

THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE DONNA ISABEL

BY RANDALL PARRISH
AUTHOR OF "DASH HAWTHORN OF FLORIDA ETC."

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SYNOPSIS.

The story opens with the introduction of John Stephens, a Massachusetts man, who is interested in mining operations in Bolivia. He is accompanied by a young woman, Miss Jeannie, and a young man, Mr. Meadows. Stephens rescued the young woman from a drunken officer. He was thanked by her. Admiral of the Pacific navy, Commodore Stephens, told him that he 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 were to sail for the Esmeralda, through the straits of Magellan, through the straits of Drake, and to capture the vessel. 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 vessel. He explained the situation to her ladyship. Lord Darlington's vessel had been taken in order to go to the Antarctic circle. Lord Darlington's vessel had been taken in order to go to the Antarctic circle. Lord Darlington's vessel had been taken in order to go to the Antarctic circle.



"Damn You, McKnight, Lie Still!" I Panted.

CHAPTER XVIII.—Continued.

By heaven, for her sake, if for no other reason, I would play the man! Ay, and I comprehended exactly what such resolve would cost—realized fully why at that moment I would say and do the things that I did. I had given up search for the treasure. I should have to command by brute force, by threat and blow. There would be mutiny aboard for every league until we made port. I knew the nature of that sea-scurvy forward—how they would whine and curse, how they would hate me for failing to hold them to their course in face of death! Well, let them hate; my love was worth by far the more, and the life and honor of Lady Darlington outweighed all else on board—ay, and the treasure of the Donna Isabel! "Implicitly"—I saw her eyes again as she said it, and sprang to the deck, tumbling in the darkness for the latch of my door.

The main cabin was dimly lighted and chill, the fire in the stove low. I paused to rattle it, and add a few lumps of coal from the scuttle standing near by. In spite of surrounding comforts what a grim, inhospitable place this was for any woman like her! The very snugness of the cabin served only to emphasize the gloom and peril without, the frightful polar mystery which surrounded us, which drives men mad amid its awful distances, its shrouded silence.

Suddenly, directly opposite where I stood, I saw it again—that same shapeless, white, gliding figure. An instant only I stood rooted to the spot, my blood like ice, my eyes full of horror. Then the swift reaction came, the reserve courage of a man ashamed of such weakness, and I leaped straight toward the misty object, grasping at it with my hands. I touched nothing but air, falling headlong with a violence jarring the entire cabin, and overthrowing a chair crashing to the deck. Dazed, confused, I staggered to my knees, staring about into the dim shadows. A white-draped figure was at my very elbow, and I sprang to my feet, only to take a quick step backward, grasping at the table, as I recognized Lady Darlington.

"Good God! was that you?" I gasped, the horror still possessing me. "This certainly is," she answered, swiftly. "But what do you mean? Who has deceived me?" "I hardly know," and I looked about me, and then into her face, breathing heavily. "I seem unable to separate the real from the unreal. I am half afraid I am losing my mind. Lady Darlington, it is not only the crew forward who are seeing ghosts on board, believing it a mere illusion that could never occur again. In that spirit I told you about seeing a white, misty figure in this cabin the night after 'Tuttle died. It vanished like a wreath of smoke, and daylight made me believe the vision was born of a tired brain. But I have seen it again now—yonder, as plainly as I can see you. It was no dream, no imagination; yet when I sought to grasp the things, my fingers encountered nothing but air."

"I saw her hands tremble, her white face turned whither I pointed; but she had not beheld what I had, and her mind remained clear."

"What was it you saw?" "A shapeless white figure, misty, vanishing like a bubble."

"We do not believe in ghosts, Mr. Stephens, you and I," her voice growing firmer with conviction. "Our education and training make such a conception impossible. There is a natural cause for this, a reason, an actual presence back of the shadow. There must be, and we must find it. Where did you stand when you saw this apparition?"

I stepped back to the spot beside the stove, realizing that she still clung tightly to me. "Here, and I lifted my eyes like this."

She leaned eagerly forward, her breath on my cheek, her fingers clutching my arm. "Why—why that is a mirror you are looking into! See! What is it reflected there? Turn up the light until I locate the spot. Oh, I see now—the open pantry door. Mr. Stephens, there is where your ghost stood—it was the shadow of a man reflected in that mirror."

"Our eyes met, all my former terror, shame and anger dominating me. "It might be—certainly some one who sought in that way to terrorize officers and crew, and thus compel them to turn back. Whoever it was, he killed Mr. Tuttle, and now seeks to accomplish the same end with you. What are you going to do?"

"Trace him down. The last time the fellow went directly from here to the fore-castle. There must be a passageway from stem to stern."

"She caught me as I turned, her gray eyes wide with apprehension. "You will take me with you?" "That will be impossible, Lady Darlington. I know nothing regarding this passage amidships, but it must surely lead through the coal bunkers and the engine room."

"But—but I cannot let you go alone," utterly forgetting to conceal her agitation. "Truly, I could not bear to do it. Whoever this man may be he will become desperate when cornered. Your very life will be in danger."

"And you really care?" my hand clasping hers, my eyes eagerly searching the gray depths. "Yes, I care," making no effort to free herself; "why should I not? Think what our condition would be if you were not on board. Yet that is not all; I care because I value your life, your friendship. Little as I can do, let me, at least, be near you."

alley-way leading forward was extremely narrow, yet of a height sufficient to afford comparatively easy passage had it only been lighted. Suddenly a faint glow appeared ahead, and a moment later I slipped caustiously through a small bulkhead door standing ajar, into a low square room, containing six bunks arranged in tiers of two. A slush lamp swung from a blackened beam, and various articles of wearing apparel dangled from hooks. I peered into the bunks, discovering three occupied, the unconscious sleepers being Cooky, the smooth-faced Chilean, and the gunner, a Swede named Gustafson. None awoke under my scrutiny, although the Chilean was talking in his sleep and thrashing his arms about as if in a nightmare. I bent down, looking at him more closely, attracted by something oddly familiar in the upturned features. By all the gods, the fellow was Lieut. Juan Sanchez, his long mustaches shaven, and looking ten years younger! It was so odd a thing, this sudden renewal of a controversy originating thousands of leagues away, that I nearly laughed outright, forgetting for the instant the serious purpose bringing me there.

Yet this surprising discovery of Sanchez aboard seemed of comparatively little importance, and was as quickly dismissed. The narrow bulkhead door leading forward was tightly closed, and in that dim light I had to hunt for it, so perfectly was it fitted into place. When discovered, however, it proved to be unfastened, and I stepped forth into an empty coal bunker, whence I could look straight forward along the glowing boilers into the engine room. I advanced carefully along the slight open space until I came upon the squad of firemen and big Bill Anderson. The latter shaded his eyes, staring at me as though he mistook me for another ghost, but I took the initiative.

"I have been investigating the arrangement of things below, Anderson," I said, in explanation; "rather odd way in which the yacht is cut up. Did you know there was a passage leading all the way aft?"

The boatswain shook his head, too surely naturally to answer. "Well, possibly you know whether or not a similar passage leads forward into the fore-castle?"

"There's a bulkhead door over there," he returned, indicating by a gesture a spot concealed by the donkey pump, "but I don't know

where it goes, only it's dark as hell." "It comes out under the fore-castle, sir," broke in a coal heaver named Davis. "Leastwise there's a trap in the deck there, with a ladder leading down."

"I'll finish the trip through, then, for I like to know what is under my feet when I command a vessel. Where is the engineer, Anderson?" He waved his big hairy hand in the direction of the boilers. "Went to his bunk to lie down for an hour; he was about all in."

"Are you capable of standing watch alone in an engine room?" The fellow grinned, his bulldog jaw protruding. "Well, I've had to do it on this trip whether I can stand it or not. This fellow can't stand it here night and day without no rest. I know how to start an' stop her, an' watch the water gauge. If anything else goes wrong he's easy enough called."

So it was McKnight who was playing the antics of a ghost on board; McKnight who had discovered that unusual passageway through the bulkheads; McKnight who had conceived the idea that in this manner he could frighten us into turning back. Well, truly, I did not altogether blame the man, and now that my own fear of the supernatural was allayed, did not feel any desire to punish him severely. Still, his masquerade must stop before he thoroughly demoralized the crew, frightening them beyond all my power of control.

I discovered the door concealed behind the donkey engine, left it slightly ajar behind me, and stepped forward into the black passage. I had groped along to the very foot of the ladder, feeling nothing but bare walls, and hearing no sound except the slush of bilge water, when suddenly an inarticulate cry sounded almost directly above; something, a hatch cover possibly, seemed to settle into place, and the ladder shook under my hand. I drew back a step, permitting the fellow to come down until he reached the floor. My eyes, accustomed to the gloom, enabled me to dimly perceive his shape. It was no more than a formless smudge he made, but I struck straight for what seemed to be the head, and landed with a force that dropped him like a log. In an instant I was on top, clasping the canvas sheet he wore tightly about his arms, and throttling him against the deck. He fought like a wild bull for a moment, thoroughly frightened and whimpering, dazed by the suddenness of attack, yet following the animal instinct of a struggle for life.

"Damn you, McKnight, lie still!" I panted. "I've got you, and you might just as well take your medicine, my man. Yes, that's a gun you feel, and I know how to use it. So you're the ghost of the Sea Queen, are you? I guess you know what this means if I turn you over to those fellows, don't you?"

He groaned, and I ventured to release my grip on his throat, flinging back the canvas for his head. "Sit up, well, I'll tell you, McKnight—you would probably go overboard to feed the fishes. Do you recognize me?"

"Yes, sir," managing to find his voice for the first time. "You're Mr. Stephens."

"Right you are, and you can bless your lucky stars that I am the one who caught you. What started you in that trick?"

"It was the Chilean, sir, Sanchez; he said we could scare the whole outfit."

"Did he do any of the ghost playing?" "No, sir; he didn't have the nerve, but he rigged me up, and found out about these passageways."



Miss Jeannie Stood Looking and Wondering.

He peeped out and saw a girl with red cheeks, hazel eyes and brown hair. There was the report of a gun, and down he went, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals had no agent at hand. If there had been one he would surely have been "sassed." The slain rabbit was slung over her shoulder and the hunter went on.

Forty rods further on a second rabbit made a bolt but found cover before he became a target. The huntress was cautiously advancing, finger on trigger, when something came bounding over the brush heap and she fired. The other rabbit had squealed when he felt the shot; this one raised his voice in howls and k-y-y's that made the forest ring.

It was not a rabbit at all, but a small dog, and he ran around in circles as he yelped. Miss Jeannie stood looking and wondering when a young man appeared through the trees beyond. He, also, was a Nimrod; he, also, had a slain hare on his back. While he was yet 30 feet away, he called out:

"Now, then, young fellow, why didn't you wait and assassinate me! You either shot my dog on purpose, or else you are not fit to be trusted with a gun!"

As Miss Jeannie was wearing a round fur cap and a short jacket the mistake was pardonable. "If you can't tell a dog from a rabbit what are you doing out here?" continued the young man as he advanced.

"He isn't hurt much," replied the girl, as the dog ceased to yelp, and she moved from the underbrush which had partly hidden her.

"The man always has the most friends when he needs the fewest."

The Rabbit Hunters

By CARL JENKINS

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"And on that November night, while every one at Hilltop, as the manor house was called, slept and dreamed, the first snow of the season came falling softly down, and when day dawned a pure white mantle covered the earth for miles around. One person in particular at Hilltop hailed the snow with delight. She had made two or three circles of the house before she appeared at the breakfast table and said to her widowed mother:

"It's just what I have been waiting for. I shall kill as many as 20 rabbits to-day. They were running about last night, and left a thousand tracks. Oh, mother, if you loved to tramp about in the snow—and fall down and roll over and get up—and walk three or four miles—and shoot rabbits—and—be a Nimrod."

The widow Warden looked up at the 20-year-old daughter with an indulgent smile and shook her head. There were good sisters who whispered that Miss Jeannie was a bit of a hoyden. She fished, hunted, prospected, rode horseback, rowed, swam, and she didn't know how to sew or cook. When she found a hole in the heel of her stocking or a rip in her dress she carefully hung the article on the back of a chair for some one else to mend. If other girls said she was a hoyden all the young men said she was good looking, and she didn't seem to care either way.

Half an hour after she had bolted her breakfast, the girl was out in her short skirt and leggings, and with her gun on her shoulder, she picked out a rabbit track she knew and followed it toward the woods back of the house. If that rabbit had known of the presence of the bloodthirsty girl in the house he would have headed for the north pole instead of his home under a brush heap, but as he didn't know, he wandered over half the county and finally reached home and went to sleep. He was awakened by footsteps softly approaching his hiding place.

"Gracious, no! If Foxy should pine for me, would he have a relapse? You know he has been my constant companion for the last three years."

Miss Jeannie looked him straight in the eyes until he dropped his head and then ventured:

"If you are not afraid of being assassinated by the 'young fellow' you might call in a day or two and see how Foxy is getting along. Oh, but you needn't call after all. You may telephone."

"But Foxy will want to see me and I him, if you don't mind—"

"Well, if I'm not at home, Foxy will be in the kennel."

Foxy turned out to be a dog that knew a thing or two. He gave one look at his master, which might have been accompanied by a wink, and then trotted off with the girl, who had given up any further hunting for the day. At the house the dog was tied up and two pellets picked out of his neck by the aid of a penknife, and from thence on his attitude was that of a dog having a mission.

On the afternoon of the second day, Mr. Meadows appeared and was introduced to the mother though he had very little conversation with her. The talk was mostly between him and Miss Jeannie, and it was dog talk. The kennel was visited, the patient interviewed, and rabbit hunting was discussed from various standpoints. Foxy showed no disposition to follow his master home, and the master was secretly glad of it.

"If I had a girl," said the cook in the kitchen to herself, after the young man had departed—"If I had a girl, which I haven't got, and she should go hunting and shoot a dog belonging to a fine young man, and that fine young man should call and see about the dog—"

And she shook her head and looked wise and said no more until next time. Mr. Meadows called again. He was passing and thought he would ask about Foxy. He called a third time and a fourth and he astonished his uncle by telling him how he loved the country in winter, and though Foxy got well the calling did not cease. When it had settled down into a regular thing the cook sighed and shook her head and said:

The Important Problem

confronting anyone in need of a laxative is not a question of a single action only, but of permanently beneficial effects, which will follow proper efforts to live in a healthful way, with the assistance of Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna, whenever it is required, as it cleanses the system gently yet promptly, without irritation and will therefore always have the preference of all who wish the best of family laxatives.

The combination has the approval of physicians because it is known to be truly beneficial, and because it has given satisfaction to the millions of well-informed families who have used it for many years past.

To get its beneficial effects, always buy the genuine manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co. only.



First Manager—Did your company have a long run?
Second Manager—No; but we had a long walk.

DOWNWARD COURSE.
Kidney Troubles Grow Worse Every Year.

Charles S. Bailey, 808 Locust St., Yankton, S. Dak., says: "I suffered agony from kidney complaint and was almost helpless. The disease grew worse each year although I doctored and used many remedies. There were excruciating pains in my back and the urine passed too freely. Doan's Kidney Pills gradually helped me and soon I was cured. Some years ago I recommended them and have had no trouble since."

Remember the name—Doan's. For sale by all dealers. 50 cents a box. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

Queer Attribute of Salmon. Only about 20 per cent. of salmon spawn before they return up the rivers from the sea, and those that do return after spawning are coarse, and, when cut up, white in the flesh; in fact, are known as bull trout, for so-called "bull trout" are not a different kind of fish, but are plainly salmon which have spawned.

\$100 Reward, \$100. The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one disease that has been shown to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Dr. H. C. Wood's Catarrh Cure is a new discovery. It is a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Dr. H. C. Wood's Catarrh Cure is a new discovery. It is a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Dr. H. C. Wood's Catarrh Cure is a new discovery. It is a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment.

Her Worry. Mrs. Hoyle—I seem unhappy. Mrs. Doyle—I am; I don't believe that if I were to die my husband would wear as deep mourning as he did for his first wife.

Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets regulate and purify the stomach, liver and bowels. Sugar-coated, they granulate, clear to the inside.

The smaller the man the bigger the horn he tries to blow.

AFTER SUFFERING FOR YEARS Cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. Park Rapids, Minn.—"I was sick for years while passing through the Change of Life and was hardly able to get around. After taking six bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound I gained 20 pounds, am now able to do my own work and feel well."—Mrs. E. LA DOT, Park Rapids, Minn.

Brookville, Ohio.—"I was irregular and extremely nervous. A neighbor recommended Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to me and I have become regular and my nerves are much better."—Mrs. H. KINZIE, Brookville, Ohio.

Commercial Value of Peat

Germany, as Usual, Quick to Recognize Potential Wealth Stored in the Earth.

An object lesson in the utilization of peat bogs has for the last few years been carried on in northeastern Germany. Some 15,000 acres of moorland known as the Friedeburg bogs, are being reclaimed and the peat used for the supply of electric power. The land is cultivated by settlers, who at the same time cut peat and sell it to the electrical supply company, with works on an island in the middle of the bog. It is expected that this central power station will supply electricity for light and power for a region of 30 miles radius. Already it supplies electric light to Expen, Wilhelmshaven and several other large towns and cities.

As by-products of the conversion of the energy of the peat into electricity large quantities of ammonia and hydrogen sulphide are made and sold.

As part of the work 33 miles of new canals are to be made, and in order to accomplish this about 650 acres of moor have to be stripped of their peat. Thus in the making of the canals 200,000,000 cubic feet of peat would be supplied for the central power station. And this, it is reckoned, would keep it going at its present rate of the production of energy for 66 years.

Adam's Solar Plexus Blow. Eve—Adam, if you don't behave yourself I'm going right home to my mother. Adam—Aw, gwan! You ain't got no mother! (Showing that there was wit even in those days.)

Feeding One's Vanity. "The reason most of us go so far away from home on a vacation," says the Philosopher of Folly, "is so that the local papers can speak of us as 'distinguished citizens.'"

See End of Man's Dominion

Whote Matter Settled by Four Women Over the Tea Table.

The women, taking their tea by the club window, talked. "They have a girl promoter at the Garrick theater," said one. "The manager told me last night that he'll have none but women promoters after this. Their fine, clear voices carry so beautifully across the stage, while at the same time they are quite inaudible in the auditorium."

"Norwegian horses," said a third woman, "are at once spirited and gentle. Do you know why? Because it is the women, the farm women, who break them. They make pets of them first; the colts feed from their hands and follow them about like dogs. After that their breaking is easy. It is only done by kindness. And the result is that Norwegian horses have the best dispositions in the world."

"Of course," said another. "In teaching living languages, too, a woman is incomparably better than a man. A man has a thick guttural voice. His words are all mumbled and jumbled. But a woman's clear delivery—her open voice—gives every syllable its just value. In studying French or German or Italian, choose a woman, and your progress will be easier and faster."

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