

# The Doom Trail

— By —  
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 Author of PORTO BELLO GOLD, Etc.  
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## THE STORY

**CHAPTER I**—Harry Ormerod, proscribed traitor to King George as a Stuart partisan, returning from France to London, rescues Alderman Robert Juggins from a band of assassins. Juggins proves to be the grandson of a former steward of Ormerod's father, to whom Juggins feels himself indebted. Ormerod tells Juggins he has abandoned the Stuart cause.

**CHAPTER II**—Juggins tells Ormerod of a Jacobite plot in the American colonies to weaken England by forwarding French interests. Their aim is the return of King James to the English throne. At its head is one Andrew Murray, a Scotsman, and a Frenchman, De Veulle, deadly enemy of Ormerod. The two are in London furthering their schemes. Ormerod sees them. Anticipating the plotters' early return to America, Juggins arranges for Ormerod to go there with letters to Governor Burnet, friend of Juggins, and work to foil Murray.

**CHAPTER III**—Disguised as Juggins' servant, Ormerod takes passage to America. He meets a Scottish girl, daughter of Murray, and ardent Jacobite. De Veulle recognizes him, and their enmity flares. The Frenchman denounces Ormerod to the girl as a traitor to the Stuart cause. Believing him, she repulses Ormerod's proffer of friendship. He is thrown into the sea by an unseen assailant.

**CHAPTER IV**—Ormerod, regaining the deck, has recognized his assailant as Murray's servant, Tom, giant negro. He accuses Murray of employing the negro to assassinate him, but a truce is arranged. At New York Ormerod saves an Indian from insult. The Indian, who speaks English, is Ta-wan-ne-ars, Seneca chief.

**CHAPTER V**—Governor Burnet welcomes Ormerod as a friend of Juggins, and tells him Murray's aims. By what is known as the "Doom Trail" Murray smuggles furs, which should come to New York, to the French in Canada. With Ta-wan-ne-ars and a gigantic Dutchman, Peter Corlaer, Ormerod agrees to go to Niagara, French outpost, and spy out the secrets of the Doom Trail. He of course speaks French. De Veulle has won Ga-ha-no, Ta-wan-ne-ars' affianced wife, now the Frenchman's mistress, and the red man seeks revenge. Ta-wan-ne-ars saves Ormerod's life in an attack on him by Murray's henchman, Bolling.

## CHAPTER VI

### Into the Wilderness

"No, we will go to Murray's tavern," I said. "I will ask him if he thinks he can commit assassination here in the town as he does in the forest."

"Good," rejoined Ta-wan-ne-ars. "I will accompany my brother there."

I remembered that De Veulle lodged at Cawston's, and hesitated.

"Let my brother Ormerod be at ease," added the Indian. "Ta-wan-ne-ars has mastered his hatred."

"I, too, hate your enemy," I said. He was silent for as much as ten paces.

"My brother means De Veulle?" he asked.

"Yes; I once crossed swords with him."

"And he lives! Did he wound my brother?"

I recounted briefly the circumstances of the duel at the Tolson d'O'R. He made no comment until I had finished.

"I am glad my brother spared him," he said then. "For Ta-wan-ne-ars has often prayed to Ha-wen-ne-yu, the Great Spirit, to give him the life of this man who lives as though he were one of the fends of the Ga-gos-sa (False Faces)."

At Cawston's we looked in vain for Murray or any of his party in the taproom and ordinary, so without a word to the servants we ascended the stairs to the upper floor. In the hall I halted momentarily, considering which door to knock upon, when the puzzle was solved by the opening of the one by which we stood.

My Lady appeared, and she started back in amazement, tinged with fear, at sight of me and the stalwart, half-naked figure of the Seneca.

I bowed to her.

"Good evening, Mistress Murray," I said. "I am come with my friend for a word with your father."

"He is engaged," she answered quickly.

"That may be, but I must speak with him on a matter of much importance. I am obliged to ask your father for the second time if he condones assassination in the dark."

Her eyes widened with horror, then darkened with stony anger.

"Sir, you are monstrous impudent!" she exclaimed. "How dare you suggest such a thing?"

"Because it occurred a quarter-hour past."

"And because you are assailed by some footpad in a disreputable part of the town, is that a reason for you to charge Master Murray with assassination?" she demanded with high contempt.

"Oh, I have proof," I said.

My anger grew with hers. It madened me that this girl, who I knew was honest, should be arrayed against me, should hold for me the contempt of a clean woman for a man she deemed a traitor.

The door behind her opened, and Murray himself came out.



"I thought I heard voices— Ah, Master Juggins—"

"Ormerod," I interrupted suavely. His eyebrows expressed polite astonishment.

"To be sure. Forgive my stupidity. It hath gone so far as that already, hath it?"

"It hath gone so far as attempted assassination—for the second time," I retorted.

"Assassination? Tut, tut," he rebuked me. "Master Ormerod, you use strong language. And who in this little town of ours would seek to murder a gentleman new-landed like yourself?"

Ta-wan-ne-ars stepped to the front. "Does Murray know this scalp?"

He permitted an end of the lock of Bolling's hair to show through his clinched fingers.

Marjory shrank back in terror. Murray's face became convulsed with passion.

"Sdeath!" he swore. "If Bolling is dead by this savage's hand I shall know the wherefore of it! What? Do the Iroquois take scalps within the city?"

Ta-wan-ne-ars laughed, and slowly opened his fist to reveal the single lock of hair.

"Ta-wan-ne-ars only takes the scalps of honorable warriors," he said in his smooth, low-pitched voice. "But the Red Death escaped tonight by the width of these hairs. Does Murray think Ga-en-gwa-ra-go would have been angry with Ta-wan-ne-ars if the tomahawk had struck true?"

Murray wiped beads of perspiration from his face.

"So 'twas Bolling!" he muttered. "Curse the knave! What hath he done?"

"No more than attempted to murder me, sir—as I have attempted to tell you," I answered ironically.

Marjory came forward, hands-clasped in expostulation.

"It isn't so! It can't be so! Tell him he lies, sir!" she pleaded with Murray.

He put her gently to one side.

"Peace, peace, my dear," he said. "You do not understand."

"But Bolling was one of your people, sir. You told me—"

"Tut, tut, my dear Marjory. You are new to this new world of ours. The frontier is not like Scotland. We must work with what tools we find. I say it to my sorrow—and he said it furthermore without even the twitch of an eyelid—I am compelled occasionally to consort with men I might prefer to do without."

He gave his attention once more to me.

"In a word, Master Ormerod, what hath happened that you approach me in so hostile a spirit?"

"In a word, Master Murray," I replied, "your man Bolling, or 'The Red Death,' as he seems to be known in these parts, tried to kill me with knife and hatchet this evening."

"I am constrained to believe you," he said with an appearance of much sorrow, "but I cannot hold myself responsible, sir. As it happens, Bolling quarreled with me this afternoon in the presence of half a dozen well-known citizens of the town, and I dismissed him from my service."

"Pardon me," I said with a laugh. "If I express some—"

"Do you step within," he responded with civility. "I shall be glad if you will satisfy yourself by questioning witnesses of the dispute. Marjory, will you—"

"I will stay," she said positively.

He shrugged his shoulders and stood aside. I motioned to Marjory, and she re-entered first. I walked next, and the Seneca followed me, one hand resting on his knife hilt.

Murray shut the door behind us, and I found myself in a large room, sufficiently lighted by candles. Five or six men, who had been talking at a table, looked up with interest as we came in. One of them was De Veulle, and I felt rather than saw the massive frame of Ta-wan-ne-ars gather itself together exactly as does the wildcat when he sights his quarry.

The others I did not know. Later Ta-wan-ne-ars told me they were respectable merchants identified with the faction in the province who were hostile to Governor Burnet, and all were for the closest trade relations with Canada.

Murray turned to me, after recounting my errand, and said:

"Your companion is evidently a chief, Master Ormerod. Will you identify him?"

Before I could say anything Ta-wan-ne-ars responded for himself.

"Not to speak of the fact he was in great need of funds, Master Murray having refused to grant certain demands he made," suggested a third.

I bowed.

"Gentlemen," I said, "I am satisfied—that Master Murray hath a stout case. There is no more need to be said."

"Ah, but there is more to be said," flared Marjory. "Think shame of yourself, sir, to be forever believing against others motives which you know yourself to be laden with. You were once an honorable man. Why do you not mend your ways and regain the self-respect of your kind?"

"God send there be an honorable man to hand when your need comes, mistress," I said. "Good evening, gentlemen."

Murray escorted us to the door. Ta-wan-ne-ars walked beside me without speaking until we had left the tavern.

"I understand your thoughts, my brother," he said suddenly. "We go upon the same quest."

"Quest?" I repeated. "What quest?"

"We each seek a soul which is lost, a sick soul."

I remembered his rage against De Veulle, and caught his meaning.

"Yes, that is true of you, Ta-wan-ne-ars. But there is no soul which I have the right to seek."

"Nevertheless, my brother would find the soul of the maiden and guard it," he insisted. "I have seen."

I saw the grave smile, with a hint of pleading, on his face; and I reached out and caught his hand.

"Whatever be the end of my search, brother," I said, "I will go to the setting sun, and beyond if need be, to aid you to find the soul which you seek."

"The same words are in my heart, brother," he replied simply.

"Bolling hath disappeared," said Governor Burnet. "I have given orders to all officers and troops and town officials that he is to be detained if he ventures to appear, but the knave—or, I should say his master—is too wise. By the way, an express arrived from Fort Orange (Albany) last night and reported having spoken Murray's party in the Tappan zee. He will be a good three days ahead of you, 'twould seem."

"I am not sorry," I answered. "Have you any further instructions for me, sir?"

The governor unfolded the map of the wilderness country which he had exhibited to me during my first visit.

"Above everything else, I must know what is happening at Jagara," he said. "The Doom Trail may wait. The news which Ta-wan-ne-ars brought of the intent of the French to replace Joncaire's trading post with a stone fort is the most menacing tidings we have had since the peace was signed. It makes manifest what I have always contended: that there can be no real peace whilst we and the French sit cheek by jowl, each striving for more power than the other."

"Peace on paper there may be; but the French will be breaking it, as they have done in the case of Joncaire's post and as they now plan to do by building a fort upon English territory. I must know what they do there, Master Ormerod. I must know beyond a doubt. I must have a man I can trust who will see for himself on the spot."

"Surely, Corlaer—"

"Corlaer cannot speak French. Moreover, if he could, his face is known along the whole frontier. He and Joncaire are old opponents. 'Tis you who must go. Masquerade as a Frenchman."

"I am Ta-wan-ne-ars, of the Clan of the Wolf, war chief of the Senecas, and nephew to Do-ne-ho-ga-we, the Guardian of the Western Door of the Long House."

He spoke directly to De Veulle, and the Frenchman's eyes shifted from his level glance.

"Must we have an Indian present?" he muttered. "This is a white man's affair."

"As it happens, this Indian saved my life from a white man's knife," I replied quickly. "He is my brother. I would rather have him here than a woman-stealer."

But I had reckoned without Marjory. She took the situation out of my hands.

"Sir," she said, "you seem to delight in slandering gentlemen who are not disloyal to their friends. I beseech you, have done. 'Tis a sorry business, and gains naught for you. Get forward with what brought you here."

I marked the relief that shone in De Veulle's eyes. I marked, too, the penetrating glance which Ta-wan-ne-ars bent upon her face. For myself, although I felt sick at heart, I said nothing. There was nothing which I could say.

I turned to Murray again.

"This conversation must be painful to us," I said. "Let us make an end to it. Bolling attacked me, as you know. My friend and brother here saved me and drove him away. We have a lock of Bolling's hair in proof of the attempt. 'Tis in your interest to do what you can to clear yourself of responsibility for so dastardly a crime."

One of the merchants at the table, a very decent appearing man, soberly dressed and with much good sense in his face, caught me up.

"'Tis not strange that you should have come to Master Murray after such an attempt as you mention, sir," he began in conciliatory fashion. "But fortunately we were present this afternoon when Master Murray dismissed the man from his employ, in consequence of his dishonesty and misdealing during Master Murray's absence."

"Aye," spoke up a second merchant, "and sure, the knave must have attacked you hoping 'twould be brought against Master Murray."

man. There are plenty of lads who go out every year to Canada to have a try at the fur trade. You should be able to pass for one of them. At any rate 'tis worth the attempt."

"'Tis well worth trying," I agreed. "Also, 'tis possible I may pick up some news of the Trail from Joncaire."

"Possible," he assented; "but keep the Trail in the back of your mind. 'Tis this fort which concerns me now. For look you, Master Ormerod, if I secure proof the French meditate in earnest so grave a breach of the treaty 'twill strengthen by so much my case against Murray. Then might I dare indeed to stir the Iroquois to hostilities against him, as Peter suggested."

"I will do what I may," I promised.

"'Tis well. And be not reluctant to accept advice from Corlaer and the Indians. They are schooled in the forest's craft. Good-by, sir, and be vigilant."

He gave me a hearty clasp of the hand and bowed me out.

In the street Corlaer awaited me. "Der tide is flooding," he said, and without another word set off at a good round pace.

We came presently to a wharf at the foot of Deye street, where lay the sloop Betsy, her sails unstopped, landlines slack. She cast off as we stepped aboard, and presently I was looking back over her stern at the dwindling skyline of the quaint little city.

On the fourth day the river bore us through a country of low, rolling hills and plains that lifted to mountainous heights in the distance. There were farms by the water's edge, and sometimes the imposing mansion of a patron with its attendant groups of buildings occupied by servants, slaves and tenants.

On the fifth day we sighted in the distance the stockades of Fort Orange, which the English were beginning to call Albany, nestling close to the river bank under the shelter of a steep hillock. We made the tottery pier, and hastened up into the town, delegating to the master of the sloop and his boy the task of conveying our baggage to the tavern. We learned that Murray had spent but twenty-four hours in the town and was gone two days since.

We spent the forenoon in purchasing for me the regular trappings of the frontiersman—moccasins of ankle height and leather leggings and shirt, all Indian in manufacture. The weapons Juggins had supplied me were warmly praised by my comrades.

For the rest there were slim stores of salt, sugar, powder, flints and ball to be packed upon our backs. My garments of civilization I made into a package which I consigned to the innkeeper's care.

We took the road to Schenectady. It was the last white man's road I was to see, and I long remembered its broad surface and the sunlight coming down between the trees on either hand and the farms with their log houses and stockades.

But I knew I was on the frontier at last, for the stockades were over high for mere herding of cattle and the house walls were loop-holed. In several of the villages there were square, log-built forts, two stories tall, with the top story projecting out beyond the lower, so that the garrison could fire down along the line of the walls.

'Twas sixteen miles to Schenectady, and night had fallen when we halted the gate for admission.

We were afoot again early the next morning. Beyond Schenectady a few farms rimmed the road, but presently we came to a clearing, and on the west side a green barrier stretched across our way. From end to end of the clearing it reached, and as far on either hand as I could see, a high, tangled, apparently impervious green wall of vegetation.

(Continued Next Week.)

## DETECTIVE ROGERS WARNED TO KEEP OUT OF AIKEN

New York, N. Y.—Reports have come to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, that W. W. Rogers, South Carolina state detective, investigating the Aiken lynchings, has been warned, under threat of death, to stay out of Aiken. Local newspapers state that Mr. Rogers received the following threatening letter:

"You had better stay out of Aiken, as we do not need you to meddle in our business, for if you do not stop what you are doing, we will get you as we did the Lowmans. So watch out and stay away.—Your Friends."

Mr. Rogers continued his visits to Aiken despite the threats of death to himself. The cases are to come before the grand jury whose terms begin January 24, 1927.

Blame for the lynchings is specifically placed upon the Aiken sheriff and his deputies in an editorial published in the Conway S. C.) Herald, which says, under the caption, "When Officers Fail":

"Before it is over the people of this state will no doubt know that the lynchings in Aiken county must be laid at the door of officers of the law."

"Aiken has a sheriff in name only. His deputies were in name only."

"If the sheriff and his deputies had meant to enforce the law, the Negroes would have been protected from the fury of the mob in one way or another."

"The name of Aiken county is ruined and her citizens are more to blame than anybody else for the result."

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