

NO DEFENSE

By GILBERT PARKER

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(CHAPTER XVII—Continued.)

Presently they were in the refectory, and a moment after that they were over the stones, and near the entrance of the ruins, and then a native appeared, armed and running in. Without an instant's hesitation Dyck ran forward, and as he entered, put his sword into the man's vitals, and he fell, calling out as he fell.

"The rest will be on us now," said Dyck, "and we must keep going." He was about to issue from the place when three more natives appeared, and he shot two without waiting. Catching a pistol from Sheila aimed at the third native and wounded him, but did not kill him. The man ran into the wood surrounding the monastery. Presently more Maroons came—a dozen or more, and rushed for the entrance. They were met by Dyck's fire, and now also Sheila fired and brought down her man. Dyck fired again and wounded another, and with great skill loaded again, but at that moment three of the Maroons, in a whirlwind of rage, rushed down into the ruins.

It was dark and they were astonished to see that Dyck was there, and they were more astonished to receive—first one and then another—his iron in their bowels. The third man made a stroke at Dyck with his lance, and did no more than gash Dyck's left arm. Then he turned and fled into the open, and was met by a half-dozen others. They all were about to rush the entrance when suddenly four shots behind them brought three of them down, and the rest fled into the wood shouting. In another moment Dyck and the ladies were in the open, and making for the woods, the women in front, the men behind, loading their muskets as they ran, and alive to the risks of the moment.

The dresses of the ladies were stained and soiled with dust and damp, but otherwise they seemed little the worse for the adventure, save that Mrs. Lynn was shaken, and her face was ashen gray.

"How did you know where we were, and why did you come?" she said, after they had mounted and had got under way, having secured the horses which Sheila and her mother had ridden.

Briefly Dyck explained how, as soon as he had dealt with the revolt of the Maroons at his own place, he came straight to Salem to protect her and Sheila.

"We had not heard of the rising of the Maroons," she said. "The governor was at Salem yesterday and a message came from his staff to say he was needed to deal with a critical incident, and would be come at once. His staff were not at Salem, but at the next plantation nearer to Spanish Town. Lord Mallow went. If he suspected the real trouble he said naught to us, but was gone before you could realize it. The hours went by, night came and passed, then my mother and I, this morning, made up our minds to take a ride to the monastery, and then round by the road you traveled by back to Salem."

"There are Maroons now on that hill above your place. They were there in ambush when we passed to-day, but we took no notice. It was not wise of us to invite trouble. Some of us would have been killed, but—"

He then told what had been in his mind, and what he thought might be the outcome—the killing or capture of the whole group, and safety for all at Salem. His words went to the farthest corners of Sheila's nature.

When he had finished, she continued her story. "We rode for an hour unchallenged, and then came the Maroons. At first I knew not what to do. We were surrounded before we could act. I had my pistol ready, and there was the chance to escape—that faint chance—if we drove our horses on; but there was also the danger of being fired at, and who could tell what a terrible end might have been to the event! So we sat still on our horses, and I asked them how they dared to assault white ladies. I asked them if they had never thought what vengeance the governor would take. They did not understand my words, but they grasped the meaning, and one of them, the leader, who understood English, was inclined to have reason. As it was, we stopped what might have been our murder by saying it would be wiser to let us as hostages, and that we were Americans. That man was killed—by you. A shot from your pistol brought him down as he rushed forward to enter the ruins. But he took care of us as we went forward, and when I shot one of his followers for laying his hand upon me in the saddle—he caught me by the leg under my skirt—he would allow no retaliation. I knew boldness was the safe part to play.

"But in the end we were bound with ropes as you found us, while they waited for more of their people to come—those, no doubt, you found ambushed on the hill. As we lay in the kitchen, bound as you saw us, the leader said to us we should be safe if he could have his way, but there were bad elements among the Maroons, and he could not guarantee

it. Yet he knew the government would pay for our release, would no doubt give the land for which they had asked with no avail. We must, therefore, remain prisoners. If we made no efforts to escape, it would be better for us in the end. 'Keep your head steady, missy, try no tricks, and all may go well; but I have had lot to control, and they may fly at you.' That was the way he spoke. It made our blood run cold, for he was one man, with fair mind, and he had around him men, savage and irresponsible. Black and ruthless, they would stop at nothing except the sword at their throats or the teeth in their flesh."

"The teeth in their flesh!" said Dyck with a grim smile. "Yes, that is the only way with them. Naught can put the fear of God into them except blood-hounds and that Lord Mallow will not have. He has been set against it until now. But this business will teach



Sheila Fired and Brought Down Her Man.

him. He may change his mind now, since what he cares for is in danger—his place and his ladies!"

Mrs. Lynn roused herself to say: "No, no, Mr. Calhoun, you must not say that of him. His place may be in danger, but not his ladies. He has no promise of that. . . . And see, Mr. Calhoun, I want to say that, in any case, you have paid your debt, if you owe one to us. For a life taken you have given two lives—to me and my girl. The account is squared, if it were ever in doubt. Believe me, I speak as one who has a right to say it! Erris Boyne was naught to me, naught at all, but he was my daughter's father, and that made everything difficult. I could make him cease to be my husband, and I did; but I could not make him cease to be her father."

"I had no love for Erris Boyne," said Sheila, with an effort, for she felt choked. Misery was heavy on her. "None at all, but he was my father—and there is nothing more to say."

"See, all's well still at Salem," said Dyck, waving a hand forward as though to change the talk. "All's as we left it."

There in the near distance lay Salem, serene. All tropical life about seemed throbbing with life and soaking with leisure.

"We were in time," he added. "The Maroons are still in ambush. The sun is beginning to set, though, and the trouble may begin. We shall get there about sundown—safe, thank God!"

"Safe, thank God—and you," said Sheila's mother.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Clash of Race.

In King's house at Spanish Town the governor was troubled. All his plans and prophecies had come to naught. He had been convinced there would be no rebellion of the Maroons, and he was equally sure that his career would be made hugely successful by marriage with Sheila Lynn—but the Maroons had revolted, the marriage was not settled!

Messages had been coming from the provost marshal general of reports from the counties of Middlesex and Cornwall, that the Maroons were ravaging everywhere and that bands of slaves had joined them with serious disasters to the plantation people. Planters, their wives and children had been murdered, and in some districts the natives were in full possession and had destroyed, robbed and ravaged. He had summoned his commander of the militia forces, had created special constables, and armed them, and had sent a ship to the Bahamas to summon a small British fleet there. He had also mapped out a campaign against the Maroons, which had one grave demerit—it was planned on a basis of ordinary warfare and not with Jamaica conditions in mind. The provost marshal warned him of the futility of these plans, but

he had persisted in them. He had later been shocked, however, by news that the best of his colonels had been ambushed and killed, and that others had been made prisoners and treated with barbarity. From everywhere, except one, had come either news of defeat or setback.

One good thing he immediately did; he threw open King's house to the wounded, and set the surgeons to work, thereby checking bitter criticism and blocking the movement rising against him. For it was well known he had rejected all warnings, had persisted in his view that trust in the Maroons and fair treatment of themselves and the slaves were all that was needed.

As he walked in the great salon or hall of audience where the wounded lay—over seventy feet long and thirty wide, with great height, to which beds and conveniences had been hastily brought—it seemed to him that he was saving, if barely saving, his name and career. Standing beside one of the Doric pillars which divided the salon from an upper and lower gallery of communications, he received the Custos of Kingston. The doors at the south end of the great salon opened now and then into the council chambers beyond, and he could see the surgeons operating on the cases returned from the plantations.

"Your honor," said the Custos, "things have suddenly improved. The hounds have come from Cuba and in the charge of ten men—ten men with sixty hounds. That is the situation at the moment. All the people at Kingston are overjoyed. They see the end of the revolt."

"The hounds!" exclaimed the governor. "What hounds?"

"The hounds sent for by Dyck Calhoun—surely your honor remembers!"

Surely his honor did, and recalled also that he forbade the importation of the hounds; but he could not press that prohibition now. "The mutineer and murderer, Dyck Calhoun!" he exclaimed. "And they have come!"

"Yes, your honor, and gone with Calhoun's man, Michael Clones, to Salem."

Lord Mallow was at once relieved and nonplussed. No doubt the policy of the hounds was useful, and it might save his own goose, but it was, in a sense, un-English to hunt the wild man with hounds.

"Tell me about the landing of the hounds," said Lord Mallow.

"It was last night about dusk that word came from the pilot's station at Port Royal that the vessel Vincent was making for port, all sails standing, and that she came from Cuba. Presently Michael Clones, the servant of Dyck Calhoun, came also to say that the Vincent was the ship bringing Calhoun's hounds from Cuba, and asking permit for delivery. This he did because he thought you were opposed to the landing. In the light of our position here, we decided to grant the delivery, and it was so done."

During the Custos' narrative, Lord Mallow was perturbed. He had the common sense to know that Dyck Calhoun, ex-convict and mutineer as he was, had personal power in the island, which he as governor had not been able to get, and Dyck had not abused that power as he might have done. He recalled that Dyck's premonition of an outbreak and caution in sending for the hounds was a stroke of genius.

Yet he felt the time had come when he might use Dyck for his own purposes. That Dyck should be at Salem was a bitter dose, but that could amount to nothing, for Sheila could never marry the man who had killed her father, however bad and mad her father was.

First, clearly, he must not think of applying the order to confine Dyck to his plantation; also he must give Dyck authority to use the hounds in hunting down the Maroons and slaves who were committing awful crimes. He forthwith decided to write, asking Dyck to send him an outline of his scheme against the rebels for comment and approval. That he must do, for the game was with Dyck.

"How long will it take the hounds to get to Salem?" he asked the Custos presently in his office, with deep-set lines in his face and a determined look in his eyes. He was an arrogant man, but he was not insane, and he wanted to succeed. It could only be success if he dragged Jamaica out of this rebellion with flying colors, and his one possible weapon was the man whom he had reason to detest.

"Why, your honor, as we sent them by wagons and good horses they should be in Salem and in Dyck Calhoun's hands this evening. If they press they should be there by now almost, for they've been going for hours, and the distance is not great." The governor nodded, and began to write. A half-hour later he handed to the Custos what he had written.

"See what you think of that, Custos," he said. "Does it, in your mind, cover the ground as it should?"

The Custos read it all over slowly and carefully, weighing every word. Presently he handed back the paper. "Your honor, it is complete and masterly," he said. "It puts the crushing

of the revolt into the hands of Mr. Calhoun, and nothing could be wiser. He will organize the business like a master. We haven't forgotten his fight for the navy on the Ariadne. Didn't the admiral tell the story at the dinner we gave him of how this ex-convict and mutineer, by sheer genius, broke the power of the French at the critical moment and saved our fleet, though it was only three-fourths that of the French?"

"Go on with your tale of the hounds," said Lord Mallow.

"Your honor, as the hounds went away with Michael Clones there was greater applause than I have ever seen in the island except when Rodney defeated De Grasse. Imagine a little sloop in the wash of the seas and the buccaniers piling down on him, and no chance of escape, and then a great British battleship appearing, and the situation saved—that was how we were placed here till the hounds arrived. Your honor, this morning's, this early morning's, exit of the hounds was like a procession of veterans to Walhalla. There was the sun breaking over the tops of the hill, a crimsonish, grayish, opaline touch of soft sprays or mists breaking away from the onset of the sunrise; and all the trees with night-lips wet sucking in the sun and drinking up the light like an overseer at a Christmas breakfast; and you know what that is."

"Then, suddenly, the sharp sound of a long whip and a voice calling, and there rises out of the landing place the procession—the sixty dogs in three wagons, their ten drivers with their whips, but keeping order by the sound of their voices, low, soft and peculiar, and then the horses starting into a quick trot which presently would become a canter—and the hounds were off to Salem! There could be no fear with the hounds let loose to do the hunting."

"But suppose that when they get to Salem their owner is no more."

The Custos laughed. "Him, your honor—him no more! Isn't he the man of whom the black folk say, 'Lucky buckra—morning, lucky newcomer'! If that's his reputation, and the coming of his hounds just when the island most needed them is good proof of it, do you think he'll be killed by a lot of dirty Maroons! Ah, Calhoun's a man with the luck of the devil, your honor! He has the pull—as sure as heaven's above he'll make success. If you command your staff to have this posted as a proclamation throughout the island, it will do as much good as a thousand soldiers. It will stop the slaves from revolting; it will squelch the Maroons, and I'm certain sure Calhoun will have Maroons ready to fight for us, not against us, before this thing is over. I tell you, your honor, it means the way out—that's what it means. So, if you'll give me your order, keeping a copy of it for the provost-marshal, I'll see it's delivered to Dyck Calhoun before morning—perhaps by midnight. It's not more than a six hours' journey in the ordinary way."

At that moment an aide-de-camp entered, and with solemn face presented to the governor the last report from



"But Suppose That When They Get to Salem Their Owner Is No More."

the provost marshal general. Then he watched the governor read the report. "Ten more killed and twenty wounded!" said the governor. "It must be stopped."

He gave the Custos the letter to Dyck Calhoun, and a few moments later handed the proclamation to his aide-de-camp.

"That will settle the business, your honor," said the aide as he read the proclamation.

CHAPTER XIX.

Sheila Has Her Say.

"Then, tell me, please, what you know of the story," said the governor to Sheila at King's house one after-

no weeks later. "I only get meager reports from the general commanding. But you being close to the intimate source of the events must know all."

"I know nothing direct from Mr. Calhoun, your honor," she said, "but only through his servant, Michael Clones, who is a friend of my Darius Boland, and they have met often since the first outbreak. You know, of course, what happened at Port Louise—how the slaves and Maroons seized and murdered the garrison, how families were butchered when they armed first, how barbarism broke loose and made all men combine to fight the rebels. Even before Mr. Calhoun came they had had record of a sack of human ears, cut from the dead rebel-slaves, when they had been killed by faithful slaves, and good progress was made. But the revolters fixed their camps on high rocks, and by blowing of shells brought many fresh recruits to the struggle. It was only when Mr. Calhoun came with his hounds that anything decisive was done. For the rebels—Maroons and slaves—were hid, well entrenched and cautious, and the danger was becoming greater every day. On Mr. Calhoun's arrival he set the hounds to work and the rebellion in that district was soon over."

"It was gathering strength with increasing tragedy elsewhere," remarked the governor. "Some took refuge in hidden places, and came out only to steal, rob and murder—and worse. There is but one way to deal with these people. No gaming or drinking among slaves must be allowed, blowing of shells or beating of drums must be forbidden, and every free negro or mulatto must wear on his arm a sign—perhaps a cross in blue or red."

"Slavery is doomed," said Sheila firmly. "It's end is not far off."

"Well, they still keep slaves in the land of Washington and Alexander Hamilton. They are better off here at any rate than in their own country where they were like animals among whom they lived. Here they are safe from poverty, cared for in sickness, and have no fear of being handed over to the keepers of carrion, or being the food of the gallinuso. They can feed their fill on fricassees of macaca worms and steal without punishment teal or ring-tailed pigeons and black crabs from the massa."

"But they are not free. They are atoms in heaps of dust. They have no rights—no liberties."

Sheila was agitated, but she showed no excitement. She seemed, save for her dark searching eyes, like one who had gone through experience which had disciplined her to control. Only her hands were demonstrative—yet quietly so. Any one watching her closely would have seen that her hands were sensitive, expressed even more markedly than her eyes or lips what were her feelings. Her tragedy had altered her in one sense. She was paler and thinner than ever she had been, but there was enough of her, and that delicately made, which gave the governor a thrill of desire to make her his own for the rest of his life or hers. He had also gone through much since they had last met, and he had seen his own position in the balance—uncertain, troubled, insecure. He realized that he had lost reputation, which had scarcely been regained by his consent to the use of the hounds and giving Dyck Calhoun a free hand, as temporary head of the militia. He could not put him over the regular troops, but as the general commanding was, in effect, the slave of Dyck Calhoun, there was no need for anxiety.

Dyck Calhoun had smashed the rebellion, had quieted the island, had risen above all the dark disturbances of revolt like a master. He had established barracks and forts at many points in the island, and had stationed troops in them; he had cowed and subdued Maroons and slaves by the hounds. Yet he had punished only the chief of those who had been in actual rebellion, and had repressed the violent punishments of the earlier part of the conflict.

Dyck had built up for himself a reputation as no one in all the history of the island had been able to do. He commanded by more than official authority—by personality and achievement. There was no one in the island but knew they had been saved by his prudence, foresight and skill. It was to their minds stupendous and romantic. Fortunately they showed no strong feeling against Lord Mallow. By placing King's house at disposal as a hospital, and by gifts of food and money to wives and children of soldiers and civilians, the governor had a little eradicated his record of neglect.

Lord Mallow had a way with him when he chose to use it. He was not without the gift for popularity, and he saw now that he could best again by treating Dyck Calhoun well. He saw troops come and go; he listened to grievances; he corrected abuses; he devised a scheme for nursing; he planned security for the future; he gave permission for buccaneer trading with the United States; he had by legislative order given the Creoles a better place in the civic organism. He was not blind to the fact that he might by discreet courses impress favorably his visitor. All he did was affected by that thought. He could not but think that Sheila would judge of him by what he did as much as by what he said.

He looked at her now with interest and longing. He loved to hear her talk, and she had information which was no doubt truer than most he received—was closer to the brine, as it were.

"What more can you tell me of Mr. Calhoun and his doings?" he asked presently. "He is lucky in having so

perfect a narrator of his history—yet so unexpected a narrator."

A flush stole slowly up Sheila's face, and gave a glow even to the roots of her hair. She could not endure these references to the dark gulf between her and Dyck Calhoun.

"My lord," she said sharply, "it is not meet that you should say such things. Mr. Calhoun was jailed for killing my father—let it be at that. The last time you saw me you offered me your hand and heart. Well, do you know I had almost made up my mind to accept your hand, then the news of this trouble was brought to you and you left us—to ourselves and our dangers!"

The governor started. "You are as unfriendly as a 'terral garramity'; you make me draw my breath thick as the blackmoors, as they say. I did what I thought best in the circumstances," he said. "I did not think you would be in any danger. I had not heard of the Maroons being so far south as Salem."

"Yet it is the man who foresees chances that succeeds, as you should know by now, your honor. I was greatly touched by the offer you made me—indeed yes," she added, seeing the rapt, eager look in his face. "I had been told what had upset me, that Dyck Calhoun was guilty of killing my father, and all the world seemed dreadful. Yes, in the reaction, it was almost on my tongue to say yes to you, for you are a good talker, you had skill in much that you did, and with honest advice from a wife might do much more. So I was in a mind to say yes. I had had much to try me, indeed, so very much. Ever since I first saw Dyck Calhoun he had been the one man who had ever influenced me. He was forever in my mind even when he was in prison—oh, what is prison, what is guilt even to a girl when she loves! Yes, I loved him. There it was. He was ever on my mind, and I came here to Jamaica—he was here—for what else? Salem could have been restored by Darius Boland or others, or I could have sold it. I came to Jamaica to find him here—unwomanly perhaps, you will say."

"Unusual only, with a genius—like you."

"Then you do not speak what is in your mind, your honor. You say what you feel is the right thing to say—the slave of circumstances. I will be wholly frank with you. I came here to see Dyck Calhoun, for I knew he would not come to see me. Yes, there it was, a real thing in his heart. If he had been a lesser man than he is, he would have come to America when he was freed from prison. But he did not, would not, come. He knew he had been found guilty of killing my father, and that for him and me there could be no marriage—indeed, he never asked me to marry him. Yet I know he would have done so if he could. When I came to know what he was jailed for doing, I felt there was no place for him and me together in the world. Yet my heart kept crying out to him, and I felt there was but one thing left for me to do, and that was to make it impossible for me to think of him even, or for him to think of me. Then you came and offered me your hand. It was a hand most women might have been glad to accept from the standpoint of material things. And you were Irish like myself, and like the boy I loved. I was sick of the robberies of life and time, and I wanted to be out of it all in some secure place. What place so secure from the sorrow that was eating at my heart as marriage! It said no to every stir of feeling that was vexing me, to every shadow of love or remembrance. So I listened to you. It was not because you were a governor or a peer—no, not that! For even in Virginia I had offers from one higher than yourself—and younger, and a peer also. No, it was not material things that influenced me, but your own intellectual eminence; for you have more brains than most men, as you know so well."

The governor interrupted her with a gesture and a burst of emotion. "No, no, I am not so vain as you think. If I were I should have seen at Salem that you meant to say yes."

"Yet you know well you have gifts, though you have made sad mistakes here. Do not think it was your personality, your looks that induced me to think of you, to listen to you. When Mr. Calhoun told me the truth, and gave me a letter he had written to me—"

"A letter—to you?"

There was surprise in the governor's voice—surprise and chagrin, for the thing had moved him powerfully.

"Yes, a letter to me which he never meant me to have. It was a kind of diary of his heart, and it was written even while I was landing on the island on Christmas day. He gave it to me to read, and when I read it I saw there was no place for me in the world except a convent or marriage. The convent could not be, for I was no Catholic, and marriage seemed the only thing possible. That day you came I saw only one thing to do—one mad, hopeless thing to do."

"Mad and hopeless!" burst out Lord Mallow. "How so? Your very reason shows that it was sane, well founded in the philosophy of the heart."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Like to Write Letters.

The English-speaking race is the most industrious in the world in the matter of letter writing. The Australians take first place, with 13 letters per head per year; Canada and the United Kingdom comes third with 75. The German average is only 49, and Italy is a long way behind with only 11.