

# THE SEA-HAWK

Part Two By Rafael Sabatini.

(Continued From Yesterday.)

Sir Oliver sat down upon a coil of rope, his guard about him, an object of curious inspection to the rude seamen. They thronged the forecastle and the hatchway to stare at this formidable corsair who once had been a Cornish gentleman and who had become a renegade Moslem and terror to Christianity.

Truth to tell, the sometime Cornish gentleman was difficult to discern in him as he sat there still wearing the cap of cloth of silver over his white tunic and turban of the same material swathed about his steel helmet pieces that ended in a spike. Lily he swung his brown sinewy legs, naked from knee to ankle, with the inscrutable calm of the fastest upon his swarthy hawk face with its light agate eyes and black forked beard and those caustic seaman who had assembled there to fear and mock him were stricken dumb by the intensity and stolidity of his bearing in the face of death.

If the delay chafed him, he gave no outward sign of it. If his hard, light eyes glanced hither and thither it was upon no idle quest. He was seeking Rosamund, hoping for a last sight of her before they launched him upon his last dread voyage.

But Rosamund was not to be seen. She was in the cabin at the time. She had been there for this hour past, and it was to her that the present delay was due.

**The Judges.**

In the absence of any woman into whose care they might entrust her, Lord Henry, Sir John, and Master Tobias, the ship's surgeon, had amongst themselves decided upon the one who could when numbed and half-dazed she was brought aboard the Silver Heron.

Master Tobias had applied such rude restoratives as he commanded, and having made her as comfortable as possible upon a couch in the spacious cabin astern, he had suggested that the rest of the crew should follow the rest of which she appeared so sorely to stand in need. He had ushered out the commander and the queen's lieutenant, and himself had gone below to a more urgent case that was demanding his attention—that of Lionel Tressilian, who had been brought limp and unconscious from the gallese together with some four other wounded members of the Silver Heron's crew.

At dawn Sir John had come below, seeking news of his wounded friend. He found the surgeon kneeling over Lionel. As he entered, Master Tobias turned aside, rinsed his hands in a metal basin placed upon the floor, and rose wiping them on a napkin.

"I can do no more, Sir John," he muttered in a deponent voice. "He is sped."

"Dead, d'ya mean?" cried Sir John, a catch in his voice.

The surgeon tossed aside the napkin, and slowly drew down the upturned sleeves of his black doublet. "All out dead," he answered. "The wonder is that any spark of life should still linger in a body with that hole in it. He is bleeding inwardly, and his pulse is steadily weakening; it must continue so until imperceptibly he passes away. You may count him dead already, Sir John." He paused. "A merciful, painless end," he added, and sighed perfectly, his pale shaven face decently grave, for all that such scenes as these were commonplace in his life. "Of the other four," he continued, "Blair is dead; the other three should all recover."

But Sir John gave little heed to the matter of those others. His grief and dismay at this quenching of all hopes for his friend precluded any other consideration at the moment.

"And he will not even recover consciousness?" he asked insistently, although already he had been answered.

"As I have said, you may count him dead already, Sir John. My skill can do nothing for him."

Sir John's head drooped his countenance drawn and grave. "Nor can my justice," he added gloomily.

"Through it avenge him, it cannot give me back my friend," he looked at the surgeon. "Vengeance, sir, is the holiest of all the mockeries that go to make up life."

"Your task, Sir John," replied the surgeon, "is one of justice, not vengeance."

"A quibble, when all is said," he stepped to Lionel's side, and looked down at the pale handsome face over which the dark shadows of death were already creeping. "If he would but speak in the interests of this justice that is to do! If we might but have the evidence of his own words, lest I should ever be asked to justify the hanging of Oliver Tressilian."

"Surely, sir," the surgeon ventured, "there can be no such question ever."

"Mistress Rosamund's word alone should suffice, if indeed so much as that event were required in such a case."

"Ah! His offences against God and man are too notorious to leave grounds upon which any should ever question my right to deal with him out of hand."

There was a tap at the door and Sir John's own body servant entered with the announcement that Mistress Rosamund was asking urgently to see him.

"She will be impatient for news of him," Sir John concluded, and he groaned. "My God! How am I to tell her? To crush her in the very hour of her deliverance with such news as this! Was ever irony so cruel!" He turned, and stepped heavily to the door. There he paused. "You will remain by him to the end!" he bade the surgeon interrogatively.

Master Tobias bowed. "Of course, Sir John." And he added, "Twill not be long."

Sir John looked across at Lionel again—a glance of hatred. "God rest him!" he said hoarsely, and passed out.

In the waist he paused a moment, and made a knot of lashing seamen, and bade them throw a halter over the yard-arm, and hale the renegade Oliver Tressilian from his prison. Then with slow heavy step and heavier heart he went up the companion to the vessel's capstated poop.

The sun, new risen in a faint golden haze, shone over a sea faintly rippled by the fresh clean winds of dawn to which their every ditch of canvas was now spread. Away on the far board quarter, a faint cloudy outline, was the coast of Spain.

Sir John's long sallow face was preternaturally grave when he entered the cabin, where Rosamund awaited him. He bowed to her with a grave courtesy, doffing his hat and casting it upon a chair. The last five years had brought some strands of white into his thick black hair, and at the temples in particular it showed very gray, giving him an appearance of age to which the deep lines in his brow contributed.

He advanced towards her, as she rose to receive him.

"Rosamund, my dear," he said gently, and took both her hands. He looked with eyes of sorrow and concern into her white, agitated face. "Are you sufficiently rested, child?"

"Rest?" she echoed on a note of wonder that he should suppose it.

"Poor lamb, poor lamb!" he murmured as a mother might have done, and drew her towards him, stroking that gleaming auburn head. "Well speed us back to England with every stitch of canvas spread. Take heart then, and—"

But she broke in impetuously, drawing away from him as she spoke, and his heart sank with foreboding of the things she was about to inquire.

"I overheard a sailor just now saying to another that it is your intent to hang Sir Oliver Tressilian out of hand—this morning."

He misinterpreted her utterly. "Be comforted," he said. "My justice shall be swift; my vengeance sure. The yardarm is charged already with the rope on which he shall leap to his eternal punishment."

"And upon what grounds," she asked squarely facing him, "do you intend to do this thing?"

He stared and frowned, bewildered by her question and its tone. "Upon what grounds?" he repeated, foolishly at most in the intensity of his amazement. Then he considered her more closely, and the williness of her eyes bore to him slowly an explanation of words that at first had seemed beyond explaining.

"I see!" he said in a voice of infinite pity; for the conviction to which he had leaped was that her poor wits were all astray after the horrors through which she had lately traveled. "You must rest," he said gently, "and give no thought to such matters as these. Leave them to me, and be very sure that I shall avenge you as in due."

"Sir John, you mistake me. I think I do not desire that you avenge me. I have asked you upon what grounds you intend to do this thing, and you have not answered me."

In increasing amazement he continued to stare. He had been wrong.

Then she was quite sane and mistress of her wits. And yet instead of the fond inquiries concerning Lionel which he had been dreading came this amazing questioning of his grounds to hang his prisoner.

"Need I state to you—of all living folks—the offences which that dastard has committed?" he asked, expressing thus the very question that he was setting himself.

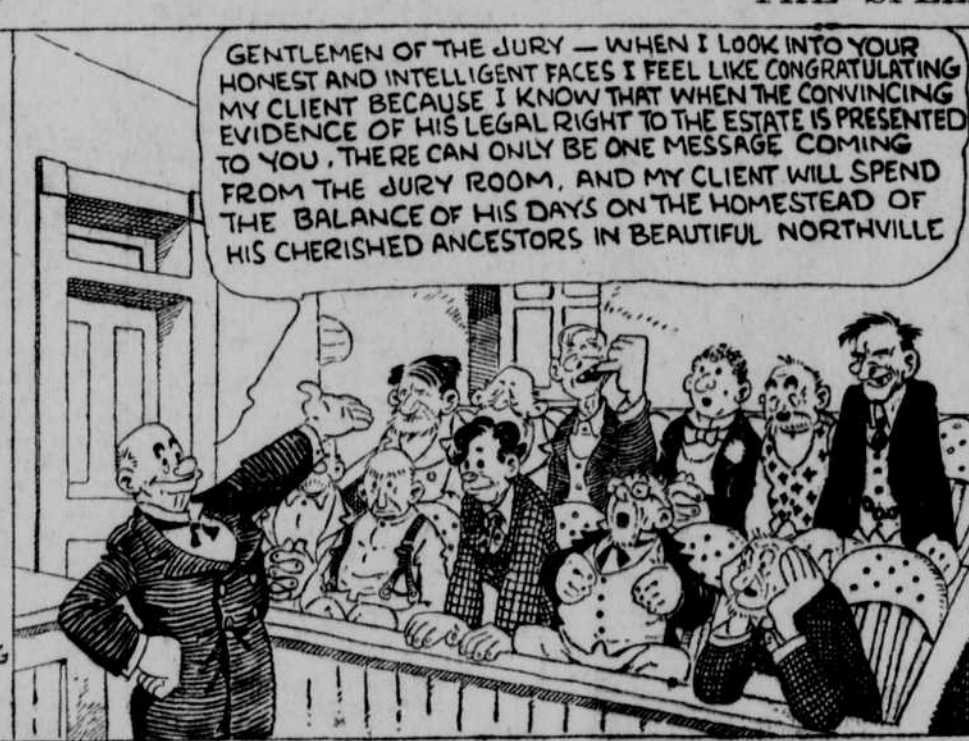
"You need to tell me," she answered, "by what right you constitute yourself his judge and executioner; by what right you send him to his death in this peremptory fashion, without trial." Her manner was as stern as if she were invested with all the authority of a judge.

"But you," he faltered in his ever-growing bewilderment, "you, Rosamund, against whom he has offended so gravely, surely you should be the last to ask me such a question! Why, it is my intention to proceed with him as in the manner of the sea with all knaves taken as Oliver Tressilian was taken. If your mood be merciful towards him—which as God lives, I can scarce conceive—consider that this is the greatest mercy he can look for."

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

## THE NEBBS

TWELVE MEN HAVE BEEN SELECTED AND THE JURY IS NOW COMPLETE AND ALL NORTHVILLE IS AGOG AND THE COURT ROOM IS CROWDED TO OVERFLOWING



## THE SPELLBINDERS.



Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess



## Barney Google and Spark Plug

ONE TIME BARNEY DOESN'T SURRENDER.

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By Briggs

## ABIE THE AGENT

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield



## New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE.

New York, June 19.—Same conversation in Manhattan is becoming almost an impossibility, due to the "wise crack." No matter what topic is under discussion someone turns it into the channels of punning. Many New Yorkers would shoot their wives just for a laugh.

This spirit of conversational flippancy has grown amazingly during the last year. So much so that two newspapers have written editorials on the subject and it has also been the theme of several sermons.

One of the best informed men in New York recently stated that he has studiously avoided serious conversation at any gathering he has attended in the last year. He said he found it brought up some world problem it would be turned into a prohibition joke.

Cheap vaudeville jokes and back-alley slang are heard in every drawl in a room. The sleek young wisecrackers, whose best bet used to be the automat, are now invited to the select festal boards just to give the low comedy touch.

At dinners where guests of honor are supposed to retain a certain dignity of expression there is instead tawdry buffoonery. In fact, this is one of the rarest of porters who at such times rarely quote a single line of the speeches.

Even among the young folks there appears to be a greater sanity of conversation than among the elders.

There is, however, a return to rationalism in one phase of New York life. The smart cafes are getting back to the pristine beauty and charm of old Delmonico and Sherry's. The Russian craze puffed out over night and the lobsteria entrepreneurs found themselves stuck with about 10 or 12 acres of weird wall hangings, samovars and furniture in the mode of Moscow. Today the most popular cafes have conventional surroundings. Perhaps as a slight diversion they have ballroom dancers, but they dress in evening clothes and do a waltz or a fox trot. The town is also going back to smaller orchestras. Five pieces are considered sufficient.

It has been a tough year for one of New York's chief newspaper executives. It has been his task to reorganize the staffs of merged newspapers. Although one of the kindest bosses the newspaper always ever had, he has been forced to discharge some 200 men, most of whom were personal friends. Very few newspaper men in New York in the last year have not awakened one morning or other to find their newspaper shot from under them. This executive, due to the multiplicity of mergers, was compelled to discharge one newspaper artist five times. The artist had had the misfortune to go from one paper that was merged to another that was in the process of merging. The last merger threw him out of a job and he packed up his belongings and took the first boat to Europe. He says he is never coming back.

Half of New York theaters are now closing their matinee performances at 4:40 o'clock in the afternoon. This was made necessary on account of the subway and elevated crush after 5 o'clock. The theaters were losing money because people would not stand the pushing and jamming that followed the effort to get home from the matinee. It is thought by winter a new night schedule will be worked out by theaters—some to open early and others later and thus relieve the frightful congestion in the Rialto district. A man living five blocks from a theater on Forty-second street discovered the other night that it took him exactly 24 minutes to reach home in a taxi.

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