

# A SISTER'S VENGEANCE

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN

## CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

"Do you think we can escape?"

and the woman, pointing with fear.

"An' it's escape, when the boat's wait-

ing, and everything riddy?" said Dinny,

excitedly. "I've hear her, sor? What

a woman it is!"

They pressed on, and at the end of what

seemed to be an impossibly long time,

Humphrey whispered:

"Are we near the sea?"

"Close in it now, sor. If it was three-

land y'd hear the bating of the waves

upon the shore, but they're too hot and

wake in this country to do more than

give a bit of a lap on the sands."

Another weary length of time passed,

and still the seashore was not reached,

but they were evidently near it now, for

the dull murmur of the billows in the shel-

tered gulf was plainly to be heard; and

Mistress Greenheys, who, in spite of

her bravery and decision, had begun to

utter a low, hysterical sob from time to

time and hang more heavily upon her

companions' arms, took courage at the

thought of the safety the sea offered, and

pressed sturdily forward for another few

hundred yards and then stopped short.

"What is it, darlin'?" whispered Din-

ny.

"Voices," she replied softly.

"Yes, our own," said Dinny. "There

can't be any others here."

"I am sure I heard talking," said Hum-

phrey; but all was still now, and feeling

satisfied at last that it was the murmur

of the waves, they crept on in utter

silence, and were about to leave the

shelter of the path by which they had

come and for the open sand when Dinny

checked his companions, and they all

listened, for a voice that was familiar

said:

"The skipper's full of fancies. He

hasn't been right since this captain was

made a prisoner, and he has been worse

since the other prisoners escaped."

"Other prisoners? What prisoners?"

thought Humphrey.

"You hold your tongue!" growled the

familiar voice of Bart. "Do you want

to scare them off?"

"Scare whom off?"

"Those who try to escape. Silence!"

Mistress Greenheys reeled up against

Humphrey and would have fallen but

for his strong arm, which encircled her.

Dinny did not speak till they had reached

the shelter of some trees.

"Look at that, now!" he whispered out

of the black darkness. "Have ye got

the black darkness? Have ye got

the black darkness?"

"Yes, safe enough; but what does this

mean?"

"Mine, sor? Sure, and it's Bart yan-

der wid two min."

"Take us down to the sea by some other

path, an' don't I tell ye there is no

other path, sor? It's the only way. Mur-

der, look at that!"

For at that moment a light flashed out

and shimmered on the sea, sunk, rose,

and became brilliant, shining forth so

that they could see the three men down

upon the shore had lit a pile of some

inflammable material, beyond which

floating easily upon the surface of the

sea and apparently close inshore, was a

boat—the boat that was to bear them

safely away.

They were sheltered by the trees, and

besides, too far off to be seen by the men,

whose acts, however, were plain enough

to them, as one of them was seen to

wade out to the boat, get hold of her

mooring rope, and drag her ashore.

"The murderer's villain!" muttered

Dinny. "They're takin' out the shores.

Look at that now! There's the barl o'

wather and the bishkit, and now there's

the sail. What'll I do intirely? My

heart's bruk wid em."

"Hush, my lad! You'll be heard,"

whispered Humphrey.

He gave an angry stamp, for in her

agonies of dread Mistress Greenheys

gave herself a wrench from his arm, and

to that old temple where Mazzard made

his attempt to kill the captain?"

"There, sor! Why, the captain would

find us directly. You live it to me.

Humphrey would have taken to the

forest without hesitation, but, worn out

and suffering keenly from disappoint-

ment, he was in no humor to oppose, and

signifying his willingness, he followed

the Irishman by devious ways in and

out of the ruins for some time, till Dinny

crouched down, and motioned to Hum-

phrey to do the same.

The place was in such a chaos and so

changed by the terrific force of the ex-

ploded that Humphrey had felt as if he

were journeying along quite a new por-

tion of the forest outskirts, till, as he

obeyed his companion and they crouched

down among some dense herbage, he

stared with astonishment at the sight

before him, a couple of hundred yards

away.

For there, beyond one of the piles of

crumbling ruins, was a perfectly familiar

pathway, out of which he saw step into

the broad sunshine the picturesque

figure of the buccaner captain, who strode

toward a group of waiting men.

A discussion seemed to take place, there

were some sharp orders, and then the

whole party disappeared.

"Why, Dinny, man, are you mad?"

whispered Humphrey. "I trusted to you

to take me to some place of hiding, and

you've brought me right into the lion's

den."

"Well, sor, and a mighty purty place,

too, so long as the lion's not at home.

Sure and ye just saw him go out."

"But, Dinny—"

"Whisht! Don't spake so loud, sor.

Sure, now, if a cannon ball made a hole

in the side of a ship, isn't that the safest

place to put your head so as not to be

hurt. They never hit the same place

twice."

"Then your hiding place is my old lodg-

ing—my prison?"

"Av course it is! The skipper has been

there to mak' sure that ye are really

gone; and now he knows, he'll say to him-

self that this is the last place ye'd go

and hide in; and truth, he's quite roight,

isn't he?"

Humphrey hesitated for a few mo-

ments, and then, feeling how true the

man's words were, he gave way.

"Sure, sor, and it's all roight,"

whispered Dinny. "Acin't I trying to keep

my head out of a noose, and d'ye think

I'd be for coming here if it wasn't the

safest place? Come along, sure, it's a

lion's den, as ye call it, and the best spot

I know."

He whispered to Humphrey to follow

cautiously, and crept on all-fours among

the dense growth, and in and out among

the loose stones at the very edge of the

forest, till the tunnel-like pathway was

reached in safety, when, after crawling

a few yards out of the blinding sunshine

into the shadowy gloom, Dinny rose to

his feet.

"There, sor," he said, "we can walk

like Christians now, and not like animal

bastes."

There was an ample supply of food in

the place for a week, and water. Dinny's

ideas respecting their safety seemed to

be quite correct, for though voices were

heard at a distance, no one approached

the place. They had the hidden subter-

anean tomb-like chamber into which

they could retreat; and on the second

night, while Dinny was watching and

Humphrey, utterly worn out, was sleep-

ing feverishly and trying to forget the

troubles and disappointments of his fail-

ure, there was a faint rustling noise

heard, and directly after his name was

whispered softly from above.

"Murder!" cried Dinny, unable to

contain himself as he sprang up.

His exclamation and the noise he made

brought Humphrey from his couch, alert

and ready for any struggle.

"What is it?" he said.

"Dinny" came in a voice from above.

CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)

"Do you think we can escape?"

and the woman, pointing with fear.

"An' it's escape, when the boat's wait-

ing, and everything riddy?" said Dinny,

excitedly. "I've hear her, sor? What

a woman it is!"

They pressed on, and at the end of what

seemed to be an impossibly long time,

Humphrey whispered:

"Are we near the sea?"

"Close in it now, sor. If it was three-

land y'd hear the bating of the waves

upon the shore, but they're too hot and

wake in this country to do more than

give a bit of a lap on the sands."

Another weary length of time passed,

and still the seashore was not reached,

but they were evidently near it now, for

the dull murmur of the billows in the shel-

tered gulf was plainly to be heard; and

Mistress Greenheys, who, in spite of

her bravery and decision, had begun to

utter a low, hysterical sob from time to

time and hang more heavily upon her

companions' arms, took courage at the

thought of the safety the sea offered, and

pressed sturdily forward for another few

hundred yards and then stopped short.

"What is it, darlin'?" whispered Din-

ny.

"Voices," she replied softly.

"Yes, our own," said Dinny. "There

can't be any others here."

"I am sure I heard talking," said Hum-

phrey; but all was still now, and feeling

satisfied at last that it was the murmur

of the waves, they crept on in utter

silence, and were about to leave the

shelter of the path by which they had

come and for the open sand when Dinny

checked his companions, and they all

listened, for a voice that was familiar

said:

"The skipper's full of fancies. He

hasn't been right since this captain was

made a prisoner, and he has been worse

since the other prisoners escaped."

"Other prisoners? What prisoners?"

thought Humphrey.

"You hold your tongue!" growled the

familiar voice of Bart. "Do you want

to scare them off?"

"Scare whom off?"

"Those who try to escape. Silence!"

Mistress Greenheys reeled up against

Humphrey and would have fallen but

for his strong arm, which encircled her.

Dinny did not speak till they had reached

the shelter of some trees.

"Look at that, now!" he whispered out

of the black darkness. "Have ye got

the black darkness? Have ye got

the black darkness?"

"Yes, safe enough; but what does this

mean?"

"Mine, sor? Sure, and it's Bart yan-

der wid two min."

"Take us down to the sea by some other

path, an' don't I tell ye there is no

other path, sor? It's the only way. Mur-

der, look at that!"

For at that moment a light flashed out

and shimmered on the sea, sunk, rose,

and became brilliant, shining forth so

that they could see the three men down

upon the shore had lit a pile of some

inflammable material, beyond which

floating easily upon the surface of the

sea and apparently close inshore, was a

boat—the boat that was to bear them

safely away.

They were sheltered by the trees, and

besides, too far off to be seen by the men,

whose acts, however, were plain enough

to them, as one of them was seen to

wade out to the boat, get hold of her

mooring rope, and drag her ashore.

"The murderer's villain!" muttered

Dinny. "They're takin' out the shores.

Look at that now! There's the barl o'

wather and the bishkit, and now there's

the sail. What'll I do intirely? My

heart's bruk wid em."

"Hush, my lad! You'll be heard,"

whispered Humphrey.

He gave an angry stamp, for in her

agonies of dread Mistress Greenheys

gave herself a wrench from his arm, and

CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

"Do you think we can escape?"

and the woman, pointing with fear.

"An' it's escape, when the boat's wait-