

# In Sheep's Clothing.



By Capt. Ormond Steele

## CHAPTER XXIV.—Continued.

The book was brought, and Ralph Denham, who knew the characteristics of every man on board, called out the fifty, or rather forty-nine names he wanted, and Valentine wrote them down.

"Now, have them assemble quietly in the ward room," said the captain.

Within ten minutes the sailors were gathered in the ward room, where lights were lit and the doors guarded.

Captain Denham removed his disguise before meeting the men, but as they supposed he was in New York, their surprise and joy may be imagined at seeing him.

As had been said, he knew every man present, and they had been boys together. He could trust them as implicitly as he could Mr. Hedges or Mr. Valentine. They were more than a lot of ordinary young sailors, they were seamen of rare intelligence, any one of whom could manage the Sea Hawk if occasion required. They were volunteers, fighting for the honor and safety of the province in which they were born.

Subterfuge was out of place with such men, so Ralph wisely concluded to tell them the whole truth, which he did, after first cautioning them to silence and secrecy.

He told of his own adventures, who Fox was, and the plan he, Captain Denham, had decided on to capture the pirate and bring him to justice.

While Ralph was speaking, the contents of the men, and the many shades of the head, told that they were not taken by surprise so very much.

"I have chosen you, my shipmates," said Ralph, in conclusion, "not because you are braver and more reliable than the rest of the crew, but I wanted, or rather Fox wants, only fifty men, so as we have all been friends since boyhood, you will understand me when the time for action comes as others might not."

The men would have broken into a cheer had not Ralph checked them in time.

Believing that Fox would not permit the sailors from the Sea Hawk to use arms, or that he might try to lock them up when the fight came, he made each man conceal two pistols and a long dirk on his person. A rallying cry was agreed on in the event of a fight at night, and the conduct that should govern each man; also the name Captain Denham was to go by, and the fact that they were to take no more notice of him than of their other companions till the time came.

The arrangements were not perfected when day broke. Soon after Mr. Frenaud came on board with a letter from Captain Fox to Lieutenant Hedges, asking that the men required would be sent on board.

"Our men are volunteers," said Mr. Hedges, "and I have not the power to send them to another ship without their own consent. But last night I explained to them that there was a chance, if they went with the Wanderer for a week, to have a brush with that traitor and dog, Kidd; so fifty of the lads are ready."

"Ah, that is good news. If we don't show them Kidd," laughed Frenaud, "then that fellow will be harder to catch than the Flying Dutchman. We have fifty or sixty men on the Sea Hawk whom we shall leave with you for a few days. They are not men under the weather, but I fear they have been indulging too much on shore. I suppose you are all anxious to have Captain Denham back."

Honest George Hedges could not reply to this with a straight face, so Valentine answered:

"Oh, yes. But we can get along without him for a while."

Within two hours the boats of both ships made their transfers, and Ralph Denham and his gallant boys were on the Wanderer.

The sixty bearded ruffians who came on board the Sea Hawk did not look like men that even had been sick, though they had a part to play, and it can be said, whether to their credit or not, that they played it exactly as Capt. Fox wished.

## CHAPTER XXV.

THE WANDERER AGAIN WEIGHS ANCHOR.

Captain Fox believed that he had Colonel Graham wholly in his power, and he bled him accordingly. In addition to the large sums the Colonel had already paid to his tool, he now gave him more, not so much, Fox thought, for gratitude as to insure his silence about the crimes on Long Island, Bermuda, and Long Island, New York.

Fox would not have been quite so comfortable with his infernal guest had he known the truth.

The governor's object in sending for Captain Denham was to put him on Fox's track; but as there were no other ships in the harbor suited to this work, and Ralph Denham neither reported in person nor by letter, the authorities were perplexed, and the young captain was disengaged.

After Graham felt assured that Ralph Denham was out of the way, he would have given hundreds could he have communicated to Mr. Hedges, without danger to himself, that the Wanderer was commanded by Captain Kidd.

Graham loathed and detested the man whom he had used so many years to further his own designs; and now as Fox told of his plans for the future, the Colonel was amazed at the man's audacity and ingenuity.

It was arranged that by daybreak of the morning that Ralph Denham and his men went on board the Wanderer, that Colonel Graham and his servant should go ashore to the inn, and make immediate preparations for returning to New York.

Othello, or some other servant equally skillful, was as essential to Graham's comfort as his clothing and his meals. But when daylight came, and Othello did not report at his master's door, as was his habit, that choleric gentleman was highly indignant.

In obedience to the Colonel's request, a search of the ship was made for Othello, but he failed to reveal himself. One of the most active of the searchers, and the only one who could have thrown any light on the matter, was the shrewd Soothsayer, Dow, and he did not think it to his interest to tell that he had seen Othello vanishing through an open port the night before, and swimming in the direction of the Sea Hawk.

"Depend upon it, that old dog, Dinah, has seduced the boy off," said Fox. "And my advice to you is to go ashore and invoke the assistance of Uncle."

The old woman had been adopted by his people, and the boy is with her. Strange that the woman should live so long and never seem to grow older."

Graham said he thought she was a devil, if ever one appeared in human form. "Yet," he added, "it is strange, knowing us as she does, that she did not tell the people. Supposing she were to say that your name was not Fox, but William Kidd."

"What?" laughed Fox. "The people would say she was insane. But if she had told them before Ralph Denham's death the story of his father's murder and the fact that he was Lord Palton by right of birth, why, then the people would begin to investigate, and, ergo, they might find it to be true; eh, Col-

onel?"

Colonel Graham made no noise, but the glitter of his cold gray eyes told how Fox's words had made him.

To get out of this man's hated company, as well as to institute a search for his runaway servant, Graham went ashore before breakfast, immediately after the men arrived from the Sea Hawk.

He would not have descended to the boat so steadily had he known that one of the men who had been holding him by his hand to steady himself was Ralph Denham, whom he believed to be dead.

As soon as Graham left, Captain Fox and Guy Frenaud went down to the cabin, where they found Don in attendance, looking as docile and innocent as if never a thought of revolt had entered his mind.

"Go out, Don, and see about breakfast, Mr. Frenaud and I wish to be alone," said Fox, and the lad bowed low and retired.

"Egad, Frenaud," said Fox, striking the table, "we are in luck. If the powers in New York don't visit me inside of twenty-four hours with a strong fleet—and I don't see they haven't got one—I'll sail within the week with my two ships right into the harbor, and unfurl the flag before their eyes, to show I am a pat-

ron at my own game."

"But will that pay?" asked Frenaud, alarmed at the Captain's proposal.

"Pay?" Confound it, man, the true sailor doesn't think all the time of prize money; he must give some thought to glory."

"Then you feel that we are sure of the Sea Hawk."

"As sure, Frenaud, as that you are sitting there. Why, sir, the ship is at this moment virtually in our possession. Our fellows will do their work when they see my signal. Hedges cannot have more than eighty men left on the Sea Hawk, and suspecting nothing, they will be wholly unprepared for our onset."

"It is certainly a splendid scheme, and I cannot see why success should not crown it," said Frenaud.

"Success will crown it, sir. Never feel half-hearted or in doubt about a matter in which you are interested. Your own confidence inspires success, and men who enter battle determined to win always succeed if they are well led."

"You are quite right there, Captain. And now as to the plans?"

"It will hardly do, Frenaud, for us to put the Sea Hawk's men we have on board before the decks as we go out of sight of the town. When the fellows see that their choice lies between walking a plank and taking service with me, they will swear allegiance to the black flag; but for that we have a plan."

"Just look at that American! One can always tell an American by his dirty boots!"

"That was too much for me. Rather than bring disgrace upon my native land I gave the little imp the job he was after."

"That will be half past 5."

"About that."

"Come on to this reception?"

"I come off," Frenaud. "Don't you understand it?"

"I must confess I cannot see what you are to do with the people that come on board, unless you land them here," said the lieutenant.

"To land part and hold the rest would be to alarm this and all the adjoining settlements, with their swarms of canoes and boats, and also to place in doubt our success with the Sea Hawk. We must take all hands and land the party, except Miss Hedges and Miss Condit, at the eastern end of Gardner's Island. A bold scheme, but you do as you are told and leave the rest to me."

Captain Fox rang a bell, and Don came in at once with the news. This over, the officers went on deck, and the arrivals from the Sea Hawk were set to work preparing the Wanderer for the cruise she was to begin that day.

It was still early in the morning when Captain Fox went ashore. Nearly the first man he met was Dr. Hedges, who told him that the people were very much divided as to the propriety of arresting the post-riders the night before, and Dr. Hedges, thought it would be wise to let the man go.

"I did not arrest him without orders, and I cannot release him without breaking them. The man is well cared for, but he is a criminal, and he will hang as soon as I get him to New York," said Fox.

"If dat man don't die till den, ee'll live forever," croaked a voice directly behind Fox, that made him jump and turn as if he had been pricked by a sword.

"Ha, you hog!" he said, recognizing Dinah. "Where is your grandson that you caused to run away from Colonel Graham?"

"Yed bettah go ax Cap'n Kidd dat question. Ha, ha, ha!" and Dinah laughed and shook herself, and with her head to one side peered up in Fox's red face.

"Old Dinah is crazy, Captain Fox; you must not heed her," said Doctor Hedges, leading his friend away.

"I am sorry," said Captain Fox, "that the people of Sag Harbor, to whom I am indebted for so many courtesies, should think I would do anything unbecoming an officer in her majesty's service." He was feeling in his pocket as he spoke, and now to the doctor's surprise, he had pulled out a large silken purse, filled with gold, and continued: "I have been anxious before starting on this cruise, from which, as there is chance of a heavy fight, I may not return to do something for the poor and dependent of your beautiful town. Take this purse, my dear doctor. I know not how much it contains, and give it to those who may need it."

The Doctor, who was an exceedingly kind-hearted man, took the purse—and as he hid it away:

"We all hope that you will return, and, though some may be angered by what they do not understand, I am sure you will not leave a foe behind you."

"I know I shall leave one true, earnest friend," said Fox, seizing the Doctor's hand and making it effusively. "Now, my dear Doctor, as I have but one with her Majesty's messenger, Colonel Graham, I must leave you, and shall expect to great you and your estimable family on board the Wanderer this afternoon."

The Doctor said he would surely be there, and then he hurried home to give Lea and her mother another evidence

of Captain Fox's princely generosity and Christian thoughtfulness.

He found Ellen Condit at his house, and told her that he would go up soon to see her, father, whose extraordinary coming to life puzzled him not a little, and made him extremely anxious for his old friend's sake.

"I think," said Ellen, "that father is feeling very well; but if you go up to the place this morning you will not find him."

"Where is he?"

"On board the Sea Hawk."

"So mother and I tell him, Doctor, and we should not be at all surprised to see him return, at any time, dressed as a sailor and walking with a rolling gait, while he shouts to us that he has enlisted."

"Oh, Heaven forbid. But, of course, Ellen, you will attend the reception on the board the Wanderer, this afternoon?"

"Yes; Lea and I were talking about that. We think some of the officers and men on that ship are the same as de-

lightful."

"Ah, Ellen, Ellen," laughed the gratified doctor. "I'll not tell Valentine; but don't say that again. And so you really think that some of the officers and men on the Wanderer are very nice, eh?"

"I do, indeed," replied Ellen.

Mrs. Hedges, up to this time, had never kept a secret from her husband. She would not have kept this one were it not that she feared he might give it publicity and so defeat the plans of those who were working to beat Captain Fox at his own game.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Gambus in Rome.

A correspondent of the New York Tribune says that the street boys of Rome have all the curiosity, shrewdness and impudence of street boys in general, together with some traits peculiar to themselves. They have a sharp eye for foreigners and have developed no little skill in extracting coins from them. The Tribune's letter writer says: I got into a dispute with a cabman because he demanded a tip in addition to his regular fare. While we were talking a little fellow of 6 or 7 years stepped up and said, in a paternal, assuring tone:

"Sixty centimes is enough, sir. The rascal is very impudent. Don't give him any more."

In the same breath he asked me for a soldier for the service rendered. I handed him a coin, laughing at his grand airs, and he received it with a condescending gesture. Then, as the driver reached for his whip, the boy said, "I'll give you 10 centimes." "I'll give you 10 centimes," I said, "but I'll give you 10 centimes." "I'll give you 10 centimes." "I'll give you 10 centimes."

I walked on, and presently another urchin was at my side.

"Yes, signor, you are quite right, this is the road to the Vatican. Give me a soldo."

I drove him off, but in a few minutes another came bounding up.

"My lord! my lord! you are losing your handkerchief."

That was another soldo.

Next a bootblack, hardly more than 5 years old, caught sight of the foreigner.

"Your boots, sir! your boots!" he shouted.

I tried to ignore him. He appealed to my self-respect.

"But, my lord, such boots!" he exclaimed, as he stood along at my side. "O Dio mio! What nasty boots! O Santo Madre Dio! What boots! I really pity you, sir. Indeed! such boots! In fact I am sorry for you."

All this was uttered in a tone of profound moral conviction, as if he cherished me the most disinterested feeling of regret and sympathy. But when the appeal failed, he dropped behind me a few steps and changed his tune!

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