

WOLVES OF THE SEA

By RANDALL PARRISH

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CHAPTER XVII—Continued.

The hilt of the knife in my belt attracted my attention, and I drew it forth, curious to learn if it bore any mark of ownership. My eyes were instantly attracted to a dark stain on both hilt and blade. I held it to the light—it was the stain of blood, and my hands were also reddened by it. In that first instant of horror I hurled the weapon out through the open port into the sea. Blood! There had been murder committed on board, and the fellow I had struck down was seeking refuge, endeavoring to find concealment following his crime. Ay, but what about the light in the cabin? It had been extinguished after the fleeing fugitive had entered Dorothy's stateroom. Did this mean that the slayer had an accomplice? If so, then the killing was not the result of a mere personal quarrel amidstships, or in the fore-castle, but the result of some conspiracy. I thought of Sanchez, and of Estada's plan to obtain control of the ship. Could this be its culmination? And was the Spaniard already lying dead in his cabin?

Nothing came of my thought—only confusion; nor did I dare investigate for fear of becoming more deeply involved in the tragedy. No, there was nothing to be done; my safety, and the safety of the girl depended on our apparent ignorance of what had occurred. Convincing myself of this, I washed the blood stains from my hands and lay down in the bunk fully dressed to await my call.

When called I exchanged but few words with LeVere. He went quickly to his room. Nothing of importance occurred during my watch.

The dawn came cold and gray but with clearing skies. I climbed into the main cross-strees and swept the horizon with a glass. Not so much as a speck rewarded my efforts, and I descended the ratlines, shouting to the boatswain to call the port watch. Watkins came aft to the wheel and I sent the fellow thus relieved down into the cabin to rout out LeVere. The two returned to deck together, the negro glancing about curiously without mounting the ladder.

"You call Senor Estada yet?" he questioned.

"No; I had no orders to do so."
"He tol' me call him at daylight. Here you, Amada; go wake up the senor."

The senor disappeared, while LeVere crossed the poop deck and stood beside me looking out across the expanse of sea.

Amada emerged from the companion and stared up at us, shading his mouth with one hand as he spoke.

"He answer nothing, Senor LeVere."
"Was the door locked?"
"I know not, senor; I not try to open it."

"The swine," said LeVere, "I suppose I'll have to go myself."
"We'll go down together, senor; I said quietly, "Estada must be sick; I could hear the rumpus Amada kicked up even on deck here. No man could sleep through that racket."

CHAPTER XVIII.

A New Conspiracy.

The interior of the cabin appeared desolate in the gray light of dawn. I led the way directly to Estada's



It Was the Stain of Blood.

stateroom. My heart pounded like a hammer as I rapped on the wooden panels and waited some response from within. There was no answer, no sound of movement, and I rapped again more loudly, my questioning eyes seeking LeVere's face. He was listening as intently as myself.

"There is something wrong, senor," he whispered, "for he was ever a light sleeper."

The door was unlocked, the latch yielding instantly to the hand, and I stepped within. A glance told every-

thing. Estada lay in his bunk, with one leg dangling outside, and his head crooked against the side wall. His very posture was that of sudden death, even had it not been pictured by the ghastly face, and the dark pool of blood underneath. I heard an exclamation from Le Vere and stood for an instant utterly unable to move. I knew already what I should find, yet finally forced myself forward—he was stone dead, pierced with three knife thrusts. I stood up and faced the mulatto, whose countenance was fairly green with horror.

"What do you know about this, Senor LeVere?" I asked sternly. "The man has been murdered, knifed. Who did it—and why?"

He could scarcely answer, gripping at the table for support, and never removing his gaze from the face of the dead man. Yet I believed his words; was convinced this was not the terror of guilt.

"My God! I cannot tell; I have never dreamed of this."

"Had the man enemies. Anyone you would suspect?"

"Enemies? Ay, plenty of them; we all have. We expect that in our trade. This ship is full of devils ready enough to do such a job; but I could not name the one who did it. I know of no cause. I have heard nothing."

"I believe you, LeVere," I said.

"What can we do, senor?"

"Do! We must talk that over first. We cannot meet this thing until we are prepared. There is more danger in hasty action than anything else."

I shut the door behind us and turned the key. It was a relief to get outside, even into that dismal cabin, beyond view of Estada's dead face. LeVere, who had evidently lost his nerve, sank into a chair.

"You fear an uprising, a mutiny?" I questioned, "when this is reported?"

"What will prevent?" he asked.

"The captain cannot stir; the mate is dead; the men already crazed because we take no prizes. They will murder us also and take control. Those devils amidstships."

"And who leads them? Who would be captain?"

"Manuel Estevan," he whispered.

"I thought as much. Then it is Manuel Estevan we must secure first—before they know. Whatever his men may know of what has occurred they will make no move until they get his orders. We must stop the possibility of his issuing any. Without a leader the advantage is ours."

"You mean to kill him?"

"Only as a last resort. There is no good feeling between those quartered amidstships and the crew?"

"No, senor; it is hate generally, although they are not all alike. The real sailors are mostly captured men; they serve to save their lives, and only for these others on board could not be held long. Your plan, senor, is to set the one against the other?"

"Yes, if possible. These sailor men are of all races. Can they be trusted?"

"Some might be, sir; it is hard to tell how many. It is not the race which counts so much, senor. There are those among them who would not care to return to honesty."

"And you, LeVere?"

He spread his hands and shrugged his shoulders. "There is no hope of me; I was born to the free life."

"What then is it with you?"

"Hate, senor—revenge," and his teeth gleamed savagely. "I would spit on this Manuel who seeks to be chief. I can never be—no; I am of black skin, with negro blood in my veins, and white men would never have it so. But I can hate, senor. That is why I am with you now, if the devil so will. Your plan might work—tell me more of it."

"What are the odds, say you—thirty to a hundred? Ay, but surprise will overcome that. My plan is this: First to secure Manuel as quietly as possible but at whatever cost. With him in our hands, or dead, the buccaneers have no leader. What then? There are men in the crew on deck and in the fore-castle to be trusted—Watkins is one, and he will know others, a dozen no doubt. They will be enough. We will whisper the truth to these, and have them ready for a signal. The forward door from amidstships is closed by iron bars—is it not?"

"Si, senor," his eyes again sparkling with interest. "The men quarreled, and there was fighting."

"Then there is no escape in that direction and it can be no great task to close any passage leading aft. Lower the deck hatch and we have those devils below caged like so many rats. There need be no fighting; starvation will bring them to terms."

"But, senor, your dozen men cannot guard the buccaneers below and also manage the bark. The crew are not all lambs—many will sympathize with those thus locked beneath deck. Co-chase is bad, and a friend of Manuel. He will fight, and there are others to back him."

"I know that, LeVere. The whole plan is desperate, but there is no other possible. Here is my scheme. There is a gun rack in the cabin to arm the

dozen men we can trust. The others have nothing but their sheath knives. The buccaneers can be secured below, before these other lads ever realize what is happening. As soon as we have control of the ship we'll round them up forward. They won't dare face the guns. I'll give them their choice."

"And what will you tell them, senor?"

I caught my breath, conscious of his meaning. My secret hope could not be revealed to this fellow. The answer came quickly to my lips.

"The whole truth, Senor LeVere—that Manuel conspired to seize the bark through a mutiny of the buccaneers; that these were to be turned loose with license to kill anyone on board who opposed them; that their real purpose was to divide among themselves all the treasure below."

"I believe you, LeVere," I said.

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REMOVE MALES FROM FLOCK

infertile Eggs Are Best to Keep and Cost Less to Produce—Send the Roosters to Market.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Produce infertile eggs. They are worth more, as they keep better and they cost less to produce since there are no roosters to feed. No expense, education, ability, or labor other than catching and killing or selling the roosters are necessary. Remove the males at once.

While eggs are plentiful some should be preserved for the winter months, as they will be scarce and high priced. It costs but little in time, money and labor, and is so easily done that it is only common sense to do it. Use fresh, infertile eggs and let customers know that they can get such eggs for preserving. Those who have never preserved eggs should get in touch with the county or home demonstration agent, the state extension director, or the United States department of agriculture.

Now is the time to begin culling flocks. Send the roosters to the chopping block or the market. Eliminate all weaklings and deformed chicks. Get rid of the chick that stands along the side of the coop with its wings down, its feathers ruffled, eye shut, and head down. Do not keep a single chick that you are not sure it will pay to raise.

Shade, clean fresh water, clean coops, and colony houses, and good ventilation and plenty of room during



Shade and Clean Coops Furnished Young Chicks on Government Farm at Beltsville, Md.

the night are of the greatest importance in growing healthy, strong, vigorous birds, whether they are for meat, eggs, or breeding.

Growing chicks should have plenty of good, nourishing food. Bone meal should be fed liberally to those intended for layers or breeders.

Do not forget to continue the fight on mites and lice. They must be fought all the time in all sections and in all seasons.

MONEY MADE WITH CHICKENS

Tennessee Woman Cleared \$379 in Five Years With Two Settings of Wyandotte Eggs.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Two settings of White Wyandotte eggs, costing \$2, in five years' time netted \$379 profit for a woman poultry club member in Madison county, Tenn.

The first two settings of eggs were bought in 1914. In 1915, nine hens and six cockerels were sold for \$4; in 1916 43 hens and two cockerels brought \$10; in 1917 \$100 worth of eggs and birds were sold; in 1918 the value of the flock, both fowls kept and sold, was \$315; a total of \$429. Much of the feed was waste products of the farm and cost nothing.

The total cost of production was: Original settings, \$2; two breeding pens, \$30; feed, \$10; advertising, three years, \$8—a total of \$50. The profit of \$379 was made possible because of the smallness of the enterprise and the fact that most of the feed for the birds had no money value.

FOWLS YIELD \$1.14 AN HOUR

Indiana Woman Has Demonstrated That This Amount Can Be Made by Keeping Chickens.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

A side line for the farmer's wife which yields \$1.14 for every hour she puts into it is worth the consideration of every farm woman. A Wabash county (Indiana) woman has demonstrated that this amount can be made by keeping chickens. Last year the local county agent interested this woman in keeping a farm poultry flock, and as a result she produced a net profit of \$172.24. She kept an accurate account of her work and found at the end of the season that she had received \$1.14 an hour for the time she actually devoted to caring for her flock.

WRIGLEY'S

The Greatest Name In Goody-Land



Sealed Tight Kept Right

The Flavor Lasts

TOO MUCH FOR THE OCULIST DELICATE HINT FOR AUNTIES

That Kind of Shortsightedness Was Something for Which He Had No Cure.

A woman consulted an oculist about her husband's eyesight, saying she wanted a very strong pair of glasses for him.

"I fear I cannot recommend glasses without first seeing your husband," the oculist said.

"He won't come at any price," was the reply.

"Then tell me something about him. Can he see objects at a distance, or does he experience difficulty when reading? For instance, could he see that pigeon flying above us?"

"Rather," the woman said. "He'd spot a pigeon on the wing quicker than he'd see an airplane, especially if he'd got a bet on it. What I want yer to cure is his short-sightedness when he's looking for a job. He's been lookin' for work for the last ten years and never got any to suit his fastidious eyesight yet."—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

When we look at some children we begin wondering how they ever tolerate their parents.

A blunt man frequently makes the most cutting remarks.

"If" is a little word that spoils some big plans.

Little Marian's cleverly conveyed reproof to her altogether too fastidious relative.

The two spinster aunts really did have a very beautiful house, but they were too particular about it to suit their small niece and nephew, who had become tired of being told to "be careful" in this room, and "don't touch anything" in that one.

And Marian decided very tactfully to let them know about it, too. So one day when she and her brother Billy were in the presence of their aunts she began a conversation on the subject of their future careers. After John had named his as that of a lawyer, Marian announced that she was going to be a school teacher like her aunts. "And Billy, since I'm going to be an old maid, I don't s'pect you'd better get married, either," she told him. "It would be awful hard on your children when they came to my house to be told to be careful so much."

A Memento. Grogan—O! hate to mention it, Mrs. Casey, but your husband owed me tin dollars when he died.

The Widow—Indade! Shure it's nice for ye to have something to remember him by.

The cheek that knows the kiss of a little child needs no other perfume to make it beautiful.

Every Year Sees An Increased Demand

for Postum, from coffee drinkers who realize a change in habit will bring better health.

The Original POSTUM CEREAL

is rich and satisfying as a table drink for both young and old.

At Grocers.

Two sizes, usually sold at 15c and 25c.