

The Last Voyage of The Donna Isabel

By Randall Parrish

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Illustrations by Deaborn Melvil

cabin cleared and habitable, made new men of all of us. The bedding was brought forth and alread before the open ports, the furniture restored to position, and a fire started in the huge box-stove. This quickly warmed the icy interior and yielded a new aspect of cheerfulness. De Nova and Kelly explored the steward's pantry, discovering a quantity of frozen biscuit, several hams rigid as rock, together with numerous flasks of some liquid turned into solid ice. We found candles, also, hard as nails though they burned fairly well after a period of sputtering, and we fitted six of them into the great lantern. By noon we had completed the work, and had brought Lady Darlington and Celeste aft for dinner.

CHAPTER XXV.

In Which We Learn the Story of the Donna Isabel.

The short Antarctic day left us little opportunity for the work on deck. However, I kept the men employed as long as possible, first setting them at hauling up the longboat and stowing it safely away under shelter, and then at untangling some of the raffle forward. They went at this last task rather unwillingly, for it was carried on in full view of that ice-casketed figure guarding the forecastle, yet they got out two fairly serviceable spars and a considerable amount of cordage so protected by the ice coating as to be still of value. When we finally knocked off and started aft in a body, a dark, cloudy night was about us, the snow falling so thickly as to make it impossible to see across the deck. Dade was busily preparing supper in the wrecked galley, the red glare of his fire shining forth through the drifting flakes, while glimpses of light stole out in welcome from the forward cabin windows.

The latter appeared shipshape and cheerful enough as we slid back the door and stepped within. Scarcely a reminder was left of that horrible interior dominated by death which had been revealed to me a few hours before by the smoky glare of the torch. While we were laboring forward to clear the deck, Doris and Celeste evidently had also been diligently employed, and with womanly intuition had given to the desolate interior a home-like touch which was irresistible. I could only come to a pause—gazing about and wondering if we could really be afloat upon a century-old wreck, tossed helplessly on the waters of the Polar sea. The odd, old-fashioned swinging lantern threw violet-hued rays over the snug scene, while in the center the table, covered by a spotless cloth, was fairly glistening in a brilliant display of ancient silver, newly polished, and of decorated glass. Doris, who had been engaged in giving the arrangement some final deft touches, turned instantly at the sound of our entrance, her sweet face brightening with interest as she read the amazement pictured in my eyes.

"You have actually worked a marvel!" I exclaimed, admiringly. "Where in the world did you unearth such a display?"

"From a locker behind the steward's pantry," she replied, smilingly. "But, oh," with a shiver, "it was most bitterly cold in there when we first opened the door. I actually had to wait half an hour before venturing in. Yet you should have seen what we found; this is not half—the silver service was simply magnificent; and see—every piece is beautifully engraved with a facsimile of the ship, and a masterpiece of art."

I gazed at the bit of plate handed me, weighing it in my hand, and studying the decidedly elaborate scroll.

"I have read that these old galleons were often furnished regardless of expense," I said, "and the Dons were high livers. Did you make any other discoveries?"

"Only several cases of liquor, but all were frozen solid. The lazarette opens from the pantry, and we succeeded in lifting the trap-door, but the cold of the air which came up was so intense that we were compelled to drop it again immediately. I never imagined such an atmosphere possible."

"It is the breath of 126 years of polar winter," I explained. "This very cabin was of that same temperature when we first broke through its ice covering."

She pressed her palms to her temples, staring about her at the gray, gold-decorated interior.

"Do you actually mean to tell me that—that this wreck has been drifting and tossing about all that time?" she questioned unbelievably.

"No, not drifting and tossing about, but solidly imbedded within the ice far south of this. This vessel is the Donna Isabel—the same one Tuttle saw—and her log-book lies in that farthest state-room yonder. Its last entry was made in September, 1753."

She sank down upon the bench, her eyes upon my face, and I heard her lips repeating softly: "September, 1753, September, 1753," as though the

conception could hardly find acceptance in her mind. The men were grouped close beside the entrance, while De Nova and Celeste had gone forward to assist Dade in bringing his supper from the galley, so that for the moment we were comparatively alone. As I bent over, wondering what I had best say, she questioned quickly, with a little sharp indrawing of the breath: "And—and the people, Jack,—the crew? What became of them?"

"Dead more than a century ago," I answered solemnly. "I did not stop this morning to read the log, and so I know little of their story. But the vessel itself tells of storm and of long struggle in the ice; probably most of those on board perished from exposure and cold."

Her hands clasped mine, her cheeks white from apprehension.

"Were—were there any—any bodies—here?"

"Yes," I replied reluctantly, not daring to say otherwise.

"How—how many?"

"Four men, a woman, and a child."

An instant she stared into my face; then swept her eyes about the lighted cabin, only to bury them within her hands, her whole body trembling.

"A—a woman and child! Here! here! for 126 years! Oh, merciful God!" she lifted her eyes again, filled with horror, her hands clenched. "They—they were actually here, appearing natural? looking as they did in life?"

"Yes; they seemed to be sleeping, for they had been solidly frozen in the very attitudes in which they died. The woman rested on the couch yonder. She had beautiful dark hair and eyes, and must have been about 30 years of age. The child was in a bunk, a little flaxen-haired girl of three or four."

"And—and you buried them?"

"As best we could. We wrapped them in blankets, and consigned them to the deep, with a prayer for their souls," I bent closer. "Doris, dear, don't let this rest so heavily upon you. I wish I might have kept it all hidden. It was only the end of one of the innumerable tragedies of the sea. We must face our own needs now, and that task will require all our courage."

I thought she did not hear me, the tears continuing to fall between her fingers, half-suppressed sobs shaking her form. Yet as I rested my hand upon her shoulder, she looked up at me out of moistened eyes, her lips firmly set.

"Yes—yes; I know, Jack, but—but it is all so terrible, and—and has come to me with such a shock. I can not comprehend it—that they should have actually been here—here, all those years—waiting! But I will not think of it any longer; I—I will do something to make me forget."

We all mused together, sitting upon the long benches drawn up about the table, Dade waiting upon us, with Doris and Celeste occupying places between De Nova and myself. At the beginning we spoke little, the strangeness of our surroundings holding us silent, but the minds of all being busy with the same thought, we insensibly drifted into conversation regarding our chances of rescue, and the history of the old vessel in whose cabin we floated. Once De Nova introduced the subject of the treasure which might be stored away below deck, and the men exhibited their interest by numerous questions; but I gave them little encouragement along this line, realizing that for the present our earliest effort should be to transform the wreck into some degree of safety—a sail first, and a clean rudder; these attained, the search for treasure might begin.

What a scene and group that was!—the wintry night without, the drifting fog of snow, the helpless hulk rising and falling upon the treacherous heave of the sea, that odd, violet-colored light gleaming over us. The faces are even before me—the girlish looking Celeste, with her dark curls and white teeth; Lady Darlington, her gray eyes still moist as she glanced about the interior, unforgetful of its memories; De Nova, jaunty as ever, with no thought beyond the present, recalling to my mind with every movement the face of that dead Spaniard who for more than a century had sat where he was sitting; Sanchez, pale and with that hunted look, a counterpart no doubt of some seaman this ship had known in other days; McKnight, burly and red-necked; Kelly, his blue eyes filled with the merriment of old Ireland; Johnson, broad-shouldered, and sober-faced, eating steadily, with never a lift of his shaggy brows; and Dade, fluttering about like a waiter ashore, with his eternal smirking and suggestion of a tip.

When the dishes had finally been removed I gave the men permission to smoke, went back to the after state-room, and brought forth the log-book, which we made an effort to decipher. It was roughly written and by a number of different hands, and between us our knowledge of early Spanish script was barely sufficient to enable us to read a portion of it. The earlier en-

tries made by the captain, although badly faded, were legible enough, bringing the story of the voyage down to the latter part of July, and recounting a series of severe gales, involving the loss of several members of the crew. Then a new hand took up the pen, "Balaza, first officer," the captain having been killed by a falling spar; for a week or ten days the tale was of fierce struggles in the ice-pack, and a steady drift to the southward. Others followed—"Alcassar, second officer," "Salvatore, government agent," every line the record of new disaster, gales, wrecked rigging and death. They were locked in beyond all hope early in August, vast hummocks overhanging the deck, the forecastle sealed by ice, the cold so deadly the red-hot stove scarcely kept the numbing chill from the cabin, the doors and windows of which they had covered with blankets. Not a day passed but that they carried out their dead upon the ice, leaving them beyond sight of the deck. The names were all written down. There came a time when the survivors were too few and weak even for that service; when they could do nothing but cower within the cabin and cast dice to settle on who should go down into the icy hold and bring up the fuel which alone kept life in them. They drank and played cards; they quarreled, forgetting everything human and reverting to brutes. The child of Senora Alcatraz died; the next day the mother went quietly to sleep, never to wake again. They did not even know when her final breath came. She was the last of the women. The boatswain, Pedro Reo, passed away that same night, sitting on the deck; and there was left only Salvatore, who had gone mad, a seaman named Juan Ruiz, and a passenger, Antonio Saltero. It was the latter who wrote the final entry, September 11, 1753: "I touched Ruiz just now, he was stone cold; there is only Salvatore left, grinning at me across the table; the last candle is going out, too, and I haven't strength to go after more. Jesu, mercy." It ended in the blank page.

I straightened up, unable to articulate, scarcely able to see. Celeste clung convulsively to De Nova's sleeve, her eyes staring at me, her lips parted as if for a scream; Doris had bowed her face upon the table; the men sat horrified, breathing heavily. So intense was the silence that I could hear the crackling of the coal, the sharp swish of snow against the window. And that awful thing had actually happened here, here where we were sitting! Here in the pitiless darkness, those last two lives had gone out to meet their God—despairing, hopeless; Scarcely realizing what I did, I bent low over Lady Darlington.

"Doris, sweetheart," I whispered, my words barely audible to her alone, "this will drive us all mad unless we can do something to bring back faith and hope. I beg of you to sing to us, sing to us here."

She looked up, white-faced, wet-eyed, her hands trembling violently; as they touched mine.

"Oh, I could not, I could not; the words would choke me."

She arose unsteadily to her feet, gripping the table, then the back of the bench, and thus helped, staggered rather than walked forward. A long, breathless moment she stood, grasping the window-casing, staring blindly out into the dark, the snow flecking the glass, her shoulders bent and trembling. She turned slowly, ashen-lipped, one hand shadowing her eyes. Twice she endeavored vainly to find voice; then, clear, yet with the glistening of tears clinging to each word, she sang:

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock, and treacherous shoal,
Chart and compass come from Thee;
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.

While I live I remember the wondrous change in her face as she sang—the effect pictured in those faces watching her.

As a mother stills her child,
Thee, exact bush in ocean wild;
Boisterous waves obey Thy will,
When Thou sayest to them: "Be still,"
Whence Sovereign of the Sea,
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.

She straightened, her fine eyes darkening, and I noticed Johnson leaning forward, clenching the table with his hard hands.

When at last I near the shore,
And the fearful breakers roar,
Twixt me and the peaceful rest,
Then, while leaning on Thy breast,
May I hear Thee say to me,
"Fear not, I will pilot thee."

In the intense silence that followed she crossed to where I sat, placed one hand upon my shoulder, and bent down until her cheek pressed my sleeve. One by one the men fled gravely out into the darkness of the deck, leaving us there alone.

CHAPTER XXVI.

In Which We Find Treasure.

We began to dream of treasure as soon as the fierce winds ceased and the waves fell. The lust for wealth, partially blunted by the requirements of hardship and peril, revived within us the instant nature granted a temporary respite. The memory of the three million pesos that might be stowed away below began to haunt our imaginations, and the story of it found utterance on our lips. The negro blurted it forth, his eyes rolling, and De Nova came direct to me, asking, in behalf of the men, the privilege of making search. There was no excuse for refusal, even had I desired to find one, as the decks were cleared of the debris left by the storm, and the Donna Isabel rode her course easily to a lashed helm. Leaving Dade above to keep a watchful eye on the weather, I willingly led the others to the steward's pantry, where we pried open the door leading down into the lazarette.

CHAPTER XXVII.

(To be Continued)

A Clean-Up of Every Boys

Suit in the House!

INCLUDING BLUE SERGES—Sizes 3 to 16

Just Three Prices, \$1.39, \$1.99, \$2.49!

Do you realize what this means? It means that you can buy boys wool suits that sold for \$3, \$4, \$5, \$6 and \$7 at one of the three prices above. You know what kind of boys suits we handle. All splendid, well-made dependable suits. No trash; no kike goods. No goods bought to sell at a sale price, but our regular quality line of boys suits. We have been so successful in cleaning up our other lines that we have determined to make a clean sweep of all that's left of our boys suits. That's why we have made these unheard of low prices. We have bought a big new line of boys clothing for Fall and we want to clear our tables of every single garment now in the house. Some of these suits are light, some dark. Light, medium and heavy weight; blue, black, gray, brown, green and all colors and styles—sizes 3 to 16. It will pay you to buy goods at this sale for future needs. You cannot buy them cheaper at auction. Come early while the picking is good.



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The House of Kuppenheimer
Chicago

We Have Made 3 Prices in Men's Suits:

\$7.90, \$9.90, \$11.90

Such suits as these you cannot buy for \$12 to \$20. They are mostly Summer weights, but styles and colors you can wear 9 months of the year. You can never buy good suits for less than these. We still have some of the big bargains left in shirts at 37, 54 and 69c

Underwear 25c, a few gowns only at 54c, boy's wash pants 26c, boy's shirts 23c, boy's stockings 16c.

Men's Pants \$1.45, \$1.99, \$2.48

Men's fancy hose 19c. Lisle suspenders 19c.

These bargains have set the town to talking. If you have not taken advantage of this clearance sale you are missing the one big chance of the year to buy good goods very cheap.

Remember these Prices are for Cash Only!

C. E. Wescott's Sons

"Where Quality Counts."

THE HOME OF SATISFACTION!

Italians go on Strike.

The Burlington is suffering from a strike among its extra gang forces. This morning the gang of Greeks or Italians which has been working in this vicinity under Foreman Scott concluded that they were not getting pay enough for the work they were doing and refused to go out. They demanded that the rate of pay be raised to seventeen and a half cents per hour in place of fifteen which they were getting.

As the foreman had no authority to raise their wages they went on strike. This noon they moved out of the boarding cars which they have been occupying on the tracks south of the depot to await a train for Omaha. The action of the company on the matter is being awaited with interest but it is probable the gang will be allowed to go and another gang be ordered to finish their work. They seemed to have talked the matter over and concluded to either get what they wanted or quit.

Back From the Ranch.

County Treasurer Schlater and Cashier H. N. Doye of the First National bank, returned this morning from their foray into the wilds of western Nebraska, having been spending the past week or ten days on Mr. Schlater's ranch near Bridgeport. The gentlemen are looking fine and apparently have had a great time while there. Mr. Schlater is the proud possessor of many hundreds of acres of fine grazing and farming lands out on the North Platte river and it was upon these that the time was put in. Considerable rough life was indulged in during the vacation of the two gentlemen and they returned pretty well lumbered up for the remainder of the summer and fall.

A. R. Young and wife returned last evening from Omaha, where Mrs. Young has been an inmate of a hospital for a number of months. The lady returns quite improved in health and feeling better than for a long time past.

Nebraska State Fair.

On August 11 comes the closing date for all harness races at the state fair, September 6 to 10. One hundred and eighteen horses have already been named in the stake races. The races embody 3-year-old 2:55, 2:30, 2:25, 2:21, 2:18 and 2:15 trotting; 3-year-old 2:30, 2:25, 2:22, 2:18, 2:14 and free-for-all pacing. Six of these races will be for \$1,000 each. The 3-year-old Nebraska bred running race for a purse of \$200 and the Nebraska derby, 1-1-16 miles, for a purse of \$500, also close August 11.

The 2:35, 2:21 and 2:15 trotting and the 2:30, 2:22 and 2:14 pacing, each for a purse of \$1,000, and the 3-year-old 2:30, 2:25 and 2:18 trotting and 3-year-old 2:25, 2:18 and free-for-all pacing each for \$500, to be raced at the state fair, September 6 to 10, also the running 1-1-16-mile Nebraska derby for \$500, and 4 1-2 furlongs 3-year-old Nebraska bred colts for \$200 will close August 11. There will be some excellent racing this year.

John Lutz, Henry Zuckweller and J. Ed. Barwick were passengers last week for Millard, S. D., where they examined some land with a view of purchasing. Mr. Lutz returned Saturday evening and Mr. Barwick returned last night. Mr. Zuckweller went to Lincoln from Millard. Messrs. Lutz and Zuckweller, between them, took an option on a half section of land, the deeds and title to be examined pending the purchase. Mr. Lutz was much taken with the country and predicts a great future for it. The corn crop he regards as mighty fine this year, while the wheat looks better even than in this section. The gentlemen will undoubtedly make a purchase providing the title to the property shows up all right.

The condition of Frank Svoboda is reported today as not so favorable and he is very low. It is his desire that his friends appreciate how seriously ill he is. A change for the better is hoped for but at present he is indeed quite ill.

Married in Omaha.

Married—At the residence of Mr. Floyd Knee, in Omaha, Neb., on Monday, July 26, 1909, at 7:30 p. m., Mrs. A. H. Knee of this city and Mr. David Knee of Alturas, Cal.

The above notice will convey to the many friends of the bride in this city the news of her marriage to Mr. David Knee, a wealthy mine owner of California. The wedding was quite a family affair, those present, in addition to the immediate members of the family, being Mrs. B. C. Kerr of this city, president of the local W. C. T. U., and a number of state officers in that organization, of which Mrs. Knee was a prominent member. Immediately following the ceremony the happy couple came to this city and are now making a brief visit here preparatory to an extended wedding tour to Michigan and other eastern points. The many friends of Mrs. Knee hasten to extend their best wishes and hopes for a happy and prosperous married life.

Mrs. Hawrick Improving Nicely.

A Hawrick returned last evening from Chicago, Ill., where he was summoned some days ago when his wife, who was visiting there, was compelled to undergo an operation. He left Mrs. Hawrick getting along nicely after what the attending physicians described as one of the most severe operations they had ever performed upon a patient. She will not be able to return home for a period of probably three or four weeks, but as she was getting along so nicely, Mr. Hawrick concluded it was safe for him to return, and did so. Mrs. Hawrick's many friends will be delighted to hear of her steady progress and trust that her recovery will be soon and that she can return home very soon.

Miss Blanche Murray of Omaha came down Saturday evening for an over-Sunday visit with her mother, Mrs. J. A. Murray, and her brother Alvin Murray of North Platte, who is also visiting his mother.