

# THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE DONNA ISABEL

BY RANDALL PARRISH  
NOTICE BY THE HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS, ETC.

## SYNOPSIS.

The story opens with the introduction of John Stephens, an adventurer, a Massachusetts man, marooned by authorities at Valparaiso, Chile. Being interested in mining operations in Bolivia, he was denounced by Chile as an insurrectionist and as a consequence was hiding. At his hotel his attention was attracted by an Englishman and a young woman. Stephens rescued the young woman from a drunken officer. He was thanked by her. Admiral of the Peruvian navy confronted Stephens, told him that she had been declared between Chile and Peru and offered him the office of captain. He desired that that night the *Esmeralda*, a Chilean vessel, should be captured. Stephens accepted the commission. Stephens met a motley crew, to which he was assigned. He gave them final instructions. They boarded the vessel. They successfully captured the vessel supposed to be the *Esmeralda*, through strategy. Stephens gave directions for the departure of the craft. He entered the cabin and discovered the English woman and her maid. Stephens quickly learned the wrong vessel had been captured. It was Lord Darlington's private yacht. The lady's wife and maid being aboard. He explained the situation to her ladyship. Then First Mate Tuttle laid bare the plot, saying that the *Sea Queen* had been taken in order to go to the Antarctic circle. Tuttle explained that on a former voyage he had learned that the *Donna Isabel* was lost in 1853. He had found it frozen in a huge mass of ice on an island and contained much gold. Stephens consented to be the captain of the expedition. He told Lady Darlington. She was greatly alarmed, but expressed confidence in him. The *Sea Queen* encountered a vessel in the fog. Stephens attempted to communicate.

## CHAPTER XII.—Continued.

"Lay your hands on me again," I threatened, sternly, "and I'll floor you to the deck. I'll take that grin off your face, De Nova. If you attempt any interference with me now."

He understood quickly enough what I meant, and evidently had no relish for attacking me alone, for with one swift, searching glance into the fog, he leaped down the steps and ran hastily aft. I know he was seeking the backing of Tuttle, and armed myself with a belaying pin, peering eagerly meanwhile for the near-by sail, and cursing the fellow at the wheel for not holding her up to the point directed. They came up together, two steps at a time, Tuttle in his shirt sleeves, and, as they attained the bridge, Bill Anderson swung himself over the hatch and started after them. I backed away, the ugly iron pin grasped in my hand.

"You'd better keep back," I warned, threateningly. "I'm ready to brain the first man who attempts to touch me."

Tuttle stopped, his jaw working sagaciously, his eyes on mine.

"Will you promise to keep quiet, sir, and let us get away out of this?"

"Damn you, no!" stubbornly, all my senses leaving me at sight of his hateful face. "I'll speak that ship yonder if I have to fight the crew of you single-handed."

"Then fight, you cockered, and be damned to you!" roared Anderson; and he pressed past the two of them and sprang at me.

It was hot, swift work, while it lasted. I struck twice, laying open the big brute's scalp, and dropping him so his head hung dangling down over the deck, his body huddled against the rail. I aimed to do as well by Tuttle, but the descending pin landed on his uplifted arm, and before I could draw back for another blow, the fellow at the wheel released the spokes and jumped at my back, throttling me with his hands as the weight of his body crushed me to the planks. Grasping the rail I half tore myself loose, rising to one knee, and struck him twice madly in the face; but others of the crew came tumbling on top of us, pinning me helplessly down. It was all the work of a breathless moment, and as I lay there, the knee of a negro crumpling into my chest, I saw De Nova spring to the wheel and whirl it hard down, while Tuttle, his left arm dangling, his teeth set from pain, began jangling the bells in the engine-room. Scarcely had the echo reached us when a strange voice hailed sharply from out the dense fog:

"Steamer, ahoy! What vessel is that?"

Tuttle's nasal voice answered:

"Steam yacht *Cormorant*, Panama to Easter Island, for pleasure. Who are you?"

"H. M. S. Victory, on cruise. Stand by, while we send a boat."

A deep oath sprang to Tuttle's lips, his fingers convulsively gripping the rail. Then he appeared to rally, the very intensity of his fear making a new man out of him.

They were certainly expeditious enough in my case, dragging me bumping down the steps, and flinging me in between table and bench with a violence that made me groan. I caught the glimmer of a steel barrel in De Nova's hand as he drew close the sliding door.

"It was not nice dead to do, Mons. Stephens," he said, not ill-naturedly, "but, by gar, out-se farafly row it was going to be done, for I shot so pistol very good."

"That's all right, De Nova," I replied, realizing my complete defeat and holding no personal grudge against him. "I don't blame you. I've



The Descending Pin Landed on His Uplifted Arm.

made my play, and have had enough. May I sit up?"

He nodded carelessly, dropping the revolver back into his jacket pocket, yet with his black eyes fastened awfully on my face.

"'Tis za best way to talk, monsieur," pausing to listen to the mingled sounds without. "Sacre, I wonder what ze devil was up now!"

We both sat, breathing hard from our late exertions, listening anxiously, yet with vastly differing emotions, hope animating me that this was to prove a capture, or, at least, that some chance discovery by the officer visiting us would result in the release of the women below. But De Nova was in an agony of apprehension, the full peril of his position clear before him. We heard the bare feet of the hurrying sailors patter along the deck, the strident voice of Tuttle issuing a few final commands, and the faint sound of oars in the water alongside. The officer came slowly up the ladder, and my heart sank as I heard him laugh carelessly to the mate's greeting. I could distinguish the sound of his voice, but not the words uttered, and in some way it impressed me with the thought that the fellow was young, a midshipman, possibly, who would prove mere putty under Tuttle's expert handling. The two went down the companion-ways together in apparently amiable conversation, and we could hear the low murmur of voices as the crew hung over the rail jostling with the men-of-war's men in the boat below. My eyes met De Nova's in the semi-darkness, and he grinned, showing his teeth.

"Nossing very dangerous, monsieur," he said, easily. "Ze oil fox he tool zat kid."

I attempted no response, my mind already sufficiently heavy from apprehension. Oh, for just a word, merely an opportunity to cry out our story before it was forever too late! De Nova must have felt the struggle within me, for he stretched his legs across the narrow passage leading to the door, and I saw his hand thrust into his coat pocket. Underneath his genial veneer he was one to act upon occasion, absolutely careless of the result. So I waited in silence, my teeth set hard, my hands clenched, as the last vestige of hope oozed slowly out of me. They were scarcely ten minutes below, coming up chatting in rare good fellowship, the officer clinging to the rail, his feet on the ladder, while he completed some story he had been relating with much gusto. Then we heard plainly the dip of oars, growing gradually fainter in the distance, feet pattered on the deck planks, Tuttle's voice sounded from the bridge, and the vessel began throbbing to the steady chug of the screws. We were safely under way again, pressing our sharp bow into the fog-bank. Unable to control my weakness, I buried my face in my hands.

I do not know how long we sat there motionless, De Nova staring blankly at the vapor sweeping past the window, and I with head lowered in depression. It was Tuttle himself, with

one arm in an improvised sling, who slid open the door of the charthouse and looked in upon us.

"This is your watch yet, De Nova," he said, shortly, "and I need to doctor up my arm a bit. You're a dam' hard hitter, Mr. Stephens. No trace of anger in his voice, "but that's about the last chance you'll have to kick up a shindy on this vessel. You'll go below, sir, an' stay there, unless we happen to need you."

I stepped forth onto the open deck in obedience to his gesture.

"Then I am no longer even in pretended command, but merely your prisoner."

"Call it whatever suits you best," he returned, grimly. "The result will be the same in any case. Well, De Nova, what are you waitin' for?"

"I sink maybe you say w'at was it ze navy man wanted?"

Tuttle's solemn countenance broke into the semblance of a grin.

"Plug tobacco," he announced, sucking his lips with sudden enjoyment of the joke. "Gave me the scare of my life, but that's all it amounted to. Been out cruisin' for three months, an' the crew ready to mutiny for smokin' and chewin'. Nice, sociable little chap they sent over, too."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### In Which We Sail Due South.

As I sank down into the recesses of a cushioned chair in the cabin, my spirits at lowest ebb, I glanced up at the telltale compass—we were already headed due south.

"Those days and nights following, while serving to bear us continually deeper into the immense expanse of water that concealed the mystery awaiting us in the great South sea, contained little of incident directly relating to this narrative. Day following day that same wide circle of the sky came down to unite with the circle of the waters. It was almost as though we remained motionless, "a painted ship upon a painted ocean"; only the figures on the paper, the pins on the chart, the sharp stem cleaving the waves aunder, and the oily wake astern leaving us aware of steady progression through this trackless desert of the sea.

We passed somewhat to the westward of Juan Fernandez, so far out that only with a glass from the foretop could the distant peaks be dimly deciphered in blue, misty blots against the sky. Already Tuttle had banked the fires, and spread the *Sea Queen's* canvas, reaching to the westward to get the most possible out of the fresh breeze. The *Sea Queen* changed motive power and appearance as if by magic, the square yards hiding the jauntyness of her keel, and concealing the rake of her masts, the white sails billowing out before the wind, sending her swooping forward through the water like a great bird, leaping over until at times her lee rail was all awash with white foam and her forward decks glistening with spume.

Tuttle drove her recklessly, holding

on in spite of crackling wood and sails threatening to tear loose from the bolt-eyes, taking shrewd advantage of each stint of wind, and lowering canvas only when danger was deadly. He had come into his own, he was at home, and the rejuvenated *Sea Queen* leaped forward at his will, as though endowed with fresh life. He seemed to understand her moods, her caprices, as though he had sailed her in every sea, and I watched him test her, loosening a rope here, tightening another there, striving to discover her good and bad qualities, until my admiration for his seamanship almost overbalanced my growing detestation of him otherwise.

Lady Darlington became positively afraid of him, dreading his approach, shrinking from his address, yet not daring to withdraw wholly from his presence. His sole topic of conversation was psychomancy, and every time she endeavored to lead him to some more pleasant subject he would return with dogmatic persistence to that one rather dismal theme. His blatant self-conceit saved him from realizing her utter weariness, and he never seemed to tire of his own unctuous, nasal tones. Heavens, but the fellow was an insufferable bore. Celeste would slip away unobserved, but her mistress and myself had no means of escape. I remained quietly below for three days, and even then was not released by any formal word of mouth. I simply became so tired of the senseless imprisonment that I mounted to the deck, taking Lady Darlington with me, determined to be confined to the cabin no longer except by physical force. De Nova was upon the bridge when we emerged from the companion, but he merely glanced at us curiously. Tuttle, coming aft a little later, retained sense enough to remain silent. The three days passed below had thrown me much into the society of both mistress and maid, although the frank intimacy of that first conversation with Lady Darlington was never resumed. There seemed an intangible barrier of reserve between us, although we talked freely enough regarding our situation, the peculiarities of Tuttle, and the constantly changing wonders of the deep. It was as if neither of us quite dared to probe beneath the surface, opening up once more the depths each endeavored to conceal; rather were we content to drift as the tide ran.

I saw comparatively little of De Nova, the second officer, during this period, and gained an impression that he was endeavoring to avoid meeting me. Yet I ran across him twice in company with Celeste, once in the cabin, and again in the narrow deck space overhanging the stern, and began to hope vaguely that the girl was winning him over to our interests.

With the others I sought to approach I made no progress. McKnight seldom showed his nose above deck, and then only to smoke in staid silence, seated gloomily on the edge of the main hatch or to the lee of the charthouse. Olsen was undoubtedly honest enough, yet without intelligence, his eyes those of a faithful dog. The Chilean, a smooth-faced young fellow wonderfully deficient in chin, I learned had been assigned as assistant to the cook, and was thus kept too busy inside the galley even to be approached. Indeed, so far I had not seen his face on board the ship.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### In Which De Nova Speaks.

What now occurred came upon us with such suddenness that I find it difficult to relate the incidents in detail. We must have been below the fiftieth degree of south latitude, and about 125 degrees west, with the wind strong and occasionally puffing up into squalls, bearing flakes of snow which stung exposed flesh and left a thin mantle of white along the decks. It was Tuttle's watch below, and as I paused in the protection of the companionway looking forward, while I got my pipe going, I could see De Nova on the bridge, wrapped up like a mummy, and crouching well down behind the tarpaulins. All about was a wild sea scene, never to be looked upon amid any other stretch of waters on the globe—a dull, dead picture of utter desolation, of madly racing waves, of green, sullen sea, of pale blue sky, the very frost in the air apparent; a cold, drear expanse of momentous distance wherever the eye looked—a desert of water below, a void of air above. Big Bill Anderson, his head still bound up where I had cracked him, slouched in the doorway of the charthouse, staring aft, and a moment later De Nova came lumbering down the steps from the bridge and spoke with him for some earnestly. The boatswain finally went forward, clinging to a lifeline to keep footing on the slippery deck, and the second officer clawed along the weather-rail until he reached the companion.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## THE DUTCH PAINTER

By KATE LUBY

In the center of a quiet village stood an inn, the proprietor of which was named Fritz; nearly opposite was the cottage of the village painter, rejoicing in the odd name of Tunder, at whose door might be seen boards representing grotesque caricature paintings, as signs of his profession.

Of a truth, poor Tunder had a great love for his art; but, sorrowful to relate, his art had no love for him!

He was vain and conceited, as nearly all pretenders to excellence are, yet he found a liberal patron and an ardent admirer in old Fritz, who carried his patronage so far as to promise him his lovely little daughter Lulu in marriage.

Now Lulu and her good mother had another young gentleman in their minds' eye; it was Rudolph, the handsome young gardener and huntsman, who loved Lulu most fondly and truly, but who failed to make an impression on the flinty bosom of old Fritz.

The day was fixed for Lulu's marriage with Tunder, and mother and daughter went bristling through their preparations with tearful eyes and saddened hearts, which ill befitted a bridal day.

To give more eclat to the wedding, Fritz ordered a new sign, and Tunder's talents were called in requisition.

Just then, a young artist, who had that day arrived from the city, offered to paint a sign, representing the archduke, on very reasonable terms. Lulu and her mother voted for the artist's sign, and stubborn old Fritz swore that Tunder alone should share the glory with himself. At length a compromise was effected; both paintings should be done, and a place over the inn door awarded to that one which displayed most ability.

The wedding day had arrived, and Tunder was first in the field with his sign, but no one could make anything out of it.

"Behold!" cried the villagers, "a miserable abortion, which represents neither fish, nor fowl!"

"What is it?" asked one.

"It is mutilated Indian from the wilds of the west!" replied his neighbor.

"Ignorant wretches!" shouted Tunder, choking with indignation. "Ye have eyes and see not!" so saying, he seized his brush and painted underneath the portrait, "To the great Leopold."

Shouts and groans followed this announcement, not for "Leopold," but for Tunder, who had so shamefully misrepresented him.

The city artist's painting was next displayed, and produced a spontaneous burst of enthusiastic applause.

Never before had the people beheld so lifelike and well executed a likeness of their very popular archduke; and the artist, in order to escape being embraced to death, beat a speedy retreat into the garden in the rear, and sat musingly on a bench.

In the midst of triumph his heart was bowed down beneath the load of some secret sorrow that was devouring him.

Unhappy Rollo! A few days since had seen him the favorite artist of a brilliant court, enjoying the reputation of a Raphael, and on the high-road to fame and fortune.

A noble lady of the court, and who was a ward of the archduke, had made a deep and lasting impression on his heart, and he soon perceived that his passion was returned.

He had not been long sitting in the garden, before he learned that there were others equally unhappy. Lulu and her lover were sitting in an arbor, taking a last, loving farewell of each other.

"Why not fly with me, dearest Lulu?" murmured Rudolph. "If you will not do so, a few short hours will see you wedded to that hateful Tunder, and lost to me forever!"

Lulu sobbed audibly; yet, drying her tears, she replied:

"I cannot fly with you, though you know how much I love you, Rudolph; to fly would grieve my father and break my mother's heart. I am full of hope that Heaven will yet smile on our love."

"Poor little Lulu!" sighed Rollo, as she and her lover left the garden.

Archduke Leopold, with the beautiful archduchess, accompanied by her ladies and officers of the court, were on a hunting excursion and dashed through the village. The archduchess placed a chain of gold round Fritz's neck, demanding to see the village artist who had painted the sign. After a long search Rollo was found peacefully sleeping in the garden.

Great was their delight and surprise at finding the "glory of their court," as they termed him.

The archduke folded him in his arms, and told him he had never doubted his honor. He must instantly return to court, no longer in the capacity of a poor artist, but as Baron de T—, which title, with its estates, the archduke was ready to bestow on him. Then he said he was greatly in need of Rollo's services as chief physician to his lovely ward.

"And now is there aught you wish me to do for your friends here?" asked the archduke.

Rollo related, in a few words, the story of Lulu and Rudolph, on hearing which the duke beckoned to Fritz, and in a few moments the old man called the young couple, Lulu and Rudolph, and gave his consent to their marriage.

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