ah Sin and the luggage just as the prompt signal is given and the train moves.

The ride is uneventful.

Reaching Glasgow, a cab is taken to the hotel, and Jack seeks rest, having left word in the office that any message arriving is to be brought to him at once, for he believes the mission of the artist to this city on the Clyde is to sail on an Anchor Line steamer for New York, whence Cuba may be reached.

Another day and no word.

How heavily time drags!

He lounges about the hotel, making short pilgrimages abroad, for it is possible that those he seeks escape him. In Jamaica street he surveys the crowd and wanders into Argyle street, his eyes ever on the watch for the face that is always in his mind.

Among such crowds the chances of seeing a particular person are slender indeed.

Ah Sin says nothing; but he, too, keeps a bright lookout.

And at noon no word.

Jack grows restless. Can it be possible his shrewd agent has lost track of the game, outwitted by Spanish cunning?

He arouses to the occasion and makes inquiries himself.

There is a party, consisting of two gentlemen and the same number of ladies, who have secured staterooms under the name of Hamilton; but he can find out nothing about them, or when they expect to come aboard.

It looks, then, as though he will have to come prepared to watch the gang plank, and, if he discovers those he seeks, go aboard himself.

At the hotel a note awaits him.

Smithers is awake and on the track. He bids Jack be ready for action in case a voyage is the next thing on the program.

This seems significant of action.

That evening, as Jack enters the dining-room, a gentleman hastily leaves whom he has not noticed, and who seems rather anxious to avoid recognition, which is not at all strange seeing that it is Howard Spencer.

Jack has actually been under the same roof as those he seeks for almost twenty hours, and yet never once dreamed of the fact.

It draws near ten o'clock.

Shadows have fallen. Clouds obscure the sky and the night promises to be a dark one.

Jack has decided to drive to the dock of the steamer and carry out his plan. Ah Sin has charge of the luggage and waits in the cab for his master, who lingers to exchange a few sentences with the clerk.

(To be continued.)

### About Large Babies.

Well-authenticated instances of children weighing at birth as much as thirteen pounds are of extreme rarity. Among 15,166 children born in Chrobak's clinic in Vienna only one weighed 5,300 grammes (11½ pounds); while in seven years at the Clinic Baudelocque, in Paris, there were only six children who exceeded 5,000 grammes (11 pounds) at birth, the largest weighing 6,150 grammes (13½ pounds). Dubois in 1897 collected twenty-eight cases in which the child weighed more than 5,600 grammes (12 pounds) at birth, and stated that the heaviest children on record weighed respectively 24 pounds 2 ounces, 24 pounds 2 ounces and 23 pounds 12 ounces.—Lancet.